

2013-01-01

Using Journal Writing with Peer Feedback to Enhance EFL Students' Writing Ability Across Proficiency Levels

Watcharee Kulprasit

Thanyapa Chiramanee

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital.car.chula.ac.th/pasaa>



Part of the [Reading and Language Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Kulprasit, Watcharee and Chiramanee, Thanyapa (2013) "Using Journal Writing with Peer Feedback to Enhance EFL Students' Writing Ability Across Proficiency Levels," *PASAA*: Vol. 45, Article 5.

DOI: 10.58837/CHULA.PASAA.45.1.5

Available at: <https://digital.car.chula.ac.th/pasaa/vol45/iss1/5>

This Original Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Chulalongkorn Journal Online (CUJO) at Chula Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in PASAA by an authorized editor of Chula Digital Collections. For more information, please contact ChulaDC@car.chula.ac.th.

**USING JOURNAL WRITING WITH PEER FEEDBACK
TO ENHANCE EFL STUDENTS' WRITING ABILITY ACROSS
PROFICIENCY LEVELS**

Watcharee Kulprasit

Thaksin University, Thailand

Email: watcharee.tsu@gmail.com

Thanyapa Chiramanee

Prince of Songkhla University, Thailand

Email: thanyapa.c@psu.ac.th

Abstract

This quasi-experimental research integrated journal writing with peer feedback in an EFL writing classroom to examine its impact on writing ability of 42 Mathayomsuksa 3 Semi-English-program students in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency* across proficiency levels. The findings revealed that all students' overall writing ability improved significantly. The middle and the low groups' writing ability improved significantly in terms of *accuracy* and the word count in their writing significantly increased while the high group's did not. However, no significant improvement was found in all students' production of consistent language structures and vocabulary use: an aspect of *fluency*. The data analysis also showed that some of their previous five most frequent problematic grammatical points in writing reduced and they produced longer writing products after the treatment. Pedagogically, the utility of journal writing with peer feedback to promote collaborative and interactive language learning and skill development in EFL writing classrooms was demonstrated.

Introduction

Being a country in the Expanding Circle of Kachru's WEs structure, the status of English is not officially found in Thailand (Wilang & Teo, 2012). However, as Thailand is moving to participate in ASEAN in 2015, English as an official working language plays a significant role in communication. English as a Lingua Franca (EFL) or English as an International Language (EIL) is becoming necessary for people to communicate with both native and non-native speakers (Kilickaya, 2009). ASEAN EFL, therefore, seizes the territory in both academic and practical sites (Kirkpatrick, 2008). EFL students then come to face with the real need to listen, speak, read, and write in English for –international contact‖ or –practical purposes‖ (Shih, 1999, p. 21). Therefore, the English literacy of EFL students in Thailand, specifically their English writing ability is brought into the spotlight. In such case, the students should be taught to perceive themselves not only as the speakers of English but also –the writers of English‖ (McConochie, 2000, p. 17). The ability to write in English is, thus, essential in both academic and career success (Yong, 2010).

In Thailand, including other countries in Asia, writing instruction is driven under the traditional approach (Shih, 1999). Teaching writing through this approach involves a mixture of grammar translation method, audiolingual method, teacher-centred as well as product-oriented approach. Through such an approach, the students are taught to learn about the language rather than learn how to write the language for communication. Based on this approach, good writing is defined as –correct writing‖ (Shih, p. 21). As a result, the students' writing skill is not actually developed; they merely learn what is right or wrong about the target language. In the meantime as Schneider (2009, p. 61) claims, an influence of –standardized testing wave‖ drives the teachers to ‘teach to the test’ in teaching writing. A formulaic writing is taught in the writing classes in order to raise the students' standardized test scores. Hence, teaching writing is represented by teaching ‘five-paragraph essay’

which makes the students lose interest and enthusiasm in learning to write.

In order to deal with these problems, Shih (1999) suggests that teaching writing should move forward to a communicative approach; that is, teaching how to write the language to communicate. Through this approach, the students' writing skill could be developed without abandoning of linguistic knowledge development. In addition, Schneider (2009) proposes an integration of creative writing, such as the use of journal writing in teaching writing. In so doing, Schneider claims that the qualities of good writing beyond accuracy are not too distant for the students to reach and their positive attitudes toward writing could also be promoted. This shift from the product-oriented approach to the process-oriented approach in teaching writing emphasizing all the processes in writing (Kroll, 2001) also solves the problems in teaching writing. Under the use of process-oriented approach, journal writing plays a significant role in the writing process (Maxwell, 1996). With the use of journal writing, the students' writing ability was improved and their writing motivation as well as their positive attitude toward learning to write was driven and increased according to the studies of Liao and Wong (2010) and Tuan (2010). Nevertheless, these benefits come together with a regular practice (Harmer, 2004). Feedback, which is also considered a vital element in the writing process, occupies an important place in teaching writing and learning to write as well (Keh, 1990). Particularly, peer feedback is regarded as a popular technique employed in both ESL and EFL writing classes (Charoensuk, 2011; Rollinson, 2005) although it possibly threatens the students' faces, challenges their language proficiency and brings the notion of both their own language proficiency confidence and their peers' into question (Charoensuk, 2011; Sultana, 2009). This type of feedback is, however, recognized as an alternative feedback on the students' journal entries apart from teacher feedback (Brown, 2004; Harmer, 2004). Being integrated with journal writing activity, peer feedback promotes collaborative learning and a learner-centred approach in

teaching writing. With the use of peer feedback, the students can be involved in —active participation‖ of writing improvement (Russo, 1987, p. 88). This highlights the fact that writing is an interactive activity.

Like other language skills classes, writing classes usually consist of the students with mixed writing proficiency levels (Prodromou, 1995). In such classes, the teacher should keep in mind that all the students are different, particularly in their language proficiency. To teach writing, it is suggested that the teacher assign the activities which help the students build on their existing knowledge (Freeman & Freeman, 2003; Prodromou, 1995). Journal writing, which is regarded as an activity for the students to develop their writing skill from where they are, comes into play (Zhou & Siriyothin, 2009). Moreover, collaborative interaction and scaffolding should also be promoted in such classes to offer an opportunity for the students to make effective use of their strengths and learn from each other. In so doing, peer feedback should be integrated into the writing classes.

The positive effects of journal writing as well as peer feedback on either ESL or EFL students' writing ability have been claimed in several studies (e.g. Jones & East, 2010; Liao & Wong, 2010; Ting & Qian, 2010; Tuan, 2010; Wakabayashi, 2008). However, the studies on such positive effects on the students' writing ability across writing proficiency levels are not found in the Thai academic context to the best of my knowledge. If any, those studies did not involve an integration of journal writing with peer feedback in their investigations. In order to fill these gaps, the present study aimed to investigate the impact of journal writing with peer feedback on writing ability, specifically in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency* of the subjects with different writing proficiency levels. In so doing, it could answer the call for an alternative technique to improve EFL students' writing ability in mixed writing proficiency EFL writing classes in the Thai academic context.

Operational Terms

1. *Accuracy* refers to the frequency of problematic grammatical points the subjects produced in their pre- and post- free writing tests and the frequency of each subject's five most frequent problematic grammatical points produced in their journal entries.
2. *Fluency* involves 2 writing aspects. First, it concerns the subjects' production of the consistent language structures and vocabulary use in their pre- and post- free writing tests. The second aspect deals with the number of words produced in their pre- and post- free writing tests and their journal entries under a certain length of time.

Methodology

Subjects of the Study

Forty-two Mathayomsuksa 3 (Grade 9) Semi-English program students at a secondary school in Thailand took part in the study. Being the students in the Semi-English program at this school, the students were taught in English in some subjects; for instance, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Apart from that, two more extra courses of English; that is, *Writing and Reading Course* and *English Conversation Course* taught by a native speaker were also added into the curriculum. The subjects were all female Thai native speakers. Their average age was 14 and they had approximately 10 years of formal English educational exposure. In a journal writing activity, each subject was required to write a journal entry on any topic on a piece of color paper for 30 minutes on a weekly basis. For a peer feedback activity, the subjects were paired up according to their writing proficiency levels based on their scores of the pre- test of writing: the higher writing proficiency subjects were paired up with their lower writing proficiency peers. Thus, there were 21 designated pairs covering three types of pairing, the high and the low writing proficiency subjects, the middle and the low, as well as the high and the middle ones.

Research Instruments

To accomplish the objectives of the present study, three research instruments were employed: a test of writing, a practice test of error recognition and correction, and the subjects' journal entries.

A one-hour test of writing, consisting of 2 sections, was used both as pre- and post- tests. A free writing test, the first section of the test, was in the form of a short paragraph writing test of approximately 150 words on the topic –Someone I Admire. The 30-item error recognition and correction test, the second section of the test, covers 15 grammatical points, two points for each item.

A practice test of error recognition and correction covering each subject's five most frequent problematic grammatical points based on their pre-test results was used to equip the subjects with grammatical knowledge to ensure that they were able to give grammatical feedback on their designated partners' journal entries.

Eight journal entries of the subject of all writing proficiency levels were used to provide in-depth data about their writing ability development in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency*.

Data Collection Procedure

The present study was conducted for 13 weeks in the first semester of the academic year 2011. In the first week of the study, the test of writing was administered to measure the subjects' writing proficiency before the treatment. The data on each subject's five most frequent problematic grammatical points were obtained from the second section of the test. Then, their problematic grammatical knowledge was developed for three weeks by the use of the practice test of error recognition and correction. In so doing, it could ascertain that the subjects were capable of giving grammatical feedback on their designated partners' journal entries. In the fifth week, an orientation of journal writing with peer feedback was given by the researcher (the first author) to the subjects and they were then asked to write their first journal entries individually for 30 minutes. After each journal entry was written, it was exchanged with their

designated partners' for peer feedback on both content and grammar in the written form in English. After that, each designated pair sat together to discuss in Thai about the feedback they received. The entire activity took approximately one hour and the whole process was repeated for 8 weeks. Finally, the test of writing was administered to the subjects again to measure their writing proficiency after the treatment.

Data Analysis

The subjects' pre- and post- free writing tests were scored by two native speakers and the researcher (the first author) in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency* according to the analytic scoring scale (0-6) devised by John Anderson based on an oral ability scale in Harris (1968) (as cited in Hughes, 1989) (see Appendix A for a description of scores). The inter-rater reliability was .98 and .93 for the pre- and post- free writing test scores. Their pre- and post- error recognition and correction tests were scored by the researcher (the first author). The subjects' mean scores of the pre- and post- tests of writing were compared by using a paired samples t-test. The word counts of the subjects' pre- and post- free writing tests included both content and function words.

Eight journal entries of the subject of all writing proficiency levels were analyzed to see their writing ability development in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency*. In terms of *accuracy*, their five most problematic grammatical aspects found in their journal entries were recorded by the researcher (the first author). Under the aspect of *fluency*, both function and content words in their journal entries were counted by the researcher (the first author).

Research Findings

The impact of journal writing with peer feedback on the subjects' writing ability in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency* by proficiency levels is presented in Table 1 as follows.

Table 1: Pre- and Post- Tests of Writing by Proficiency Levels

High Group (N = 13)	Level	Pre-Test		Post-Test		t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Section I: Free Writing Test							
Accuracy	6	4.62	.47	4.97	.84	-1.964	.07
Fluency	6	4.72	.38	4.74	.53	-.201	.84
No. of words		184.77	51.98	216.62	50.10	-1.841	.09
Section II: Error Test	Score						
Error Recognition	30	21.85	2.88	26.15	1.77	-5.987	.00**
Error Correction	30	17.92	4.17	22.69	3.12	-4.827	.00**
Total	72	49.10	6.83	58.56	5.40	-6.054	.00**
Middle Group (N = 16)	Level	Pre-Test		Post-Test		t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Section I: Free Writing Test							
Accuracy	6	4.08	.52	4.38	.51	-2.098	.05*
Fluency	6	4.29	.48	4.40	.41	-.689	.50
No. of words		172.44	52.15	235.50	67.00	-4.631	.00**
Section II: Error Test	Score						
Error Recognition	30	16.06	2.24	24.13	5.02	-6.102	.00**
Error Correction	30	9.38	2.28	19.94	5.82	-7.613	.00**
Total	72	33.81	3.57	52.85	10.93	-7.615	.00**

Table 1: Pre- and Post- Tests of Writing by Proficiency Levels (Cons.)

Low Group (N = 13)	Level	Pre-Test		Post-Test		t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Section I: Free Writing Test							
Accuracy	6	3.26	1.55	4.23	.46	-2.403	.03*
Fluency	6	3.54	1.62	4.21	.52	-1.493	.16
No. of words		153.46	61.63	217.00	49.63	-3.116	.01**
Section II: Error Test	Score						
Error	30	9.46	2.63	23.38	3.07	-11.444	.00**
Recognition							
Error	30	5.46	2.50	17.92	4.68	-8.035	.00**
Correction							
Total	72	21.72	4.34	49.74	8.41	-11.081	.00**

**p < .01, *p < .05

Table 1 reveals a significant overall writing improvement of the high group ($t = -6.054$, $p < .01$). However, a significant difference was found only in their error recognition and correction test ($p < .01$), but not in the free writing test.

For the middle group, their overall writing ability also improved significantly ($t = -7.615$, $p < .01$). In the free writing test, their writing ability improved significantly in terms of *accuracy* ($p = .05$) and the number of words in their writing also significantly increased ($p < .01$). Moreover, their mean scores in the error recognition and correction test significantly increased ($p < .01$). However, no significant difference was found in their production of the consistent language structures and vocabulary use.

Additionally, the low group's overall writing ability development improved significantly ($t = -11.081$, $p < .01$). They improved significantly in terms of *accuracy* ($p < .05$) and the number of words they wrote in their writing ($p < .01$). Nevertheless, no significant improvement was found in their production of the consistent

language structures and vocabulary use. Their mean scores for the error recognition and correction test significantly increased ($p < .01$).

The development of some subjects' writing ability in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency* is reported by proficiency levels in Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4. Regarding the three tables, 'Frequency of Errors' means the number of errors made by a particular subject in each of her journal entry. 'Peer Feedback Performance' refers to the number of corrections provided by a particular subject's partner.

The five most frequent problematic grammatical points found in the pre-test of Student A, a high writing proficiency subject, were numbers (N), pronouns (PN), passive voice (PV), present simple tense (PS), and past simple tense (PT). Her writing ability development in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency* through journal writing with peer feedback is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Student A (High Writing Proficiency Subject)'s Record of Eight Journal Entries

Journal Entry No.	Frequency of Errors					Peer Feedback Performance					No. Of Words
	N	PN	PV	PS	PT	N	PN	PV	PS	PT	
1	3	0	0	0	-	1	0	-	1/1	-	130
2	2	0	-	2	-	1/1	0	-	0	2	184
3	2	2	-	4	-	1/2	1/1	0	1	0	184
4	0	2	-	1	-	1/1	2/2	0	5/8	1	156
5	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	-	1/2	0	129
6	0	1	-	0	2	1/1	0	-	0	-	127
7	0	0	-	0	7	0	2/2	-	2/4	-	170
8	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	1	1/6	1	149

* - means this problematic grammatical point did not appear in her journal entry.

Table 2 shows that two of her five most frequent problematic grammatical points, numbers (N) and pronouns (PN), gradually reduced and were not found in her journal entries No. 7 and No. 8. The subject could give her partner feedback regarding these two

grammatical points. Her grammatical problems about the use of present simple tense (PS) and past simple tense (PT) reduced whereas the problematic use of passive voice (PV) still occurred. The number of words produced between her first and last journal entries increased.

Table 3 reveals the writing development of Student B, a middle writing proficiency subject, in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency*. Her five most frequent problematic grammatical points in her pre-test were conditionals (C), numbers (N), articles (A), passive voice (PV), and parts of speech (P).

Table 3: Student B (Middle Writing Proficiency Subject)'s Record of Eight Journal Entries

Journal Entry No.	Frequency of Errors					Peer Feedback Performance					No. Of Words
	C	N	A	PV	P	C	N	A	PV	P	
1	-	3	0	-	0	-	1/2	2	-	4	138
2	-	0	0	-	0	-	1/1	2	-	1/1	102
3	0	9	0	-	0	-	1	0	-	0	127
4	-	1	1	-	0	-	0	0	-	2	103
5	-	0	4	-	-	-	1/1	-	-	2	106
6	0	1	0	-	0	1	0	0	0	1	102
7	-	0	5	-	4	-	0	1	-	0	228
8	0	2	0	-	1	-	1/1	1/3	-	0	210

* - means this problematic grammatical point did not appear in her journal entry.

Table 3 demonstrates that the number of errors about conditionals (C), numbers (N), articles (A), and parts of speech (P) the subject made in the pre-test gradually decreased along the way as she proceeded in journal writing with peer feedback activity. Moreover, the subject could effectively give her partner feedback about these four grammatical points. Noticeably, the subject did not use passive voice (PV) in her own journal entries and this grammatical point also did not appear in her partner's journal entries. Apart from that, the subject's writing ability also improved in terms of *fluency* since she

could write 210 words in her last journal entry up from only 138 words in her first journal entry.

Five most frequent problematic grammatical points in the pre-test of Student C, a low writing proficiency subject, were passive voice (PV), parts of speech (P), articles (A), relative clause (R), and present simple tense (PS). Her writing development in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency* through the use of journal writing with peer feedback is reported in Table 4.

Table 4: Student C (Low Writing Proficiency Subject)'s Record of Eight Journal Entries

Journal Entry No.	Frequency of Errors					Peer Feedback Performance					No. Of Words
	PV	P	A	R	PS	PV	P	A	R	PS	
1	-	0	2	1	0	1	0	1/1	1/2	1/1	114
2	-	1	0	0	0	0	1	1/2	0	0	134
3	1	1	2	0	1	0	2	1	-	1/3	155
4	-	1	0	0	0	-	0	1	1	1/4	110
5	1	0	0	-	0	0	1	1	0	2/2	111
6	-	1	0	0	3	-	1	4	1	1	121
7	-	0	0	1	0	1	3	1/6	0	3/5	160
8	-	2	1	1	1	-	5	1/3	0	4/9	194

* - means this problematic grammatical point did not appear in her journal entry.

Table 4 reveals that three of her five most frequent problematic grammatical points, articles (A), relative clause (R), and present simple tense (PS), reduced and the subject was able to correct her partner on these three grammatical points. Nevertheless, the grammatical problem on parts of speech (P) increased and she failed to give feedback on this grammatical point to her partner. The problem about the use of passive voice (PV) did not evidently appear in her last journal entry. The table also indicates that the subject's *fluency* in writing greatly improved as she produced 80 more words in her final journal entry compared to her first journal entry.

Discussion and Pedagogical Implications

As the findings show, journal writing with peer feedback significantly improved all the subjects' overall writing ability although the degree of improvement varied across proficiency levels. This highlights the merit of integrating journal writing with peer feedback in the EFL writing classroom to provide an opportunity for the subjects to develop their writing ability from their existing proficiency levels in the collaborative and interactive atmosphere.

Interestingly, it is worth noting that the high group had the least overall writing ability improvement whereas the low group had the greatest improvement. Moreover, only the middle and the low groups' writing ability improved significantly in terms of *accuracy* while the high group's did not. This might be explained by a probability that the high group possessed quite high writing ability based on their pre-test scores. Thus, only a minimal improvement could take place. Furthermore, it could probably be assumed that the high group did not receive sufficient feedback concerning their weaknesses and problematic grammatical aspects from their lower writing proficiency partners to help them improve their writing ability. This point appeared through content feedback by their partners. Their partners, probably due to their limited writing proficiency, seemed to praise the higher group's writing ability as well as concentrated on their strengths rather than their weaknesses or grammatical errors in their writing. For example, one subject from the low group gave feedback on one of her higher writing proficiency partner's journal entries that *-Your English is not only good but also perfect.*||

Moreover, there was more room for the low group to develop since their language learning and skill development were in the initial phase. In addition, the low group got greater opportunity to be exposed to better, if not the best, language models of the higher group in their partners' journal entries. Their problematic grammatical awareness could be raised through journal exchange where they read their higher group's journal entries. So, it seems that the low group

received more benefit of journal writing with peer feedback than the high group.

This finding from the present study supports that journal writing is a recommended activity for the low writing proficiency students to help improve their writing ability as claimed by Massi (2001). The finding in this study also reflects the benefit of peer feedback integrated into the activity; collaborative learning and scaffolding were two crucial features of peer feedback helping enhance the students' writing ability (Tang & Tithecott, 1999). The differential benefits of peer feedback on the students at diverse achievement levels were found in Li's (2011) study. That is, the low proficient students gained more benefit from peer feedback than the high proficient students. One reason was that the high group had less satisfaction toward peer assessment, so they did not attempt to acquire its benefits. Moreover, Charoensuk (2011, p. 157) explains that the lower proficiency students were reluctant to give any negative feedback to their higher proficiency students in order to help them improve their writing.

In terms of the subjects' production of the consistent language structures and vocabulary use, no significant improvement was found at all proficiency levels. However, all the subjects showed a slight improvement of this writing aspect. Nonetheless, the middle and the low groups could produce significantly longer writing products while the high group's word count slightly increased. This could be caused by journal writing with peer feedback being done in a short-term through a regular practice. Hence, it was not sufficient for them to develop to be fluent writers since this might take a longer-term practice. As EFL learners, the limited English language exposure as well as English writing practice could be considered as an impediment to improving their writing ability under this writing aspect. This pedagogically calls for a need for a wide range of English language exposure together with a regular and ongoing practice of writing for developing EFL students' *fluency* in writing.

Nonetheless, the subjects probably felt more confident to express their ideas in the target language as the nature of the activity itself encouraged them to practice writing in a non-threatening atmosphere. That is, their journal entries would be under the reviews of their peers, not their teacher's, even though the word count of the high group did not significantly increase. This raises the teacher's awareness of the value of journal writing with peer feedback in establishing a relaxing atmosphere to encourage EFL students to practice writing. However, a promotion of a sense of accomplishment for the low proficiency students should have come together with a challenge for the high proficiency students in teaching writing in the mixed writing proficiency EFL writing classrooms.

The finding of the subjects producing more words through journal writing with peer feedback in the present study is consistent with Liao and Wong's (2010) as well as Tuan's (2010) studies. Additionally, Ting and Qian (2010) found out that peer feedback slightly improved the students' writing ability in terms of this aspect of fluency in their study. This affirms that —the journal is an effective tool for promoting fluency (Blanton, 1987, p. 114).

Another benefit of journal writing with peer feedback was also found in the present study. All the subjects' error recognition and correction ability improved significantly with different degrees across proficiency levels. The low group improved the most, followed by the middle and the high groups, respectively. This scenario could be explicated as the low group having more problematic grammatical points to master as they were at the primary stage of language learning and development. Moreover, grammatical feedback from their higher writing proficiency partners could help raise their awareness of their problematic grammatical points. In pedagogy, the advantage of the activity provides a chance for EFL students to collaboratively and interactively improve their error recognition and correction ability and develop self-recognition and correction competency in their own future writing.

Additionally, the findings from the in-depth data analysis also reinforce the merit of the use of journal writing with peer feedback in improving the subjects' writing ability, especially in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency*.

In terms of *accuracy*, some of the subjects' 5 most frequent problematic grammatical points in their writing reduced through the activity. In terms of *fluency*, the number of words produced in the subjects' last journal entries increased from those of their first although a variety of word counts was found in between. Due to the short-time of only 8-week journal writing with peer feedback activity through a regular practice, it was inadequate for the subjects to reduce all of their problematic grammatical points in their writing. As indicated in Puengpipattrakul's (2010) study, no significant impact of journal writing was found on some students' grammatical ability because of the restricted time of journal writing practice. All in all, journal writing with peer feedback can be regarded as an alternative tool to help EFL students gain more grammatical knowledge and overcome their writing obstacles in achieving more *accuracy*, one quality of good writing.

Furthermore, some constraints of the nature of journal writing itself might affect the length of the subjects' journal entries. That is, although the subjects had freedom to choose their own topics to write on their journal entries, they might have limited their ideas to only certain pedestrian topics; for instance, *Today*; *I'm Fat*; *I'm Happy when*; and *Doing Homework*. In order to ensure that topic limitation does not hamper the students' writing development, an effective instruction for EFL students to choose expansive topics for journal writing practice should be offered by the teacher.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings in the present study shed light on a pedagogical implication of journal writing with peer feedback in mixed writing proficiency EFL writing classrooms in order to improve writing ability in terms of *accuracy* and *fluency*, especially for the low writing

proficiency students. In addition, it spotlights the integration of this collaborative and interactive writing activity in EFL writing pedagogy in promoting collaborative and interactive language learning and skill development as well as establishing a learners-centred EFL writing classroom.

According to the findings, it would be of interest for future studies to include a group-peer feedback consisting of the students with three writing proficiency levels in order to compare findings with the present study's. In addition, a longitudinal study is encouraged to investigate whether a significantly more positive impact is found on writing ability in terms of the production of the consistent language structures and vocabulary use.

Limitations of the Study

The types and frequencies of the students' most problematic grammatical aspects and their writing ability in terms of both accuracy and fluency are limited to those found in their tests of writing and journal entries. Therefore, the findings in the present study are not able to be generalized to other contexts where those aspects are investigated in other circumstances.

The Authors

Watcharee Kulprasit holds an M.A. in Teaching English as an International Language from Prince of Songkla University, Hat-Yai Campus and a B.A. (First Class Honors) in English from Thaksin University, Songkhla Campus, Thailand. Currently, she is working as a lecturer in the Western Languages Program, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Thaksin University, Songkhla, Thailand.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Thanyapa Chiramanee holds a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from the University of Sydney, Australia. Currently, she is a lecturer in the Languages and Linguistics Department as well as an Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the Faculty of Liberal Arts of Prince of Songkhla University, Hat-Yai Campus, Songkhla, Thailand.

References

- Blanton, L. L. (1987). Reshaping ESL students' perceptions of writing. *ELT Journal*, 41(2), 112-118.
- Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language assessment principles and classroom practices*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Charoensuk, P. (2011). The relationship between an English writing classroom and Asian cultural issues when using peer feedback. *Executive Journal*, 31(3), 154-159.
- Freeman, Y., & Freeman, D. (2003). Struggling English language learners: Keys for academic success. *TESOL Journal*, 12(3), 5-10.
- Harmer, J. (2004). *How to teach writing*. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.
- Hughes, A. (1989). *Testing for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jones, J., & East, J. (2010). Empowering primary writers through daily journal writing. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 24(2), 112-122.
- Keh, C. L. (1990). Feedback in the writing process: A model and methods for implementation. *ELT Journal*, 44(4), 294-304.
- Kilickaya, F. (2009). World Englishes, English as an International Language and Applied Linguistics. *English Language Teaching*, 2(3), 35-38.
- Kirkpatrick, A. (2008). English as the official working language of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): Features and strategies. *English Today* 94, 24(2), 27-34.
- Kroll, B. (2001). Considerations for teaching an ESL/EFL writing course. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 291-232). USA: Heinle & Heinle.
- Li, L. (2011). How do students of diverse achievement levels benefit from peer assessment? *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 5(2), 1-16.

- Liao, M., & Wong, C. (2010). Effects of dialogue journals on L2 students' writing fluency, reflections, anxiety, and motivation. *Journal of Reflections on English Language Teaching*, 9(2), 139-170.
- Massi, M. P. (2001). Interactive writing in the EFL class: A repertoire of tasks. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 7(6). Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Massi-WritingTasks.html>
- Maxwell, R. J. (1996). *Writing across the curriculum in middle and high schools*. Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon.
- McConochie, J. (2000). Feeling and acting like a writer. *TESOL Journal*, 9(4), 17-23.
- Prodromou, L. (1995). *Mixed ability classes*. Hertfordshire: Phoenix EFL.
- Puengpipattrakul, W. (2010). What does focus-on-form journal writing tell language teachers? *PASAA*, 43, 67-91.
- Rollinson, P. (2005). Using peer feedback in the ESL writing class. *ELT Journal*, 59(1), 23-30.
- Russo, G. M. (1987). Writing: An interactive experience. In W. M. Rivers (Ed.). *Interactive Language Teaching* (pp. 83-92). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schneider, D. (2009). Fusing two philosophies to promote creativity, higher-order thinking, and organization in the writing process. *Language Arts Journal of Michigan*, 24(2), 61-63.
- Shih, M. (1999). More than practicing language: Communicative reading and writing for Asian settings. *TESOL Journal*, 8(4), 20-25.
- Sultana, A. (2009). Peer correction in ESL classrooms. *BRAC University Journal*, 1(1), 11-19.
- Tang, G. M., & Tithecott, J. (1999). Peer response in ESL writing. *TESL Canada Journal*, 16(2), 20-38.
- Ting, M., & Qian, Y. (2010). A case study of peer feedback in a Chinese EFL writing classroom. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 33(4), 87-98.

- Tuan, L. T. (2010). Enhancing EFL learners' writing skill via journal writing. *English Language Teaching*, 3(3), 81-88.
- Wakabayashi, R. (2008). The effect of peer feedback on EFL writing: Focusing on Japanese university students. *OnCUE Journal*, 2(2), 92-110.
- Wilang, J. D., & Teo, A. (2012). Exploring the relationship between intelligibility and education. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 4(4), 104-115.
- Yong, F. L. (2010). Attitudes toward academic writing of foundation students at an Australian-based university in Sarawak. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 13(3), 471-477.
- Zhou, L., & Siriyothin, P. (2009). An investigation of university EFL students' attitudes towards writing-to-read tasks. *Suranaree J. Sci. Technol.*, 16(4), 297-309.

Appendix A

Analytic Scoring Scale

Accuracy:

- ___ 6. Few (if any) noticeable errors of grammar or word order
- ___ 5. Some errors of grammar or word order which do not, however, interfere with comprehension.
- ___ 4. Errors of grammar or word order fairly frequent; occasional re-reading necessary for full comprehension.
- ___ 3. Errors of grammar or word order frequent; efforts of interpretation sometimes required on reader's part.
- ___ 2. Errors of grammar or word order very frequent; reader often has to rely on own interpretation.
- ___ 1. Errors of grammar or word order so severe as to make comprehension virtually impossible.

Fluency:

- ___ 6. Choice of structures and vocabulary consistently appropriate; like that of educated native writer.
- ___ 5. Occasional lack of consistency in choice of structures and vocabulary which does not, however, impair overall ease of communication.
- ___ 4. 'Patchy', with some structures or vocabulary items noticeably inappropriate to general style.
- ___ 3. Structures or vocabulary items sometimes not only inappropriate but also misused; little sense of ease of communication.
- ___ 2. Communication often impaired by completely inappropriate or misused structures or vocabulary items.
- ___ 1. A 'hotch-potch' of half-learned misused structures and vocabulary items rendering communication almost impossible.

