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Effects of Scaffolded Peer Review Training on the Quality of Texts Produced by Students of French as a Foreign Language

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Abstract

More studies should be conducted to confirm whether peer review instruction is effective when we compare the text quality before and after peer review training with a control class. The present study aims to measure the impact of scaffolded peer review training on the quality of texts produced by students of French as a foreign language in a Vietnamese university. An experiment of peer review training was carried out during a semester in an experimental class of twenty freshmen under peer-assisted condition (PA), compared to a control class of twenty other freshmen producing texts individually (IND). A systematic peer review training programme was conducted in the PA class with teacher modelling, customized peer review checklists, sheets of advice on how to give and receive feedback and collective correction sessions. Forty after-training drafts from the PA and IND classes and twenty semi-structured interviews from the PA class were collected. Quantitative and qualitative data analyses showed that the PA class made better progress than the IND class in terms of total gain scores, task completion, ideas development, coherence and grammar. Our findings show positive impact of clearly structured peer review training on text quality in FFL context.

1 Introduction

As a pedagogical intervention, peer assistance has been used in all phases of the writing processes: before writing with collaborative prewriting (McDonough, De Vleeschauwer,& Crawford, 2018; Neumann & McDonough, 2014, 2015), during writing with collaborative writing (McDonough et al., 2018; McDonough & García Fuentes, 2015), and after writing with peer review (De Smedt & Van Keer, 2018; Yu & Hu, 2017). Much recent research has investigated the impact of trained peer review on text quality in L1 and L2 writing but most of the studies have been conducted in English-speaking classes (Chang, 2015; De Smedt, Graham,& Van Keer, 2018; Puranik, Patchan, Lemons,& Al Otaiba, 2017; Ruegg, 2014). Very little work has been done in French-speaking countries, except for Canada (Chartrand, 2016; Colognesi & Lucchini, 2018).Furthermore, some peer review studies showing positive effects of peer review training on text quality did not include a control group(Min, 2006; Yang, Badger, & Zhen, 2006). Finally, the majority of peer review studies have used quantitative tools whereas the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is scarce.

The present study attempts to fill this research gap. In this paper, a scaffolded peer review train-

ing is reported in an experimental French-as-a-foreign-language class (FFL) in a Vietnamese university. My peer review training was developed from the social constructivism concept of "*Scaffolding*" and Anderson's proceduralization theory. Collected quantitative and qualitative data were compared between a peer-assisted class and a no peer-assisted class in order to identify the effectiveness of trained peer review on the quality of the texts written by students before and after peer review training.

2 Literature review

A literature review of the published works examining the connection between peer review instructions and text quality has revealed four main aspects: (a) participants, (b) peer review practices, (c) data collection and (d) findings.

Participants in peer review research might be L1 learners (Colognesi & Lucchini, 2018; De Smedt & Van Keer, 2018; Puranik et al., 2017) or L2 students (Chang, 2015; Hu, 2005; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Min, 2008; Ruegg, 2014; Yang et al., 2006; Yu& Hu, 2017). Recent work in L1 tends to investigate the effectiveness of peer interaction on young pupils in America and Europe (Colognesi & Lucchini, 2018; De Smedt& Van Keer, 2018; Puranik et al., 2017) but the majority of peer review studies in L2 have been conducted with university students, many of whom were English language learners. The examination of peer review in French as a foreign language is modest.

Peer review practices vary in previous studies. In terms of duration, they lasted mostly one semester (Min, 2006; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Yu & Hu, 2017). In terms of scaffolding, feedback strategies teaching could take different forms. Some studies were done without peer review training (Carvalho, 2002; Tsui & Ng, 2000), other studies used only checklists or feedback sheets (Rothschild & Klingenberg, 1990) while more recent work focused on strategies modelling or explicit instruction or scaffolding in order to make peer review more feasible (Berg, 1999; Chang, 2015; Colognesi &Lucchini, 2018; De Smedt & Van Keer, 2018; Hu, 2005; Min, 2006; Puranik et al., 2017; Yu & Hu, 2017). Modelling implies that teachers verbalize and demonstrate the desirable behaviours when revising a text in front of the class. For many researchers, training or scaffolding is crucial for the effectiveness of peer review instruction (Chang, 2015; De Smedt & Van Keer, 2018; Hu, 2005; Min, 2006). However, teacher's assistance should be gradually reduced to help students internalize and master their writing strategies (Bouwer, Koster, & Van den Bergh, 2017; De Smedt & Van Keer, 2018; Graham, Harris, & Troia, 2000).

A literature review on previous research shows that essay scores were mostly collected to examine the impacts of peer review on text quality (De Smedt & Van Keer, 2018; Kim, Bowles, Yan, & Chung, 2018; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Min, 2006; Ruegg, 2014; Yang et al., 2006). Nevertheless, qualitative data would reveal useful information about peer review effects. Chang (2015, p.17) in her study on EFL reviewers' audience-aware feedback and affectivity in L2 peer reviewrecommended that "future studies could include reviewer interviews or audience awareness questionnaire for triangulation".

Research examining the correlation between peer review interventions and text quality improvement revealed that peer feedback had positive impact on the quality of texts produced by university students but there was no pre-test/post-test (Berg, 1999; Min, 2006; Yang et al., 2006) or no control class (Min, 2006; Yang et al., 2006). No significant difference was found in terms of total scores in studies at university level implementing pre-test/post-test and a control class and where peer review training was not scaffolded (Kim et al., 2018). Puranik et al. (2017)'s research including a control class showed that kindergarten children under trained peer review condition produced better texts but the compositions were very simple. Colognesi& Lucchini (2018) found that children under scaffolded peer review training made bigger progress in terms of communication intention, organisation, vocabulary, grammar but the control class outperformed in terms of spelling which accounted for 40% of the weight of assessment.

Vietnamese research studies on peer review are few in number. Nguyen Thi Lai (2008) analysed the first draft and the second draft of a paragraph written in English and found that peer feedback helped writers to correct their grammatical and lexical errors but the structure was only slightly

changed. Le Thi Kim Dung (2008) conducted a survey among all 10 English teachers and 200 10th-grade students at Dong Da High School in Hanoi, Vietnam to investigate writing processes instruction. Out of the 10 teachers, 4 always encouraged peer review, 2 often, 2 sometimes, 1 rarely, and 1 never. 80% of the teachers encouraged the students to make several versions of text. 10% of the students found peer feedbacks very effective, 46% fairly effective, 20% effective, 10% not very effective, and 10% ineffective. 80% of teachers reported that they lacked knowledge of writing processes and needed training on this topic (Le, 2008, p.30, 31). Most students said in interviews that they enjoyed group working in peer review (Le, 2008, p. 33).

The preceding review highlights that more evidence is needed to confirm the effectiveness of peer review on the improvement of text quality in a FFL context, especially in Asia where language teachers seem to be interested in writing processes and peer feedback instructions (Tse & Hui, 2016, p. 1028) but students are apparently reluctant to give negative feedback to peers (Nelson & Carson, 1998; Zhang, 1995). The combination of test scores and interviews may give more explanations about quantitative results. Another big gap is the absence of pre-test/post-test and a control class in several studies (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012; Chang, 2015).

In order to fill this knowledge gap, the present study aims to measure the effects of scaffolded peer review training on the text quality of FFL learners. This investigation was guided by the following research question: Did university students who received feedback on their writing from trained pairs produce better texts than those writing individually?

3 Methodology

The present study is an experimental research with mixed method integrating quantitative and qualitative data. An experiment of peer review training based on the social constructivism concept of "*Scaffolding*" and Anderson's proceduralization theory was carried out in a class of twenty freshmen students within a French Department. Twenty after-training text scores of the peer-assisted class were compared to twenty after-training text scores of a no peer-assisted class. Twenty semi-structured interviews were conducted with the peer-assisted class.

The writing course met once a week (each class session lasting 100 minutes) for 12 weeks in a foreign languages university in Hanoi.

3.1 Vietnamese context of peer review instruction

Peer review practice has been used in the Faculty of English Language Teacher Education of Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VNU)for many years. Students are free to form their groups. They review the text of their peer outside of class time and very often in writing first and then orally in class. For each writing subject, the teacher corrects a few texts and student feedbacks. Students have a peer review checklist in the writing textbook. However, peer review instruction had not been introduced in the French Department before the present study.

3.2 Participants

Theexperimental class in peer-assisted condition (PA)consisted of twenty freshmen French-major students and thecontrol class practicing individual writing (IND) was made up of twenty freshmen French-major students too. All of them were 18 years old and their mother tongue is Vietnamese. The two classes were comparable in terms of pre-test results (mean of the pre-test score was 6.06/10 for both classes). The writing course aimed to help students achieve writing proficiency of A2level on the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for languages) and focused on narrative texts. Both classes were taught by the same teacher who was the researcher. The PA class produced 5 compositions with 4 peer review working sessions while the IND class wrote6 compositions (5 of them were on the same topics as those in the PA class) and did grammar exercises. Inter-rater reliability was employed to minimize bias and subjectivity in assessing the text corpus.

3.3 Writing cycle

The writing cycle in use at the French Department is traditional: brainstorming →draft → teacher's written feedbacks→ collective correction session. The writing cycle was longer in the PA class because of peer feedback sessions: brainstorming → first draft → peer's oral and written feedback → final draft → teacher's written feedback on the final draft and on the peer's feedback→ collective correction session. This is quite similar to Paulus's writing cycle (1999) and Chang's (2015) and not as complicated as Min's (2006) or Tsui & Ng's (2000). Having the same class time, PA students produced their drafts (5 texts) at home and discussed with their peers in class, while IND students wrote more texts (6 texts), did grammar exercises and had longer collective correction sessions (cf. Table 1). However, fiveA2 writing tasks were identical for both classes; the sixth one was produced only by the IND class.

A collective correction session took place in both classes when drafts with teacher's written feedback were given to students and lasted around 40 minutes. The teacher provided her feedback on task completion, ideas development, coherence, vocabulary and grammar. She particularly focused on errors due to interferences between Vietnamese and French (for example the difference between *aller* and *venir*, *connaître* and *savoir*...), which even competent students were concerned about. A collective correction sheet (cf. Appendix A) was elaborated for each writing task, listing the most common global and local errors that could not be corrected by the students themselves and errors that could be useful for all writers. Students in both classes discussed and suggested ways to correct these errors. They participated well and revealed later during the last lesson and the interviews they had learnt a lot from these collective correction sessions. There were two differences in the PA class. First, students were asked to stay in peer writing groups so that reviewers could read the teacher's comments about reviewers' work on the first draft of their peers. Secondly, teacher's feedback was provided not only on errors made by writers but also on reviewers' competence. For example, when a reviewer commented to her pair "il ne fait pas froid à Lyon en Juin" – "it is not cold in Lyon in June", she was complimented on her feedback; when a reviewer wrote: "Ce que tu as raconté ne m'intéresse pas" – "what you told did not interest me", she was told not to be so rude.

3.4 Peer review groups

Twenty students in the PA class were divided into ten pairs according to the pre-test results. Three very good students (scoring from 8.5 to 9.5/10 points at pre-test) were paired with three weaker ones (from 2 to 3.5),three good students (from 7.5 to 7.9) with three average ones (from 3.6 to 5)and four quite good students with four quite good ones (from 5.1 to 7.4). All the groups stayed the same during the whole semester. This method was employed because the teacher hoped that more competent students could assist weaker students in improving their writing.

The option for pairs/groups of 2 students is due to two reasons. According to Arnold, Ducate & Kost (2012), Hu (2005) and Paulus (1999), discussions tend to be more intensive in pairs. In addition, Hu (2005, p. 330) suggests that "students in dyads are more comfortable sharing each other's work". De Smedt & Van Keer (2018) and Yarrow & Topping (2001) recommended that future studies should "opt for pair writing" for a more "structured application of peer assistance" (De Smedt & Van Keer, 2018, p. 348).

3.5 Peer review training and practice

The peer review training and practice included three stages based on Anderson's proceduralization theory (Anderson, 1983). The first stage involved conceptualization of the peer review process (4 class sessions) followed by practice of peer review with declarative knowledge (6 class sessions) and then proceduralization, i.e., the automation of peer review process without declarative knowledge (2 class sessions). The conceptualization stage was the key to success of the training

because this learning method was totally unfamiliar to all students. It was divided into 3 steps: problem-situation (writing task) solving, explaining of procedures used by students during their peer review session, and peer review processes demonstration on a student draft (compositions 1, 2, 3). The students were assigned to write the first composition, then to work in pairs and revise their pair's draft. Then they were asked to explain orally to the class the procedures they had employed in their peer review processes (the types of errors they had focused on, the quantity of rereading they had made and their reading strategies ...). Good writers said they reread their text 3-5 times and focused on both linguistic and textual levels while weak writers reviewed their composition once or twice and mostly paid attention to linguistic aspect. Finally, the teacher demonstrated recommended peer review processes (Table 2) on an anonymous draft (not from the PA class) using a projector. She modelled how to make detections, diagnoses and corrections and typed the feedback directly on the electronic draft. Feedback was given on the textual aspect and then the linguistic aspect. Linguistic errors were underlined and textual errors were highlighted (put in a frame in the handwritten draft). Like Hu (2005), modelling was demonstrated on a full text and not on an extract to better analyse the task completion, the structure and the coherence. The technique of teacher modelling was also successfully employed by Chang (2015) and Min (2006, 2008). In the present study, the teacher wanted the students to experience the peer review before her modelling, so with her help, they could conceptualize the collaborative revision processes from their practices and better understand how to do peer review in an efficient way.

Table 2. Peer Review Processes (Adapted from Butterfield, Hacker, & Albertson, 1996).

Revision process	Revision tasks
1. Error detection	The reviewer checks the length of the text, looks at the overall structure of the text, checks the suitability of the text for the task completion. The reviewer assesses the author's ability to communicate (ability to tell and describe, ability to create effects on the reader) and the coherence of the text. The reviewer provides a summary of his feedback on textuality. The reviewer checks the quality of the language (syntax, vocabulary, and spelling) of the text. The reviewer summarizes his feedback on the language.
2. Error diagnostic	Both peers discuss to diagnose detected errors. Sources of help can be dictionary, teacher or friends.
3. Error correction	Both peers discuss to correct detected errors. Sources of help can be dictionary, teacher or friends. The writer completes corrections to the text.

In the second stage, students practiced peer review processes during 6 class sessions. The teacher demonstrated to them peer review processes on two more students' drafts (compositions 2 and 3). A peer review working session lasted around 40 minutes. Pairs read the draft, detected and diagnosed errors, discussed with the writers for correction, and then wrote their feedback on the draft. During peer review practice, the teacher asked reviewers to detect and analyse errors made by writers, but she asked writers to correct these errors. Students provided their pairs with feedback 4 times (compositions 1-4) in the second stage of proceduralization.

In the last stage of proceduralization, students practiced peer review on the fifth composition without declarative knowledge (no demonstration session and no checklist). The teacher wanted to verify if the students achieved the automation of the peer review processes.

3.6 Peer review tools

Peer review tools consisted of sheets of advice on how to give and receive feedback and customized peer review checklists.

- *Sheets of advice on how to give and receive feedback*

Two sheets of advice on how to give feedback and on how to receive feedback were provided. They were adapted from Lundstrom's sheets (Lundstrom, 2006; Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). They aimed to give students strategies for successful interactions with the pairs. For example: "Focus on the structure and the meaning of the text, not only on grammar, spelling or punctuation"; "Be specific – don't just say "it is good". Tell the writer what is good!"; "Ask questions if there is something you do not understand". In these sheets, examples of good and bad feedback as well as examples of good and bad reactions to feedback were also included (cf. Table 3).

Table 3. Examples of bad and good reactions to Feedback.

Bad reactions to feedback	Good reactions to feedback
You are stupid.	I respect your opinions.
I don't want to work with you.	What I mean is...
You are not able to give me feedback.	Tell me how I can improve this.
	Your feedback was very helpful. Thank you.

The teacher asked students to give compliments before moving on to criticism. The purpose was to give constructive feedback in a way that did not discourage their pairs and to specify what was wrong in the text.

- *Customized peer review checklists*

A peer review checklist was elaborated by the students and the teacher for each composition (cf. Appendix B). The checklist was divided into 2 parts: questions on textuality (between six and nine questions) and questions on language (three questions). The first dealt with five aspects: the writing situation (i.e., who writes, to whom, when, where?), the type of text (i.e., the forms of a familiar letter and an unfamiliar letter), the relevance and richness of ideas, the structure and the coherence. The second ones were about syntax, vocabulary and spelling. While the questions on language were the same in all checklists, the questions on textuality varied according to writing instructions.

It should be noted that textuality questions accounted for two-thirds, or three-quarters of the peer review questions. The teacher encouraged students to first review ideas before moving to local correction. It was a deliberate choice to put the ideas of a text in the foreground. Indeed, first year students, before arriving at the university, learned mostly grammatical and lexical knowledge at high school. Very few of them had learned to prepare a drafting plan, structure their ideas, write an adequate text to the instructions, or create impacts on the readers ... In addition, we know that in the exolingual communication, the speakers favor the richness of exchanges and they are more tolerant at the language aspect.

3.7 Data collection and analysis

The two classes were comparable in terms of pre-test results where all students wrote texts individually. To investigate if students who received feedback on their writing from trained pairs produced better texts than those writing individually,40 drafts of the 4thcomposition (written after peer review training) of PA and IND classes were collected. The 5th text was not used because two students of the IND class were absent. In the PA class, students wrote the first draft, and then they worked in pairs to revise the text of their pair. They mutually gave oral then written feedback, in Vietnamese and in French. Then, the writers rewrote their texts. Only the final drafts were rated. In the IND class, students worked individually to produce their composition. The second type of data was 20 post-experiment semi-structured interviews which were carried out in Vietnamese with the PA class.

3.7.1 Text corpus

The pre-test and the 4th composition employed an A2 writing topic (a 45-minute-timed narrative text). It was similar to the writing tasks given to students during the course. The assessment tool

used was the CEFR analytic evaluation grid for A2 level. The texts were each double-rated by two raters using five rating criteria: task completion, ideas development, coherence, vocabulary and grammar (cf. Table 4). The final score is the average of both raters. Inter-rater reliability was calculated resulting in a strong agreement between raters: Cronbach's alpha in SPSS version 20= 0.89 for the pretest and = 0.91 for the 4th composition. The reliability of the rating scale was also measured: Cronbach's alpha in SPSS version 20 = 0.86 for the pretest and = 0.81 for the 4th composition, showing a high level of internal consistency of the five rating criteria.

Table 4. Rating Scale

	Rating criteria	Score
Textual level/ 5.5 points	Task completion	0.5 point
	Ideas development	4 points
	Coherence	1 point
Linguistic level/ 4.5 points	Vocabulary	2 points
	Grammar	2.5 points
Total		10 points

3.7.2 Semi-structured interviews

For the semi-structured interviews, a guideline of ten questions was prepared before collecting data (cf. Appendix C).

Interviews with all students in the PA class aimed to measure the self-assessments of their progress in terms of revision competence and text quality, and their evaluations of the experimental design. Only information about the impact on text quality has been used in this paper. The interviews were conducted in Vietnamese, one week after the end of the writing course. Before the interviews, the students learned that the objective was for the teacher to collect their honest assessment on this new mode of learning.

The pattern of questions was not strictly followed. The students were encouraged to express themselves freely. The questions were asked based on the answers given by the students. For this reason, the 20 interviews ranged from 15 minutes to 30 minutes. The atmosphere of the interviews was casual. As they had worked together for a semester, the students trusted the teacher and spoke to her easily.

3.7.3 Data analysis

- Quantitative data

A Shapiro-wilk test in SPSS version 20 showed that the text scores did not meet the assumptions for parametric statistics. A Mann-Whitney U test in SPSS version 20 was conducted for all aspects of the rating scale. The p-value chosen for this study was 0.05.

- Qualitative data

A content analysis was carried out for 20 interviews which were transcribed. Themes that were preconceived in the interview guideline (cf. Appendix C) were coded. Things that were repeated in several places, things that were surprising or things that were expressed with emotion by students were highlighted. Finally, codes were combined, and five categories were created: overall progress; task completion; ideas development; coherence; and linguistic level. I tried to find connections between those themes and peer review training. Information obtained from interviews was used to discuss quantitative data results.

4 Results

4.1 4th composition scores

Table 5 provides test results for the 4th composition scores of PA and IND classes.

Table 5. Mann-Whitney U Test Results for the 4th composition scores

Measures	PA class		IND class		U	P
	N	Median	N	Median		
Total score	20	8.25	20	7.75	110.50	.015*
Task completion	20	0.5	20	0.5	147.50	.032*
Ideas development	20	3.5	20	3.0	106.50	.011*
Coherence	20	1.0	20	0.75	130.00	.034*
Vocabulary	20	1.375	20	1.500	183.50	.629
Grammar	20	2.00	20	1.75	113.00	.014*

* $p < 0.05$

The results showed that in terms of total scores, the PA class (Mdn=8.25) outperformed the IND class (Mdn = 7.75), U = 110.50, p = 0.015* (p<0.05). The difference is statistically significant.PA students made better progress than IND students in terms of task completion, Mdn (PA) = 0.5, Mdn (IND) = 0.5, U = 147.50, p = 0.032* (p < 0.05); in terms of ideas development, Mdn (PA) = 3.5, Mdn (IND) = 3.0, U = 106.50, p = 0.011* (p < 0.05); in terms of coherence, Mdn (PA) = 1.0, Mdn (IND) = 0.75, U = 130.00, p = 0.034* (p<0.05); and in terms of grammar, Mdn (PA) = 2.00,Mdn (IND) = 1.75, U = 113.00, p = 0.014* (p < 0.05). For vocabulary, the difference between the two classes was not found to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

4.2 Semi-structured interviews

- Overall progress

In the semi-structured interviews, the majority of students in the PA class reported that they produced better text after peer review training and they were motivated by the peer review practice. A medium student said she obtained a better control of her writing thanks to the peer review practice: “now when I write, I always verify if I have mistakes that need correction” (X3M). Another student found peer review training very useful because “my peer detected mistakes that I was not able to find”and “she explained to me my mistakes, so I understood why it was incorrect” (X2M). Many students reported that they used their peers’ comments when they rewrote their texts: “I usually integrated my peer’s feedback in my second draft. But sometimes, I did not agree with her comments, so I did not change” (H1QG2). Furthermore, they indicated that they appreciated the opportunities of interaction with other students (De Smedt, Graham & Van Keer, 2018; Kim et al., 2018) which helped them improve team working skills, a very important professional competence.

- Task completion

Several PA students spoke of progress in terms of task completion. They carefully read the writing instruction and peer’s comments and tried to adjust their text.Z1W said: “My peer always gave feedback on my task completion, for example, “you followed the writing instruction, well done”, or “you should begin your letter by asking how your parents were”. Other reported they added ideas about study in their second draft because their peers commented: “you did not talk about your study” or “you should talk about your university” (Z2W and Z3W).

- Ideas development

Many students reported in the interviews that they enjoyed reading texts and discovering interesting ideas and expressions in their peers' texts. However, depending on the level of the students, the degree of appropriation of this new knowledge was not the same. The weak ones were contented to learn the “way of writing” from their peers. Medium and quite good students confessed that they “took” their peer’s ideas and vocabulary from time to time: “I sometimes stole my peer’s ideas” (H4QG1). Feedback from peers helps writers to improve their ideas. A good student said, “my peer told me that my ideas were interesting or clear, or what I needed to add to my composition” (X3G). Another student confessed, “When she revised my text, I learnt how she interpreted it... Sometimes she did not understand my ideas in the same way, so I tried to improve these sentences” (X1G)

- Coherence

Better coherence was cited by most PA students as a great effect of peer review training, from very good students to medium ones. Only weak students did not talk about it. A very good student organised the structure of his text better by revising the text of his peer. Several students started making plans from the third text written in this course. Two students explained to me, "I needed to make a plan because otherwise, my peer would say that my texts were not coherent".

- Linguistic level

PA students self-assessed in the interviews that their grammar and spelling were enhanced. Some very good students said they became more interested in verb structures to better correct their pairs' and they discovered new linguistic knowledge from their pairs. "My peer often used new structures in dictionary, so I learnt new words and structures from her" (Z3VG). Some students reported that they made fewer mistakes thanks to their peers who were better at syntax or spelling. "After several texts, I write more easily because I know my pair will correct me. Before, we were writing to the teacher immediately, so I was scared. I did not put what I was not sure about. But now I can write more and more easily" (H3QG1). "For me, ideas and coherence are more important than syntax or spelling. My peer made fewer spelling mistakes than me. For the last text, I tried to write a text without spelling mistakes, but she did find a few (laugh)" (X2G). Almost all students said they learnt a lot about vocabulary during collective correction sessions with the teacher.

5 Discussion

There is consensus among researchers that trained peer review leads to better text quality. However, peer review research implementing a control class in FFL context in university is sparse. The goal of this study was to examine the impact of scaffolded peer review training on text quality. The research question of the present study was to determine whether students who received feedback on their writing from trained peers wrote better texts than those writing individually.The composition results were supported by data from the semi-structured interviews.Quantitative data showed that PA class outperformed IND class in terms of total gains scores, task completion, ideas development, coherence and grammar. These findings were substantiated by PA students' interviews.

5.1 Total scores

According to the texts results, the PA class made better progress than the IND in terms of total gain scores. This finding shows that a scaffolded peer review training practiced over a semester was beneficial for the improvement of text quality.

This result corroborated research pointing out the effectiveness of peer review training on text quality (Berg, 1999; Min, 2006; Puranik et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2006). However, it is not in line with a few studies that have investigated impacts of peer review training on text quality by comparing peer feedback condition and no peer feedback condition (De Smedt & Van Keer, 2018; Kim et al., 2018), as well as research on revision instructions contrasting revision instruction condition and no revision instruction condition (Fitzgerald & Markham, 1987; Wallace,Hayes, Hatch, Miller, Moser& Silk, 1996). De Smedt & Van Keer(2018) and Kim et al.(2018) explained that the lack of a better writing quality was due to the peer review training not clearly structured in their studies.

Some explanations of the present study's success may be related to the application of peer review clearly scaffolded with three sessions of peer review processes demonstrations, peer review checklists elaborated for each composition, peer review groups fixed during the semester, the writing task being not too complex to free up working memory space and the engagement of the PA students with paired writing. Dale(1994) and De Smedt & Van Keer(2018)indicated "four important prerequisites of peer assistance in order to be effective" (De Smedt & Van Keer, 2018, p. 347): engagement of group members, mutual trust, a certain level of cognitive conflict and finally, structured collaboration."

5.2 Textual level

The results highlighted that the PA class outperformed the IND class in terms of task completion, ideas development, coherence and grammar.These benefits can be explained by the setting of the peer review procedures which gave a great importance to the globallevel in the peer review checklists(cf. Appendix B)and in the demonstration sessions of revision processes.

These findings confirm the results of Colognesi & Lucchini (2018), Kim et al. (2018), Lundstrom & Baker (2009), Moore & MacArthur (2012), and Min (2006) who argued that peer's feedback-allowed students to improve ideas development and coherence. Several studies that have investigated revision (Arnold et al., 2012; Belcher, 1989; Berg, 1999; Chang, 2015; Paulus, 1999; Yang et al., 2006) have also found that students made more global-level changes than local-level changes when revising texts.

5.3 Linguistic level

Quantitative data showed significant difference in terms of grammar gain scores between PA and IND classes. It was found that reviewers were able to correct many of their peer's grammatical mistakes but a lot of lexical errors, especially those resulting from interferences between French and Vietnamese remained undetected.

This finding is consistent with some qualitative work. In Yu & Hu's case study (2017), when revising peer's text, one student paid attention to grammatical errors while the other concentrated on vocabulary use and content development. However, several studies on trained peer response found that peer's feedback focused more on ideas and structure than local aspects (Chang, 2015; Kim et al., 2018; Min, 2006; Paulus, 1999; Yang et al., 2006).The result of this study may be related to the collective correction sessions where difficult semantic and linguistic mistakes made by writers were listed and corrected by the whole class.

6 Conclusion

This study examines the impact of scaffolded peer review training on the quality of texts written by FFL learners. Quantitative and qualitative data analyses showed that the PA class made better progress than the IND class in terms of total gain scores, task completion, ideas development, coherence and grammar. It is very likely that these benefits resulted from the peer review procedures (peer review checklists, collective correction sessions, and demonstration sessions of collaborative revision processes) which focused both on textual and linguistic issues.

The present study might be the first research in FFL context to confirm the effectiveness of trained peer review on text quality. It adds to the literature by providing a scaffolded peer review research design with a control class and by combining quantitative and qualitative data. In addition, compared to other peer review training protocols, this investigation has attempted to produce new knowledge with the maintaining of peer review groups during all the writing course, and a great deal of scaffolding, i.e., the conceptualization of revision processes which required a lot of students' involvement.

In light of findings from this study, some pedagogical implications can be suggested. First, the finding of insignificant difference in terms of vocabulary between the PA and the IND classes implies that more lexical exercises focusing on interferences between French and Vietnamese need to be given to students. In addition, a scaffolded peer review training is the key to success for this instructional technique (Kim et al., 2018; Min, 2006). Finally, to maintain impact of peer review on text quality, it is indispensable that FFL teachers should be trained to give peer review instruction, be willing to introduce this new way of teaching writing in their classes and to make it a long-lasting writing practice for the whole academic writing curriculum.

One limitation of this paper is that the corpus size is relatively small. Hence, we recommend that additional work should be undertaken with structured triad groups in which each student, in turn, will be the Reader, Observer and Writer (Jacko, 1978). Jacko (1978, p. 290) claims that the triad is

the most effective in securing students' engagement,and a higher degree of collaboration would lead to better progress in writing competence (Neumann & McDonough, 2015;Watanabe & Swain, 2007). Furthermore, future studies should identify errors that were not detected by reviewers and find solutions to help them improve their writing ability.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Collective correction sheet for text 3 (extract)

Task completion:
Some writers were off topic (they did not really answer to Mr. Tonton's letter, they did not write as a Spanish woman ...).

Ideas:
For reviewers:
You made great feedback about the ideas of your peer's text. Bravo!
For writers:
- Most of you have made very good texts with interesting and original ideas (marriage in Marseille, French grandparents, husband's mission ...).
- Some have not been able to make a proposal.

Coherence:
- Some texts still show incoherences. Let's try to improve the following sentences:
*[i]Marseille est au bord de la mer. J'adore la mer et votre appartement a 3 chambres. Il convient à ma famille.

Vocabulary errors:
Echanger (v.) and changer (v.) do not have the same meaning.
Vacances (f) is a plural noun.
*Nous avons besoin d'avoir des consensus. Alors, nous avons rendez-vous? Ecrivez!

Grammar errors:
* visiter ma famille
* Avant de nous échanger nos maisons, je vous propose de se rencontrer.

Appendix B: Peer review checklist for text 4

Writing topic:
You have started your studies in a city far from your parents. Write to them to tell about your new life (studies, friends, travels, climates, difficulties ...).
To help you to review your pair's text, answer the following questions:
1. Did your pair write to his parents?
2. Did he/ she follow the form of a familiar letter (city and date, salutation, closing, signature)?
3. Did he/ she tell them about his/ her new student life (studies, friends, travels, climates, difficulties...)?
4. Are his/ her ideas rich and interesting? Is there inappropriate information in his/ her text?
5. Did he/ she make paragraphs in his/ her text?
6. Is his/ her text clear and coherent?
7. Did he/ she make grammar mistakes? (pay particular attention to the conjugation of verbs, verb structures, prepositions and adverbs of time and place ...)
8. Did he/ she use inappropriate words? Is his/ her vocabulary rich and varied?
9. Did he/ she make spelling mistakes?

Appendix C: Guideline for semi-structured interviews

1. Do you think the peer review allowed you to write better in French?
2. Was your partner's feedback useful?
3. Did you take into account your peer feedback when you wrote your final draft? If not why?
4. What did you learn when revising your peer's texts?
5. Were the peer review checklists useful? Without them, would you have difficulty in practicing peer review?
6. Can the peer review checklists be taken away after four peer review sessions?
7. What do you think of the three peer review demonstration sessions at the beginning of the course? Were they sufficient or do you need more support?
8. Between pairs, do you speak easily? Did your pair discourage you?
9. Do you want to write your text in class or outside the classroom?
10. What were your difficulties during this peer review experiment?

(The symbol * means the sentences or expressions that follows are not correct.)