A Qualitative Study of Chinese Heritage Language Learners' Perspective Toward Peer Response in Writing Processes

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Abstract

Peer reviewing has been widely adopted and extensively discussed in both first (L1) and second (L2) language writing instruction. However, heritage language (HL) learners, who are different from L2 learners, have not received adequate attention in such discussions. The purpose of this study is to investigate Chinese heritage language (CHL) learners' perceptions of peer response in their Chinese writing processes. By shedding light on this aspect, this study attempts to provide valuable insight into ways to improve the effectiveness of peer response, consequently promoting the development of CHL student writing in the HL.

Keywords: peer response, Chinese, heritage language learners, writing

1.   Introduction

The focus of writing instruction shifted from product-oriented to process-oriented during the 1970s in the United States (Smith, 2000). As one of the crucial and inseparable steps in the recursive process of writing, revision is intricately associated with feedback that writers receive from various audiences such as teachers, tutors, and peers. Consequently, peer reviewing has been widely adopted and extensively discussed in both first (L1) and second (L2) language writing instruction, especially in the ESL setting. The essence of peer response is students' providing other students with feedback on their preliminary drafts so that the student writers may acquire a wider sense of audience and work towards improving their compositions (Nelson & Murphy, 1993).

Although there are no conclusive findings of the impact of peer response, a fair amount of studies indicate that L2 writers can reap the benefits from peer response under certain conditions (Durham, 2005; Hyland, 2006; Jacobs, 1989; Keh, 1990; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Paulus, 1999; Rothschild & Klingenberg, 1990). Villamil & Guerrero (2006) point out that L2 learners could obtain rich and extended assistance from peer feedback during the writing process. Liu & Hansen (2002) present detailed description of students' positive experiences at three levels—the textual level, the cognitive level, and the communicative level.

However, heritage language (HL) learners, who are different from L2 learners, have not received adequate attention in such discussions. There is no thorough understanding of 1) whether or not L2 research findings related to peer response hold in the context of HL education; and 2) how this particular group of learners compose and revise in their HL. A HL learner in this study is defined as a student who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or at least understands the language, and who is to some degree bilingual in that language and in English (Valdés, 2001). Campbell and Rosenthal (2000) point out that typical HL learners have not developed literacy skills beyond elementary levels. Therefore, it is imperative to understand how HL

learners write in the HL in order to design instructional approaches that are appropriate to these students' needs (Schwartz, 2003).

The purpose of this study is to investigate Chinese heritage language (CHL) learners' perceptions of peer response in their writing processes in Chinese. By shedding light on this aspect, this study attempts to provide valuable insight into ways to improve the effectiveness of peer response, consequently promoting the development of CHL student writing in the HL.

2.   Literature Review

2.1 Peer Response in L2 Writing instruction

Much has been written about the utilization of peer response in L2 writing instruction in general and in ESL education in particular. Both potential benefits and problematic aspects have been demonstrated in the prior studies.

Chaudron (1984) found that the influence of teacher and peer feedback on writing improvement is about the same. Freedman (1985) presented a similar finding that there was no overall difference between improvement based on teacher or peer feedback. Leki (1990) identified problems that emerged in conducting peer evaluation in ESL classroom, centered on the students' inability to identify errors and their tendency to provide peers with only surface-level comments. Allaei & Connor (1990) confirmed students' suspicion on the validity of peer responses and considered cultural difference as a vital factor that significantly affects the implementation of peer response activity. Connor & Asenavage (1994) discovered that only a small portion of revision resulted from peer response. Teacher feedback, compared to other types of feedback including non-teacher feedback, peer feedback and self-feedback, was overwhelmingly preferred by participants (Zhu, 1995).

In response to these unpromising findings, Stanley (1992) questioned the adequacy of preparation and training that students received before participating in peer response activity and emphasized the importance of coaching student writers to be

effective peer evaluators in order to improve the quality of peer reviewing. She found that participants who received coaching demonstrated a greater level of student engagement in the task of evaluation, more productive communication about writing and clearer guidelines for the revision of drafts. The findings of Berger's (1990) study indicated that peer revision had more favorable effects than self-revisions. Caulk (1994) compared teacher and student responses to written work and asserted that each served important and complementary functions in developing writing abilities and suggested each student receive comments from more than two peers. Villamil & Guerrero (1998) examined the impact of peer revision on L2 writing and also concluded that it should be considered as an important complementary source of feedback in the ESL classroom. Nelson & Murphy (1993) concluded that the degree of accepting peer responses was greatly determined by their attitudes towards peer response and the manners in which they interacted with peers.

In addition to the impact of peer response activities at the textual level, other pertinent studies revolve around the impact of communicative and social dimensions on peer response activities (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Hu & Lam, 2010; Lockhart & Ng, 1993; Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger, 1992). Carson & Nelson (1996) investigated Chinese students' perceptions of ESL peer response group interaction and concluded that Chinese students' primary goal for the groups was social—to maintain group harmony—and that this goal affected the nature and types of interaction they allowed in group discussions (p.1). Villamil & Guerrero (1996) categorized seven types of social-cognitive activities the participants engaged in peer response sessions (reading, assessing, dealing with trouble sources, composing, writing comments, copying, and discussing task procedures).

Guided by three theoretical frameworks—process writing theory (e.g. Elbow, 1998), collaborative learning theory (Brufee, 1984) and zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), Liu & Hansen (2002) systematically elaborated on the constraints and benefits of peer response activity, and provided insightful and informative suggestions with regards to successful implementation of the activity.

Notably, besides the benefits at textual and social levels, Liu & Hansen (2002) pointed out that students obtained cognitive benefits from peer response activities as well. According to Liu & Hansen (2002), L2 students could be forced to exercise their thinking, engage in exploratory talk, build critical skills and develop audience awareness in peer response activities in L2 writing.

With the development of technology, computer-assisted peer reviewing has been the focus of much research in ESL (Liu & Sadler, 2003; Neff, 2015; Sukumaran & Dass, 2014; Woo et, al, 2013), and it has been considered a valuable complementary mode to facilitate the development of student writing in L2.

In sum, despite the challenges of effectively and productively executing peer response in ESL, its positive effects have been well-documented in empirical studies and buttressed theoretically.

2.2 HL Writing

Due to prior exposure to the HL, HL learners develop stronger conversational skills than literacy skills (Byon, 2008; Kagan & Dillon, 2009; Kondon-brown, 2010). According to the results of the national HL survey (Carreira & Kagan, 2011), the overwhelming majority of CHL learners rated their writing skill in the range of low to intermediate in sharp contrast to their aural/oral skills, which they ranked intermediate to advanced. HL learners' distinct linguistic profile demands appropriate instruction to facilitate the development of writing competence in the HL.

Schwartz (2003) adopted think-aloud protocols to uncover the strategies that three Spanish heritage learners used when writing a composition in Spanish and found that students tended to concentrate on surface editing and ignore meaningful revisions. Elola & Mikulski (2013) examined Spanish heritage learners' revision behaviors in both English and Spanish and concluded there was cross-linguistic transfer. Jegerski & Ponti (2014) confirmed the effectiveness of peer review among Spanish HL learners, which increased the word count in the students' drafts, strengthened students' self-awareness as bilingual writers, and facilitated

engagement in independent learning of vocabulary. Despite these positive aspects, Jegerski & Ponti (2014) reminded that peer reviewing activities could only serve as a beneficial complement to teachers' feedback rather than a replacement. As emphasized in this study, the interpretations of their research results might not be generalizable among different groups of Spanish heritage speakers. Therefore, it is plausible to question the appropriateness of directly applying these conclusions among CHL learners. This in turn necessitates conducting pertinent research on the utilization of peer response activities in the writing processes of CHL learners.

In terms of HL writing instruction, Rodriguez (2013) demonstrated the possibility of successful integration of meaningful writing activities into the HL curriculum while continuing to focus on the acquisition of formal registers. Martinez (2007) proposed a multidimensional model of transfer to teach HL writing. Colombi (2009) discussed explicit instruction of genre/register theory as a way of promoting students' awareness of discourse-semantics and lexicogrammatical features of academic language in courses for heritage speakers.

Schwartz (2003) has pointed out that research on HL speakers' writing processes and instruction is in its infancy. Although sixteen years have passed, the area of HL writing instruction still remains underdeveloped. Very scant studies have investigated HL learners' writing processes and provided insight into how HL learners compose and revise. Furthermore, HL students' stances on peer feedback activities are neglected in many studies. To gain a thorough understanding of peer feedback in HL learners' writing processes, more studies on students' perceptions of such activities are much needed for obvious reasons - students' attitudes towards peer feedback greatly impact the effectiveness of the activities and the adoption of such feedback, which consequently determines whether or not their writing will be improved. Therefore, the present study concentrates on revealing students' perspectives on peer responses. It is noteworthy to point out that only one study conducted by Jegerski & Ponti (2014) was identified to research on the specific methodology—peer feedback—in HL writing. Additionally, the vast

majority of the aforementioned studies center on Spanish HL learners, indicating a lack of focus on CHL learners. Hence, the current study aims to fill this void.

3.   Method

3.1 Context and Participants

The present study took place at an American private university in the Midwest. Eleven college students, comprised of eight males and three females who were all CHL learners and enrolled in the intermediate Chinese language class in the heritage-track, participated in the study voluntarily. The following chart provides more detailed background information about these participants, which was collected during the individual meetings with participants at the beginning of the fall semester in 2016. The students' proficiency level in writing was evaluated through self-assessment and the writing assignments rated by the researcher. These assignments were simulated to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL), and the researcher is an official AAPPL rater certified by ACTFL. The researcher was also the instructor of this course and had built trust and rapport with participants by the time the study was conducted. Such a positive relationship encouraged the students to candidly share their opinions of peer response activities in CHL classes during the one-on-one meetings with the researcher.

Name (Pseudonym)	Gender	Peer Response Experience (EC=English class; FS=freshman seminar)	Proficiency Level in Writing (IM=Intermediate-mid; IH=Intermediate-high)	Reasons for Taking the Course (LR=language requirement)

Angela	Female	EC in high school	IH	Interests
Chris	Male	FS in college	IM	Minor
Daniel	Male	FS in college	IM	LR
Eric	Male	None	IM	LR
Eva	Female	FS in college	IH	LR
Jennifer	Female	FS in college	IM	Interests and Minor
Joe	Male	FS in college	IM	LR
Kyle	Male	None	IM	LR
Matt	Male	EC in high school	IH	Minor
Sam	Male	FS in college	IM	LR
Tamar	Male	EC in high school	IM	LR

One of the primary objectives of this course was to help CHL learners develop writing competence in Chinese. To achieve this objective, the researcher implemented several measures. One such measure was rewriting some of the chapters to transform the colloquial language into texts in formal registers aimed to model students' writing. This was done because the adopted textbook—*Integrated Chinese Level 2*—was primarily designed for non-HL learners. Supplementary articles about topics closely relevant to CHL learners, such as Chinatown, were added to the course to expand students' vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. These supplemental articles also served to facilitate in-class discussion, which served as the foundation for the subsequent essay writings on the relevant topics. In each semester, students were expected to complete two essays, which were both a minimum of 400 Chinese characters. The two writing projects in the present study, one about students' familial immigration story and another about their identities,

are examples of such essay assignments. These topics were chosen purposefully in order to motivate students to voice their opinions genuinely and to facilitate their elaboration on content in Chinese. Additionally, a process approach was employed in writing instruction in which peer response was one of the critical components.

3.2 Procedure and Principles

Prior to formally organizing peer feedback sessions, two practice sessions, 50 minutes each, were devoted to familiarizing participants with the procedures and expectations of peer feedback. The researcher explained the purpose of peer review to participants so that everyone was on the same page in terms of the objectives. At the beginning of each session, the researcher explicitly stated that time should be evenly distributed among each group member, and each group chose one participant to monitor progress and manage time. In order to promote the productivity of peer feedback activities, many researchers have emphasized the significant role that training students can play to serve this end (Berg, 1999; Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992; Min, 2005; Paulus, 1999; Stanley, 1992; Tang & Tithecott, 1999; Villamil & Guerrero, 1998;). In the practice sessions, the training mainly took two forms: 1) Teacher modeling; and 2) Students practicing feedback. By virtue of teacher modeling, students observed examples of high-quality and valid feedback. In the student practice round, students were encouraged to elaborate on their rationale behind each comment and provide comments as specifically as they could.

Peer feedback was delivered verbally in a mix of English and Chinese. The allowance of linguistic flexibility was intended to minimize communication breakdowns. While the purpose of the class is to develop the students' Chinese fluency, allowing students to use their dominant language improves the perception students have on feedback. ESL research has shown that students participating in peer response groups in their L1 were more confident in their peers' ability to provide effective feedback, believed more firmly in the value of peer response, and were more convinced than peer response groups in their L2 (Huang, 1996). Utilizing the students' L1 and L2, in this case English and Chinese, allows the activity to both meet the linguistic

needs of the students and achieve the outcomes expected from peer response (Liu & Hansen, 2002).

As per the researcher's instructions, the participants focused their peer feedback on global features such as content, holistic structure, and cohesion. This attempted to mitigate the major concern of researchers, practitioners, and students that peers are not able to identify linguistic errors and might provide erroneous feedback. As a result, the instructor dealt with local features such as word choice, the accuracy of the grammar, and the choice of Chinese characters. Zhu (1995) concluded that the emphasis on global concerns of writing and on specific feedback during training helped students provide more effective feedback.

Formal peer feedback sessions also took place twice, each lasting 50 minutes. Participants were randomly divided into three small groups consisting of three or four members. These two sessions employed the same procedures and aforementioned principles. Participants started by reading their first draft aloud to the group members, who initially wrote down their feedback on the peer feedback sheet while listening before verbally communicating their notes to the writer. The peer response sheet was adapted from Zhu & Mitchell (2012), which focused on unity, coherence, details and organization of essays (See Appendix-1). Ferris & Hedgcock (2004) suggested that the written response sheet could be used in order to obtain as much feedback as possible. After the reading, each group conducted discussions to clarify and/or elaborate on their feedback. Peer feedback response sheets were required to be turned in with their first drafts to attach more importance of providing constructive feedback. After receiving teacher feedback, participants revised their writing based on all the responses they had received and then turned in their revised version one week later.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected through diverse methods. Specifically, the following types of data were obtained.

Firstly, anonymous surveys on the students' perceptions of teacher and peer feedback were completed by the eleven participants at the end of the second formal peer feedback session. These surveys provided direct insight into students' perspectives on peer response activities. Students were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed to ten statements about peer feedback and teacher feedback (e.g. I think peer feedback is appropriate). In addition, students were asked six open questions to investigate participants attitudes, suggestions and preferences (See Appendix-2).

Secondly, altogether, forty-four pieces of student writing and peer response sheets were collected. Two writing projects were assigned to participants and each project included two versions—the draft and revised version in response to both peer and teacher feedback. Peer response sheets containing participants' specific suggestions and comments were required to be turned in together with the revised compositions, which allowed analysis of the kind of feedback students received from peers and the extent that peer feedback was incorporated into revision. The analysis of data and relevant discussion primarily focused on the textual level, particularly revisions, to assess the impact of the peer response activities. While an indirect method, it also provided additional insight into students' perceptions of peer response activities. Research results, however, also revealed some cognitive and communicative impacts which will be discussed in the next section.

The peer response sheets, student first drafts and revised version were all coded and compared to examine the feedback participants received from peers and their revisions based on peer feedback. Four categories describe the participants' revision: 1) Acceptance: revision according to peer feedback; 2) Neglect: no revision after receiving peer feedback; 3) Avoidance: revision by simply deleting the text after receiving peer response; and 4) Other: revision according to teacher feedback and/or self-feedback. In the category of acceptance, two

sub-groups of revisions were coded: revision on global features (e.g. structure and organization) and revision on local features (e.g. grammar and words).

Thirdly, after the initial coding and analysis of the collected data, subsequent semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with eleven participants individually to enrich and triangulate the data resulted from the two aforementioned sources. Neutral and open-ended questions such as "How was your experience of participating peer response activities in these two class sessions?" and "What suggestions do you have to encourage the adoption of peer response in your compositions?" were used in the interview in order to increase the reliability of the interviewees' answers and facilitate elaboration. Each interview lasted about half an hour and were all audio-recorded with permission. In total, there were about 5.5-hour audiotapes and 14 pages of transcription.

The interview data was analyzed by adopting qualitative methods. The process of constant comparison led to identification of recurring themes, which can be examined to further understand CHL learners' perceptions of peer feedback and the reasons as to whether or not they incorporated peer feedback in revision.

4.   Findings and Discussions

4.1 Positive Attitudes

The survey results (see Appendix-2) provided a general understanding of participants' attitudes towards peer feedback. It appeared that the vast majority of participants enjoyed sharing their writing with peers and agreed that peer feedback was appropriate, reliable and useful for revision. Six students out of eleven agreed on the statement, "I like sharing my writing with my peers" while four students strongly agreed. Five students out of eleven agreed on the statement, "I think peer feedback is appropriate" while three students strongly agreed.

As revealed in participants' responses to the open-ended questions, they considered peer feedback as interesting, less

judgmental and insightful. Additionally, obtaining diverse perspectives was one of the major benefits that students gained from peer feedback. Prior studies concluded congruent findings. Holliway (2004) claimed that peer feedback helped to train audience awareness, or perspective-taking.

Participants also confirmed these benefits in the in-depth interviews and indicated teacher feedback and peer response are not mutually exclusive. Joe commented, "I thought peer reviews were helpful because I think you can add new perspectives to your article. When you write on your own, you are so focused on specifics, but haven't been read by outsiders." Daniel added:

> It's good to get different points of views [sic].
> Teachers definitely have more experience and have to
> read all these compositions. But, for the students,
> they are not used to seeing all these compositions. So,
> they don't really know the norms, I guess. But it is
> also good to hear their views because different
> feedback has different values. It is also less formal.
> People can feel more relaxed to provide better input.

Furthermore, interviews highlighted the other linguistic beneficial aspects of peer feedback. Many participants expressed that the peer feedback sessions provided them with opportunities to learn and practice the HL. As Angela explicitly shared:

> I liked being able to read my compositions to other
> people, and also hearing other people's compositions
> 'cuz I thought that was really interesting. It was also
> nice to be able to speak and practice talking, and like
> since there were words I had to look up in peers'
> writing. It was a nice form of learning the language.

Participants' reflection on their experience in peer response activities revealed additional motivational benefits. By virtue of reading their peers' compositions, they were more aware of the content of their peers' writing, and therefore were incentivized to

revise even if teachers or peers didn't provide such feedback. As Eric reflected:

> When I read other people's writing, I feel like theirs have so much details, mine is like simple. So, I really like to add more. I feel like others' compositions are better. So, I want to improve mine to kind of like compete with them. And others' compositions are really interesting, I feel mine is kind of like bland.

From Eric's response, it was clear that the comparison between his own writing and his peers' became a motivational factor for revision. The peer response activity also allowed participants to socialize with others in class, helping them establish a sense of belonging. Participants enjoyed sharing their writing and exchanging ideas, especially when the topics resonated with personally meaningful experiences to HL learners, such as familial immigration stories (Writing Assignment One in the present study) as the students share similar backgrounds. They also perceived peer feedback session as a way to build confidence in HL writing, particularly when they received the same positive comments from different peers, ensuring the writer of the authenticity and genuineness of such compliments. As Angela pointed out, "If one person said something, it probably won't carry too much weight. But two or three people said that, I definitely would take it more seriously. Also, it was more affirming that I was good at certain things in writing, and the specificity of their response made it seem more genuine."

In the qualitative analysis of data, several contributing factors that led to students' overall positive attitudes toward the peer feedback activity were identified: 1) Students' prior experience in this activity: Nine participants out of eleven had similar experience in high school and/or freshman seminars at college which afforded them extensive exposure to the activity; 2) Sufficient training: As elaborated in the previous section, students received training for two sessions, which made the activity more productive. This finding is consistent with what has been concluded in existing studies (Min, 2005; Stanley, 1992; Villamil & Guerrero, 1998); 3) Structured peer feedback sheets: students expressed that the guided questions greatly assisted their

focus within the activity. Daniel stated, "Guidelines are necessary, because otherwise you don't know where to start. These questions in our peer feedback sheet, like you will have to fill out a lot of details in the sheet. I used all these questions to help me find places where they can improve on. So, I thought it was very useful."

In the case of receiving critiques, the participants in the present study held fairly positive attitudes without reacting negatively or over-defensively, differing from the findings concluded in the previous studies in L2 writing instruction. Student demographics in L2 classroom are complex, hence, "conflict, or at the very least, high levels of discomfort may occur in multi-cultural collaborative peer response groups" (Allaei & Connor, 1990, p. 24). Such tension that concerned many teachers and researchers didn't occur in the HL class in the present study. A plausible explanation might be that the participants were all CHL learners who shared the same linguistic and cultural background. Consequently, their expectations for peer comments and interpersonal communication didn't vary greatly. This is supported by research which finds that speakers of the same language and cultural backgrounds better understand the nuances and subtleties of each other's messages, allowing for both group harmony and improved writing (Nelson, 1997). On the other hand, all the participants had taken Chinese language courses together for at least two quarters by the time that the present study took place. Close relational ties, such as with close friends or roommates, also existed between some of the participants. Additionally, since the academic year started, the instructor had fostered a supportive and collaborative learning atmosphere within the class. Therefore, trust and rapport had been built between students and the instructor and among students themselves. All the members within the learning community had established mutually-understood ways to interact, which served as a great basis for conducting peer response. Eva reported that people were more open for discussions because of the structure of the course compared to their experience from the previous year. Studies by Lockhart and Ng (1993) and by Mangelsdorf and Schlumberger (1992) found that students who took a collaborative stance in response to peer review activities fared better, achieving a better understanding of the writing

process and higher grades, than did those students with other stances. Due to the same reasons, grouping did not create any challenges or became an issue in the present study; For instance, Jennifer commented, "Since the class is so small and everyone already knows each other very well, it's like grouping doesn't matter."

4.2 Problematic Aspects

Despite the overwhelmingly positive perspective on peer feedback, survey results and individual interviews with participants voiced certain concerns and problematic aspects of peer feedback. As indicated by the survey charts, both of the two statements - "I think peer feedback is useful for my revision and I think peer feedback is appropriate" -- were somewhat disagreed on by one student. One student neither agreed nor disagreed on the statement, "I think peer feedback is reliable".

The concerns expressed in the answers to the open-ended questions in the survey and in the meetings with the researcher revolved around two themes—reliability of peer feedback and peers' knowledge in the HL. Teacher feedback is preferred by some students. For instance, as Chris stressed, "For me, I think peer feedback activity is ok. I don't think it is the most helpful thing. I sort of prefer to have my essays read by the teacher. I just trust the teacher more than I trust other peers." Matt shared similar feelings and also commented that "I feel like our levels of Chinese among students are all relatively similar, so I think, the things they say, yeah, sure, I guess I could revise this, but I don't know how much it will help my writing." The same concern was concluded in the prior studies (Allaei & Connor, 1990) and negatively impacted the adoption of peer feedback in revision in this study. This will be illustrated in detail in the next section. Other problematic aspects closely related to revision such as the timing of and the autonomy of writing assignments will be explicated in the following section as well.

4.3 Revision

An interesting phenomenon arose through the survey results and the analysis of students' revision. Although many (eight out of eleven) participants indicated that they would incorporate feedback in their revision, very few of them (two out of eleven) put that into practice. The following recurring themes that emerged in the interviews explain this striking contrast to an extent: 1) Time constraints: The two peer revision sessions happened during the examination weeks (Mid-term and Final). Hence, students busy with exam preparation chose not to spend too much time on revision. As Matt stated, "The second revision time was like mid-term week. So, I was getting the other mid-term work done. As for the revision, I was more in a process of trying to complete it. So, I didn't take the proper time to revise, just fixed big things, like main ideas."

2) Fading memory: The peer feedback sheet was turned in together with the draft and these two documents weren't returned to them until two days later. Additionally, many of them didn't start revision until the day before the due date. Consequently, their memories of peer feedback became vague at the time of revision, despite the notes on the peer feedback sheet. Kyle recounted, "When I revised, I just forgot what my peers said in class, because it's hard to locate certain points from peer response sheet in such big block of text. And then sometimes I tried to make edits but forgot why they wanted me to revise that way. So, I probably just left it there as it was."

3) The timing of teacher feedback: teacher feedback in this study was returned to participants together with peer feedback. This created a negative impact on peer feedback adoption due to teachers' authoritative, more reliable and knowledgeable role in students' minds. In addition, as indicated by the survey results, item 5 (attitudes toward teacher feedback) received much higher score compared to item 1 (attitudes toward peer feedback) and many students preferred teacher feedback. This was confirmed in the interview data. Many students indicated that they would only focus on teacher feedback when they received both at the same time. Sam elaborated on the reasons for such choice in the interview.

I feel like teacher feedback is more reliable and it's like the professor does know the best advice—how to fix your composition. And I think just coming from students, like I understand their input is helpful as well, but I thought the professor's point probably makes more sense. Probably the more important feedback I would prioritize would be from my professor. I think it is a very common principle that your professor's feedback carries more weight.

This was consistent with the previous research findings (Liu & Hansen, 2002; Saito, 1994; Zhang, 1995).

4) Ownership: Participants were fully aware of maintaining the authorship of their own writing, in part due to the training they received in the practice sessions, during which the researcher emphasized that they should be responsible for their own writing and make justified revisions. The training sessions established expectations for participants to learn to think about and adopt peer feedback critically. Mendonca & Johnson (1994) found that students incorporated peer feedback selectively and made autonomous decisions about revisions in their own texts. Such practice has also been advocated by researchers to raise students' awareness of the authorship of their own writing. Hyland (2000) encouraged teachers to give more autonomy to students by allowing them to make their own decisions about their use and sources of feedback, letting them take more responsibility for their own writing. When Joe was asked about the reasons why he didn't adopt the peer feedback that he received for his first composition, he reported, "Although my peers suggested me [sic] add more about my grandpa's life, I just thought it was pointless. There was nothing new to add. I wanted to focus on my dad, and for my mom to be able to be brought into the story." The interview was about his first composition, discussing his family's immigration story. Joe's reflection clearly emphasized his clear logic and rationale in terms of how to organize his story, and consequently, his ability to provide justified reasons. Nevertheless, in the present study, participants took advantage of the autonomy that many researchers encouraged and many (seven out of eleven) simply chose to neglect peer feedback in revision without justified reasons.

In sum, it cannot be assumed that incorporation of peer response in revision can automatically result from effective peer response sessions and students' favorable attitudes towards the activity. Nelson & Murphy (1993) concluded that when writers interacted with their peers in a cooperative manner, they were more likely to use the peers' suggestions in revising. However, the present study revealed that more complex factors affected the transfer from peer response to revision and peer feedback could have minimal effect on revision. In order to promote the adoption rate, several corresponding pedagogical considerations should be taken into account when implementing the peer feedback activity based on the aforementioned analysis of data: 1) Schedule peer response activity and revision task at an appropriate time in order to avoid time conflicts with students' other important academic commitments; 2) Peer feedback should be received before teachers (Liu & Hansen, 2002). This will avoid forcing students to choose between teacher feedback and peer response. Furthermore, peer feedback sheets should not be turned in until revision based on peer feedback is completed. 3) The post-peer response activities are suggested (Liu & Hansen, 2002). Besides independently deciding whether or not they are going to adopt peer feedback, students should be required to provide justified reasons as well in order to avoid the dilemma in this study.

Differing from the findings of prior studies in ESL and HL writing, which indicated that students tended to only make surface-level revisions (Paulus, 1999; Schwartz, 2003), the present study discovered that the participants who adopted peer feedback made in-depth changes in revision, focusing on the logic rather than surface linguistic errors. For instance, based on the specific peer feedback, Daniel made significant changes to the organization and content of his first composition accordingly—his talk about grandparents' life, e.g. how they immigrated, and re-organize (the first two paragraphs) to make more sense in terms of the path of their immigration. He confirmed that he agreed upon the peer feedback, "It didn't make a lot of sense 'cuz I was jumping around from different family members. It made more sense to start from my grandparents to my mom, to my dad, and restructure everything."

Additionally, parents' assistance was a salient theme in the in-depth interviews as participants constantly alluded to it. Besides the peer feedback, teacher feedback, self-feedback, CHL learners in this study relied on their parents' feedback in the process of preparing and revising their compositions. For instance, Kyle recounted, "I asked my mom to look over my revision. She was like, oh, this doesn't make any sense, get rid of it. And like rephrase this 'cuz she can tell I use google translate. So, she was like, get rid of that, add this. Definitely she helped me with wording and a lot of words that I am not used to." Tamar was also one of those who often called parents for help. He shared, "Sometimes I texted a couple of sentences to my parents for them to read over, like to correct my grammars." In the HL writing, parent feedback functioned as a complementary and valuable source of feedback in the phases of both draft preparation and revision. Unfortunately, relevant research is scant. Although this is not closely related to the foci of the present study, it is worthy of further investigation in the future.

5.   Conclusion

The present study investigated CHL learners' perception of conducting peer feedback activities in their writing processes, enriching the existing understanding of peer feedback in L2 and informing the ways to improve writing instruction for HL learners in general as some conclusions are applicable to other HL populations as well.

Although utilizing peer feedback has been extensively discussed in L2 writing research and instruction, its use in HL writing remains under-explored. Analysis of the data collected in the present study revealed that the great majority of participants held favorable attitudes toward peer feedback, serving as a valuable source of feedback for their revision and development of writing in their HL. Complex and varying factors affect the impact of the activity implementation. The extent of homogeneity of HL learners' linguistic and cultural background played a pivotal role in productively implementing peer feedback activities. Additionally, participants who adopted peer feedback in fact did focus on in-depth revision, differing from previous research findings in L2 research. A plausible

explanation might be that HL students' familiarity with their HL and relatively higher language proficiency facilitate such type of revision. Additionally, as revealed in the interviews, HL students have extra resources—parents—to turn to for help in their writing processes. It might be reasonable to conjecture that parental assistance saves HL students' time on surface-level revisions, allowing them to concentrate on in-depth revision.

Nevertheless, these findings face some limitations. First, the sample size of participants was relatively small. Therefore, findings in this study should be interpreted to a limited extent, and the proposed suggestions are by no means applicable in all situations. Second, peer feedback activity was conducted only in four sessions, a relatively short span of time. Long-term effectiveness of peer feedback on HL learners' writing needs further investigation. In addition to looking into the factors that affect the implementation of peer response activities, it is equally important to explore the ways to ensure the adoption of high-quality peer response in students' revisions, which will further elucidate the influence of peer response on student writing development. Furthermore, parental involvement in feedback calls for more attention and should be included in the scope of discussions about improving HL learners' writing.

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Appendix-1

<div align="center">

Peer Response Sheet

Guiding Questions

</div>

1. What do you like most about the writer's composition?

2. Is there a clear topic sentence (or thesis for an essay)? What is it? Any suggestions?

3. Unity:

Does each sentence in the paragraph clearly relate to the main idea of the paragraph/essay? If not, explain and provide suggestions.

4. Coherence:

Are sentences and paragraphs connected with transition words to make the writing smooth and clear? Where are they needed?

5. Details:

Are the main points supported with enough examples, facts, stories, etc.? If not, where? Provide suggestions.
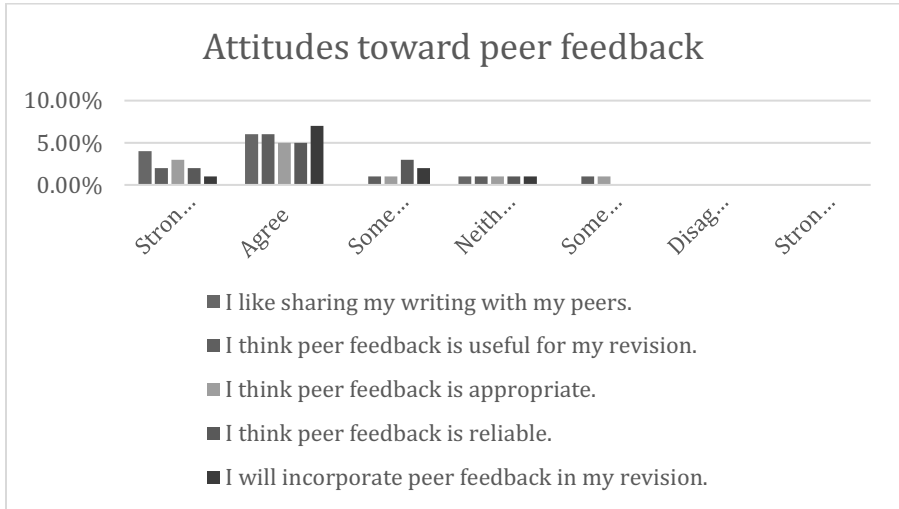
6. Organization:

Do the individual paragraphs have a logical pattern? Are the main points and support in the best order? Is there any material that needs to be arranged to make the ideas clearer? What? How?

<div align="center">

(Adapted from Zhu, W., & Mitchell, D. A., 2012)

</div>

Appendix-2

Q1-Attitudes toward peer feedback

Attitudes toward peer feedback

■ I like sharing my writing with my peers.

■ I think peer feedback is useful for my revision.

■ I think peer feedback is appropriate.

■ I think peer feedback is reliable.

■ I will incorporate peer feedback in my revision.

Q2-What is the aspect you like most about peer feedback?

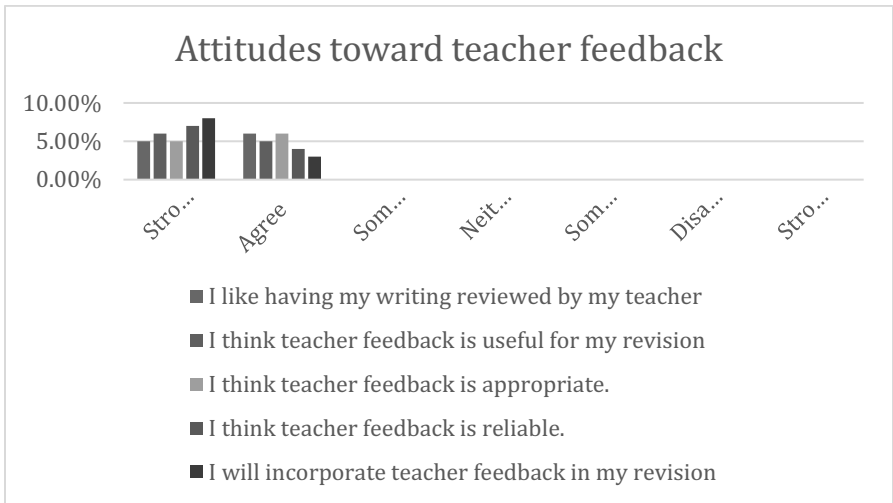| What is the aspect you like most about peer feedback? |
|---|
| I like that you get to hear a lot of different opinions. |
| It is interesting to see what your classmates have to say about your composition. |
| Less judgmental, good insight |
| It provides a new perspective on my papers. |
| It's coming from people who know about the same amount that you do |
| Hearing other people's topics, being able to read my composition |
| Sharing stories and the compositions, finding out about what they wrote |

Q3-What is the aspect you like least about peer feedback?

What is the aspect you like least about peer feedback?
I don't think peer feedback is very reliable because when you only hear someone read their paper once, you don't get a lot of time to analyze or think of suggestions.
Peers may not have expertise like the professor does.
Peers not knowledgeable enough
N/A
Sometimes the feedback is just plain bad, not for this class but other classes
Sometimes not understanding vocabulary
I think the feedback tends not to be that helpful

Q4 - What is your suggestion for peer feedback?

What is your suggestion for peer feedback?
I prefer the group setting as opposed to rotating between many different peers, to review my essay.
It's good when people actually listen and provide good inputs
Even more structured questions

Q5 - Attitudes toward teacher feedback

Q6-What is the aspect you like most about teacher feedback?

What is the aspect you like most about teacher feedback?
They are experts and I can trust them
I like how I have the teacher's suggestions for areas to specifically improve before the final grade is given
Experienced, reliable
It is very reliable.
It's always correct
Good feedback on grammar and content
Its reliable as the gold standard of Chinese

Q7-What is the aspect you like least about teacher feedback?

What is the aspect you like least about teacher feedback?
None
Too quick sometimes, not detailed enough
N/A
It's all good
Maybe it can be boring?

Q8 - What is your suggestion for teacher feedback?

What is your suggestion for teacher feedback?
None
N/A
No suggestion really