個別論文

How the Implementation of Peer-editing Checklists Impacts the Peer Revision Process in EFL Writing Classes

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要約

本研究では，大学の EFL ライティング授業にてチェックリストの効果がいかに生徒に影響を及ぼすのかを判断したものである。2 つのクラスからなる計 58 人のアドバンスライティング授業の生徒を対象に調査した。授業では幅広いチェックリストの中から有効活用し，生徒同士による文章の校訂を行わせた。コースの終わりに授業について 2 種類のアンケートを取った。結果，チェックリストを活用する事によりいくつか限界はあるが，生徒の自信とコニュニケーション能力とライティング能力を向上させた。

Abstract

This study aims to assess the efficacy of implementing checklists as a peer-editing tool within a university-level EFL writing program. Fifty-eight first-year students in two advanced-level academic writing classes participated in the study. Students used peer-review checklists, on which were delineated a comprehensive range of surface to global focus areas, as a means for proceeding systematically through the process of editing other students' essays, and as a medium for providing corrections, suggestions, and other commentary for the student writer. At the end of the year-long course, students completed both a ranking survey and a short-answer questionnaire whereby they assessed the value of using the checklists and of participating in the peer review process. The conclusion is that peer-editing checklists, though not without their limitations, do have affective, communicative, and linguistic benefits for L2 learners in their dual roles as writers and editors.

Keywords : EFL, peer review, peer-editing checklists, academic writing

Introduction

Many EFL writing teachers who incorporate peer review into their writing pedagogy recognize that it involves a skill set students need help to learn and develop. This study investigates the

extent to which peer-editing checklists can facilitate the acquisition of skills needed in the peer review process. Such an investigation encompasses three bodies of research: (1) the rationale for adopting peer review into a writing program, (2) the need for a method to instruct or train L2 students in the peer review process, and (3) how a scaffolding tool such as a checklist might be utilized to prioritize focus and highlight target areas for review.

To begin with, multiple studies have demonstrated how peer review helps students develop a wide range of skills in the target language, as peer review creates the conditions for authentic, purposeful interaction. Rivers (1987), in outlining the importance of classroom interaction to develop communicative skills, notes that "students achieve facility in *using* a language when their attention is focused on conveying and receiving authentic messages" (p.4). A study by Mendonça and Johnson (1994) found that students engage in a wide spectrum of authentic communicative exchange during the peer review process, such as asking questions, giving suggestions, restating, and explaining; in their study, this purposeful interaction resulted in students providing feedback their peers deemed valuable and selectively incorporated into their revisions. Lockhart and Ng (1995) found that among the interactive stances students take in the review process, probing and collaboration provided a means through which students clarified and expanded the meaning of what they had written, and these types of interaction helped students gain a better understanding of the writing process as a whole. Mittan (1989) notes that peer review serves to give student writers an authentic audience, feedback from different perspectives, and confidence through realizing their peers face similar writing challenges. In addition, in assuming the role of editors, student writers develop critical skills they can then apply to their own writing (Mittan, 1989; Rollinson, 2005). Gillam (1990) sees the development of these critical skills as the progressive acquisition of a metalanguage, by which students become better able to consider the linguistic components of others', and by extension, their own writing. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) note the importance of a raised awareness among student editors as they identify weaknesses in others' writing that are similar to their own. This heightened awareness is crucial to the improvement of writing skills.

However, researchers have also noted some concerns about adopting peer review into a writing pedagogy. The first salient objection relates to the perception among L2 learners that their peers are unable to assume the role of productive editors. Rollinson (2005) cautions that students may feel their teachers are the only ones who have the necessary qualifications to check their writing, and that students may need to be persuaded to see the benefits of peer feedback. Ferris (2002) points out that some students may not value feedback given by someone who is not a native speaker of the target language. Zhang (1995) found that the students in his study overwhelmingly preferred teacher feedback to peer feedback. A second major objection questions how much of the feedback given by peers is seen as useful and actually used by the writers when they approach revisions. Nelson and Murphy (1993) note that due to a lack of trust in their peers' ability to provide useful feedback, students opt not to use the feedback in their revisions. Topping (1998) suggests that students may see negative feedback as invalid and refuse to incorporate it into revisions.

Students in a study by Nelson and Carson (1998) indicated they used teacher feedback to a much greater degree than that provided by peers.

At the same time, there is evidence to suggest that students do, in fact, value peer feedback and use it in their revisions. Jacobs, Curtis, Braine, and Huang (1998) found that students welcomed peer feedback alongside, but not as a substitution for, teacher feedback. Rollinson (2005), Caulk (1994), and Mendonça and Johnson (1994) provide evidence that student editors are able to give useful feedback to their peers, and that student writers do incorporate at least a percentage of their peers' comments into their revisions. From an affective standpoint, Saito and Fujita (2004) found that students valued peer feedback along with teacher feedback, and viewed peer feedback positively.

Many studies have stressed the importance of providing students with training to become effective peer reviewers. Without proper instruction or coaching, students are likely to limit their revision to surface errors and neglect errors having to do with meaning (Leki, 1990; Stanley, 1992). Leki terms this the difference between peer editing (focus on surface only) and peer responding (focus on meaning), and writes, "students need to be made aware that an initial focus on editorial concerns is probably misplaced and may inhibit the perception of ideas" (1990, p.10). With this shift in focus, though, the student editor now has a greater burden. She cannot rely only on indicating grammar or spelling mistakes but must formulate substantive comments for the author. Stanley (1992), Leki (1990), and Nelson and Murphy (1992) point out how easy it is for the untrained student in this role to give inadequate and inappropriate feedback that may confuse and ultimately discourage the writer. Recognizing this issue as a primary concern in the peer revision process, researchers have devised various methods for training students to become more adept at peer responding. Berg (1999) found that students, when adequately trained in the process, were able to produce revisions that showed improvements in the quality of writing. Min (2005) found that by coaching student editors and giving them a concrete framework for the process of review, they were able to provide more comments, and ones that contained markedly more constructive feedback. Lam (2010) designed a three-stage workshop on peer review training that helped "equip students with the basic revising skills needed for conducting successful peer review activities," (Lam, p.121), though he qualified the results somewhat by stating that the ultimate success depended on students' believing in the value of the feedback received.

The method of employing a scaffolding tool in the peer revision process has been used for some time. Raimes (1983) stressed the importance of giving students specific instructions on what they should consider when reviewing each other's writing. She suggested using checklists as a way of providing this kind of clear instruction, to let students know exactly where they should focus their attention. These checklists can be created and adapted to suit the particular writing task and focal points for editing. Lam (2010) provided guidance sheets that directed peer reviewers to consider specific syntactical and global issues present in the essays they were reviewing. He stressed the need for "scoring guides" to help students prioritize and target aspects of the essay to

be marked and the respective comments to be given (Lam, p. 122). Soares (2007) explains how checklists can be used to train students in the peer review process, and how checklists fit into a peer review procedure that stresses non-judgmental, supportive commentary. Finally, the malleability of checklists, the way they can be adapted to target any objective of a writing task, is another feature of their utility. Sterzik and Scott-Murray (2009) show how to divide checklists into surface and meaning areas, and outline the benefits of using both kinds.

Both Raimes (as cited in Jacobs et al., 1998) and Soares (2007) see the teacher as providing crucial assistance while students are engaged in their peer review tasks. When the teacher is circulating around the classroom, she can address any questions the peer reviewers have; checklists facilitate this process by enabling students to easily locate areas of irresolvable concern, such as where the reviewers couldn't reach agreement on the point to be revised. In this way, checklists serve as a systematic, written record of where issues were located and how they were finally resolved. Bartels (2003), in noting the various benefits of written peer response, makes the point that written, as opposed to oral, commentary "provides students with reference materials on their own writing" (p.36) and serves as an evolving record of changes made. Therefore, the checklists, in addition to helping students focus on the review process, can also serve as documents that highlight exactly where editors could treat errors without teacher intervention, where editors needed teacher intervention to treat errors, and where errors could not be treated even with the teacher's help, indicating places where the syntax or discourse needs significant rewriting to be comprehensible. Such a thorough and systematic document can be used by writers in their revisions, as well as teachers in designing future lessons that target the most salient issues.

A Framework for Designing Checklists

Ferris (1999) introduced the terms "treatable" and "untreatable" to denote the difference between the types of surface errors made by students, and the likelihood of a student being able to make use of corrective feedback to self-correct these errors. A treatable error is a grammar point governed by a clear set of rules, and thus one that students could learn to correct by consulting a grammar book or through instruction; examples include verb form, article usage, and sentence fragments. An untreatable error involves more advanced knowledge of the language and is thus harder to correct; examples include word choice and sentence construction (Ferris, 1999, p.6). Lam (2010) details how he adopted the terms treatable and non-treatable for the purposes of prioritizing target areas from an editing standpoint. The rationale is that the focus in a peer-editing session should proceed from the most treatable to least treatable issues, thus easing the peer editor into the process of editing and increasing her chances of providing productive feedback from the outset, with constructive contributions possibly diminishing as the more untreatable errors are later addressed.

Taking these cues from Ferris and Lam, I designed checklists with the notion of treatable and

non-treatable errors in mind. As with Lam, I made use of these classifications for the purpose of shaping a procedure for student editors to follow, and likewise expanded the meanings of these terms to include global as well as surface errors. In this expanded context, an error denotes any aspect of a written piece that requires further attention. In designing checklists, I also found it helpful to consider treatable and non-treatable errors as spread across a spectrum. Errors, then, range from highly treatable to highly untreatable. There will be instances where the editors have no idea how to correct the error (highly untreatable), but there will also be times when editors can identify possibly-treatable errors that they can at least attempt to revise, and this is another instance where the teacher may insert herself directly into the ongoing process. In cases where the editors have a vague idea of how to correct the error but are not completely sure, the teacher can lend assistance to clarify the issue at hand.

As the classes for which my checklists were designed were advanced-level classes that spanned an entire school year, the checklists eventually became quite involved. The checklists included the points studied in class, and by the second semester, there were many. As my students were already at an advanced stage of linguistic proficiency, the checklists sought to match the long list of skills they had already developed. However, checklists can be designed for any level of writing. They are utterly flexible and can include as many or as few points as the teacher deems appropriate to the level of the students. Checklists can and should be tailor-made to match the level of each specific class, the overall objectives of the writing program, and the specifics pertinent to each type of essay students are asked to write. A checklist for a beginning-level class, for instance, may focus only on more treatable surface errors such as capitalization, punctuation, and syntactical issues like subject-verb agreement, as well as basic structural and organizational concerns. A checklist can also serve to call attention to any specific writing tendencies the teacher is trying to have students avoid, like starting a sentence with a conjunction, or using *etc.* in place of giving actual examples. It may be enough, for the first submission in a beginning-level writing class, just to have the checklists target formatting issues like a correct heading, title placement, margins, and font size. Basically, any point an editor might have a chance of addressing, which could then become feedback the writer might benefit from receiving, can contribute to the effectiveness of a checklist. Once a teacher considers all the elements that go into the correction of a piece of writing, it is easy to see how a checklist can get quite long rather quickly.

The checklists were designed as a procedural tool, and thus served to train students in the order and method they should follow when editing each others' essays. Among the many considerations was the goal of creating as objective a checklist as possible, to reduce the fears an editor might have of offending the writer, and likewise to reduce the chances that the writer would be upset by the feedback. An equally significant consideration was ordering the checklists in a way that would make the editing process as systematic and sensible for the editor as possible. For the checklists to facilitate the goal of instilling confidence in the editor and equipping her with the organizational scaffolding necessary to complete her editing tasks, the checklists needed to flow as

logically from one point to another as possible. To achieve this, while I was careful to include a range of highly treatable to highly untreatable points, the checklists mostly followed the order of the essay itself, targeting each paragraph as a separate unit.

Participants and procedure

The participants were 58 first-year university students in two advanced-level writing sections at a private university in Kyoto. Both year-long sections used the same materials, had the same tasks, and followed the same procedure. In both semesters, two students worked together in a collaborative writing process, where they had to brainstorm, plan, draft, write, and revise their essays in pairs. This gave them experience with an autonomous revision process, negotiating amongst themselves to produce a finished product. Checklists were used among the collaborating writers in preparing their drafts.

In the first semester, error correction was done by the teacher alone. The essays were corrected, given back to students with extensive comments, including a location-of-error style of correcting. The essays were checked for both local and global issues. Students then revised their essays in pairs and submitted a revised draft. They had to submit the first draft along with the second draft, and the teacher then checked the second draft, noting changes made to the first draft and indicating again any surface errors or larger issues of vagueness, incomprehensibility, irrelevance, or organizational concerns. The second draft was also returned to the students.

In the second semester, peer editing was introduced. The rationale was that in the first semester, students would get accustomed to the revision process, and error correction done by the teacher would serve as a model for the editing tasks students would be asked to complete in the second semester. During the second semester, the peer editing stage was inserted into the same overall revision process, thus serving as an intermediary stage between students' finishing their first drafts and submitting their drafts to the teacher. After again collaborating in pairs to produce a first draft, students exchanged papers with other students, and used checklists to edit each others' essays. In this way, collaborative writing partners then became collaborative editors, with each pair checking another pair's essay. In contrast to the first semester, when their first draft was submitted to the teacher for a grade, students were aware that this first draft would be returned to them by their peers without a grade, and so it was a good chance for them to refine their essays before official submission.

The exact steps of this second-semester procedure were as follows:

1. Students collaborate to produce an essay. They bring two copies of the essay to class on the due date.
2. Students are given the checklists for that particular essay. The whole class reads through

every item on the checklist together to make sure everyone understands what each checklist item is targeting, and any questions are addressed.

3. Students exchange essays. The same pair that worked together to write an essay now works together as editors.

4. Each student sets about the task of editing her copy of the essay by herself. She proceeds through each of the points on the checklist, making comments as needed.

5. Once finished, the two editors then compare their checklists. They go through each point together. When in agreement, they move on. When they come to a point on the checklist where their assessments are different, they discuss the point and try to reach an agreement. If they cannot reach an agreement or are unsure which point is right, they ask the teacher for input.

6. Their final findings are recorded onto one master checklist.

7. Essays and the master checklists are returned to the authors. The authors go through the master checklist together point by point, referring to their essays in the process.

8. If the authors agree with the editors, then they adopt the revision suggested. This is most quickly effected for formatting, spelling, capitalization, and simple syntactical mistakes. If they agree with the editors' assessment about a more time-consuming revision that is needed, such as a particular sentence that was unclear or a topic sentence that needs to be made stronger, they mark this point and come back to it later. First they should finish working through the more easily treatable points on the checklist.

9. If the authors disagree with the editors, they ask the teacher to mediate. If the teacher feels the editors were right, she tells this to the authors, and the authors adopt the revision. On the other hand, if the teacher feels the authors are correct, it is important for the teacher to then tell the editors how or why their assessment was wrong. This is a crucial step because only if the editors are informed of their error in judgment can they learn from the process as well. It also helps allay any feelings of uncertainty or confusion for all involved.

10. After checking through the checklist in its entirely, the writers then set about working on the revisions that require more effort, like rewriting sentences and adding or deleting information.

11. The writers submit this revised draft to the teacher the following week. The rest of the steps are the same as in the first semester.

Results of the Study: Teacher Observations

During the peer review sessions, the editors were engaged in constructive negotiations in the target language to reach a consensus about all aspects of the essay they were reviewing. In terms of global issues, they discussed issues of content clarity and sought to reach an understanding of concepts they couldn't understand, often times suggesting to each other what they thought to be

the intended meaning. They looked at word choice and identified words that were problematic in terms of getting the point across. They assessed the strength of thesis statements and topic sentences, and noted where these key sentences were either too general or too specific. They considered the relevance of supporting details and highlighted where either more detail was needed or where the details seemed to stray from the topic. They found spots where logical connectors needed to be inserted. Sentences that were overly long and confusing were flagged. The result was a master checklist filled with comments and suggestions for revision.

In terms of surface mistakes, student editors were successful in finding the most glaring treatable errors. They noted mistakes in formatting, as well as typographical, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation mistakes. They identified sentence fragments and run-on sentences. In many cases, they accurately treated subject-verb agreement and verb tense mistakes. At the same time, though, there were quite a few instances where student editors incorrectly identified errors, namely with regard to articles, prepositions, and phrasal verbs. In one sense, this reflected a positive affective stance of being eager editors, but it also served to create some confusion among the authors. Student editors also attempted to revise words or phrases they thought were unclear, but which I had no problem understanding. This highlights the limits to student editors' abilities; sometimes their level does inhibit them from being able to give productive feedback, and in fact has the opposite effect of just causing more uncertainty. Although, in terms of critical skills development, in many cases the authors, in objecting to the editors' comments and raising their objections with me, were actually furthering their negotiating skills and demonstrating a heightened sense of critical assessment. The writers defended their original writing with well-reasoned explanations. In such cases where I was consulted and concurred with the writers' original intent, I then made sure the editors were aware of their erroneous assessment and why it was wrong, while also praising them for their attentiveness to detail and their editing effort.

The overall result, from a teacher's perspective, was encouraging. There were far fewer formatting and surface errors to correct. Nearly every essay was submitted with perfect formatting, and there was a great reduction in the need to address highly treatable grammar mistakes such as subject-verb agreement and noun endings. Most of the surface corrections I had to make involved issues with word order and less treatable grammatical items like prepositions and non-idiomatic expressions. As far as global issues were concerned, many were successfully handled by the editors, like identifying organizational problems, unclear ideas, and irrelevant points. Sometimes the editors were able to correct these points themselves, but often times I was the one who had to provide suggestions for further revision. Still, I felt the editors had achieved success simply in being able to note where a global issue existed.

Results of the ranking survey

At the end of the second semester, students completed both a ranking survey and a questionnaire form to assess their experience of using checklists in the peer review process. Responses for both the ranking survey and questionnaire form were given anonymously to assure honestly in reporting. The ranking survey sought numeric assessments of various aspects of the process. The questionnaire sought explanations about how students felt regarding different aspects. Fifty-five of the fifty-eight students responded (the others were absent that day).

For the ranking survey, students had to determine to what extent their editors, using the checklist as a prioritizing and categorizing tool, were helpful in the revision of their essays. Different local and global points outlined on the checklists were listed on the survey. A ranking of 5 meant students felt their editors were very helpful, and a ranking of 0 meant the editors were not helpful at all.

For the broadest point, which asked students to rank whether their editors helped make their essays better, the rankings were overwhelmingly positive. Nearly 82% indicated a 4 or 5 (helpful or very helpful), with 18% indicating a 3 (somewhat helpful). No student gave a 2 or lower for this point. In judging the overall effectiveness of checklist-assisted editing, this can be seen as a strong advocation for the use of checklists. Interestingly, of all the points on the ranking survey, this was the one that received the highest ranking. The other points fell into more of a range between helpful to unhelpful. It can be deduced from this that though the editing process has its shortcomings, it has a beneficial effect on the whole. Some aspects may not have been as helpful as others, but considered together, the entire process was deemed useful and worthwhile.

Another point that received particularly high rankings was the question of whether the editor helped make the paragraphs more organized. The responses were almost evenly split with nearly 30% each for a 5, 4, and 3 ranking, a positive ranking of around 90%. Next, almost 84% said editors were very helpful (5) or helpful (4) in identifying and correcting unclear sentences. In addition, 58.1% indicated that editors were very helpful or helpful (5 or 4) in pointing out irrelevant sentences, with another 27% claiming this was somewhat helpful (3).

Two global points which received fairly low overall rankings had to do with editorial help regarding thesis statements and topic sentences. Over 20% of the students gave each of these points a ranking of 2 (not very helpful), with about 33% giving them a somewhat helpful ranking (3) and around 40% giving them a helpful or very helpful ranking (4 or 5). One reason for this relatively low ranking may be that the editors, in being unfamiliar with the topic researched by the authors, were not able to offer any valuable suggestions.

In the realm of surface errors, the rankings were also fairly high. Students felt their editors had helped them with article usage, with a reporting of 24%=5, 25%=4, and 27%=3. Regarding verb tense usage, the responses were 20%=5, 38%=4, 29%=3. Help with subject-verb agreement was ranked 13%=5, 31%=4, 31%=3. The ranking for help with punctuation was 13%=5, 33%=4, 36%=3, and

for usage of prepositions, it was 13%=5, 31%=4, and 24%=3.

Results of the questionnaire form

For the questionnaire, students were asked to respond in short-answer form about which aspects of the peer-editing process, including the use of checklists, were helpful. They were also asked to comment on which aspects of the process and use of checklists were not helpful. In this way, they were encouraged to give thought to both the positive and negative sides of the process.

First, students were asked to comment on those aspects of the peer-editing process they thought were helpful. They were asked this lead question: *Which aspects of the student-editing process were helpful and should be kept?*

In terms of the overall helpfulness of peer-editing, students' comments revealed some themes. The first was a raised awareness of the major issues to consider when creating a piece of writing. Some students commented that in reading others' essays and considering which points need to be changed, they realized which points they needed to be more careful about when writing their own essays. Others commented how serving as an editor made them read more carefully and thus notice more mistakes, a skill they then applied to their own writing. Also, some commented how mistakes they didn't notice in their own writing became apparent when reading others' essays, and this enabled them to go back to their own writing and improve it. This theme of being able to notice mistakes in others' essays translating into an increased ability in revising their own essays was repeated often.

A related theme was the ability to learn from others' writing. Reading others' essays made them more aware of their own strengths and weaknesses as writers through comparison. A few commented how comparison served them well. Comparative weaknesses served as pitfalls to avoid, and strengths were instructional. They stated they learned how to make better statements and use more creative expressions just by reading others' essays. One mentioned how reading others' essays helped her avoid making unclear sentences. Another stated that the essay she was editing became a reference for her. It seems from this that the process helped increase learner autonomy in writing.

The peer-editing process was also helpful in a range of skills development. A few students felt that the whole process helped them review and practice the various writing lessons they had been studying throughout the semester. They seemed pleased with this real-life adaptation of the grammatical and structural lessons they were taught in class; the experience demonstrated the usefulness of what they had learned. Many stated how being editors helped them sharpen their grammatical and organizational skills. Also, by having to comment on others' essays and giving suggestions, student editors were challenged to express themselves in a way that was uncommon for them; they learned a new vocabulary set in having to make editorial comments. Finally, perhaps the single largest body of feedback revolved around a perceived development in speaking skills.

Since they had to edit essays with a partner, all while speaking English, they had a chance to speak at length about grammar, structure, and content. They were forced to express the error they had identified, why they thought it was an error, and how to go about correcting it, thus accessing speaking skills they had rarely put to use before.

From both a writer's and editor's standpoint, the process had motivational benefits as well. One commented that as an editor she worked especially hard to make sure the comments she was giving were accurate and could be understood. As a writer, knowing that peers would be reading and assessing her essay gave her an added incentive to make her essay appealing.

The aforementioned all pertain simply to the peer-editing process, but students felt the feedback they received was also helpful. Speaking generally, a few students remarked how getting other perspectives on the quality of their writing helped them reshape their essays in the revision stage. They learned from others what worked and what didn't work about their thesis and support of it. The bulk of this category of feedback focused on the value of others' pointing out to them what was not understandable about their writing. Being so close to the topic, they sometimes had a hard time deciding what was relevant or not; likewise, what they thought was relevant was seen as irrelevant to those not familiar with the research. Also, what they thought was a logical progression of ideas sometimes appeared disjointed to others. All this feedback was extremely helpful for students in determining where to add explanation or other supporting details. Students also appreciated their editors' pointing out various surface errors; even when serving purely as a proofreader, the editors' input was important.

Students were also asked to comment specifically on the use of checklists. They were asked this lead question: *Overall, do you think student-editing checklists were helpful for you as an author and an editor? Why?*

A few students noted that checklists helped them consider essays in an objective way. In a process that is necessarily subjective, checklists helped editors limit their subjectivity and strive for an objective-based approach. One echoed this point by noting the benefit of having a concrete list of points to consider. Others commented how checklists helped them to pinpoint where mistakes were located. Some noted that checklists were helpful for beginning editors, that without them they wouldn't know what to do. This supports the notion of the checklist as an effective scaffolding tool. As a corollary point, checklists made it easy for editors to focus on and target the points to be checked; indeed, without it, they wouldn't know where to begin. As writers, the checklists helped them notice which points should be revised. One went so far as to say that without having her editors' checklist and its comments as a guide, she would not know how to proceed with her revision. The checklists, then, aided students' focus, both as editors and then as authors in the revision stage. In a related point, one student said using checklists helped her to develop editing skills, as they made her pay more attention to the fine points of her own essay and this increased awareness carried over into her role as editor. Checklists also made it easier for students to revise their essays because all they had to do was look on the checklist and proceed down the list; they

could locate their mistakes at a glance. The way the checklists were organized made it easy for them to locate their errors, and the lines for commentary, provided after each point, made it easy for them to understand what needed to be corrected.

Critical remarks about the checklists were sometimes clearly about the checklists themselves, and sometimes blurred the line between checklists in particular and peer editing in general. To begin with, some felt the checklists had too many items on them, and that it took too much class time to complete them. The issue of time was addressed by a few students: either that there wasn't enough time to complete the checklists or that it took too much time. In a related point, some remarked that the two editors working on one essay operated at different speeds, and so, one had to wait for the other to finish before moving onto the next stage. These points seems to suggest that having students do their initial editing as homework would be the most time-efficient method; some students even suggested this. Other students commented that their editors were being either too polite or too kind, and thus, they didn't edit as stringently as they should have. A few stated they were disappointed with the scarcity of comments. One suggested that some editors just weren't putting as much of an effort into their task as they should have.

Next, students were asked to comment on the unhelpful aspects of the peer editing process and to offer suggestions for changes in the process. The lead question was: *Which aspects of the student-editing process were not so helpful and should be changed?*

Responses to this question also revealed some themes. Six of the fifty-five respondents noted that student editors lacked the ability to make grammatical judgments. As they are not native speakers, what they think is right is sometimes wrong, and this led to confusion for some of the writers. In addition, editors sometimes couldn't identify grammar mistakes. Another wrote that the comments he received were not helpful because the editors had misunderstood what he had written; though that same student wrote that as an editor the process was helpful because he had learned to be careful about misunderstanding others' writing. A couple of students felt they had not received enough or any valuable advice. Three students expressed frustration at the inability to be helpful as editors; these comments centered on the pressure felt to give helpful comments, when it was impossible to do so because they weren't familiar with the topic.

The largest number of critical responses about the method focused on problems with the editors and partners. A few noted that the quality of comments received was dependent on the editors' proficiency level, and that, as a result, some students received better and more comprehensive feedback than others. One student felt that her editors were trying to impose their own vision of her essay on her, rather than helping her achieve her own vision. A few felt that two was not a good number for a editing team. When the two editors couldn't agree on a point, it sometimes took a long time to negotiate, and in the end, they had to consult with the teacher rather than being able to solve it themselves. Finally, a number of students stated they needed more time to check and edit the essays, and wanted more time to speak with their editors about the comments they received.

Regarding which aspects of the peer editing process should be changed, students offered the following suggestions. Two students noted that perhaps the checklists should be done anonymously to encourage more honest and thorough feedback, though one of those students realized that if this method were adopted then there'd be no way to consult the editors afterwards. One student wanted to edit more than just one essay. She felt there would be value in editing, or at least reading, a few of the essays because it would motivate her more. A couple of students remarked that it was not helpful for editors to attempt to correct the mistakes. They indicated that the value in the process is for the editors to point out where mistakes or concerns exist, but that editors lack the expertise and knowledge-base to offer suggestions. A few commented that editing should be done in teams of three or more to reduce the irresolvable points that arise when only two people are serving as editors. One wanted to be able to see the teacher's final edit of the essay she had edited, so that she could know for sure which of her editing comments were accurate. Finally, a couple of students suggested having the checklists completed for homework, and another suggested that the checklists themselves should be given a grade for thoroughness and effort, to make sure students take their editing tasks seriously.

Conclusion

The statement that perhaps best sums up the benefits of peer editing is that in serving as editors, students are able to apply critical skills development to their own writing. Many students echoed this sentiment, and this was also evident from my own observations. It may even be argued that the peer-editing process is more valuable from the standpoint of students' serving as editors than as student writers' benefiting from the feedback they receive. This is not to say that peer feedback is not helpful, only that a student editor likely benefits more from the skills she develops through checking, discussing, and attempting to revise others' work.

Checklists can prove essential in maximizing the number of areas in which a student editor can be productive, as well as minimizing the confusion that can sometimes arise in the peer-editing process. Based on the findings in this study, it is clear that the more specific the checklist, the better the chances of reducing confusion. The confusion that did, at times, arise mostly centered around editors' trying to correct less treatable surface errors or trying to rewrite unclear sentences. It is therefore recommended that editors be instructed to simply identify less treatable global and surface errors and bring these to the writer's attention without attempting to correct them, or, even better, work with the teacher toward correcting them. The teacher's role in the peer review process should not be undervalued; the expert guidance that only the teacher can provide should be an integral part of the process. Peer review should not be a replacement for teacher input, but rather should be a collaborative effort along with the teacher. This may be seen as a step away from autonomy when, in fact, it is a necessary part of gaining autonomy; one needs to acquire a certain foundation before true autonomy can be reached.

Time is a serious concern in this process. It is clear from the feedback that class time is probably not being used to maximum effect if editors are asked to read the essays, work through their editing checklists by themselves, and then confer with their editing partners, all during class. Instead, the essays should be given to students to review as homework, with each student being asked to complete a checklist as part of the assignment. As one of my students suggested, it is also a good idea to give some kind of grade for the checklists. If it becomes clear that a student has not put much effort into completing the checklist, that student would receive a low grade for effort and perhaps even be asked to complete the checklist again. All this takes time, and so a suitable schedule needs to be arranged for it. Assuming that both editors have put suitable time into completing their checklists at home, they can then confer with each other and create a master checklist in class. It will still take time for them to reach agreement, for the checklists to be returned to the writers, and for questions to be raised with the teacher, but much time will be saved if the reading of the essays and initial checklists are completed outside of class.

A final issue is effecting a suitable match between the level of the writers and the level of the editors. Clearly, it would not benefit the most proficient writers in the class to have their essays editing by the weakest editors in the class. Some teacher discretion is needed here; a teacher should make an effort to pair up students in a way she deems fair. At the least, it's clear that students would benefit from having two sets of editors for their essays. That is, each writing pair should edit two separate essays.

In conclusion, as indicated by teacher and student observations in this study, peer editing is a valuable aspect of a writing program, and checklists facilitate the process of revision. There are no absolutes in learning, though, and an endeavor as monumental as learning to become a better editor and writer can never have a single prescriptive method for success. Peer editing checklists can be as expansive or as streamlined as the teacher deems necessary for her students' levels and each particular writing task. If utilized to their full systematic potential, checklists can provide much-needed structure for communicative exchanges, promote the feeling of satisfaction students have with the editing process, and serve as a valuable aid for approaching the multi-faceted task of revision.

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Appendix – Checklist for a Five-paragraph Classification Essay
[Note: More space was given for comments in the actual checklist.]

1. Each of the following parts are formatted correctly:

Heading – Name	YES	NO
Heading – Class Name	YES	NO
Heading – Date	YES	NO
2.5cm margins (top, bottom, left, and right)	YES	NO
Centered Title	YES	NO
Indentation (for the first line of each new paragraph)	YES	NO
12pt font size	YES	NO
Times New Roman font	YES	NO
2.0 line spacing	YES	NO
Left margin justified, right margin staggered	YES	NO

2. The introduction provides sufficient background information.   YES   NO
If no, write what you think is missing from the introduction:

_____

3. The introduction contains a thesis statement that has a topic and   YES   NO
three categories. If no, suggest how the thesis statement could be rewritten:

_____

4. Body paragraph 1 has a topic sentence that mentions the first category   YES   NO
from the thesis statement. If no, suggest how the topic sentence could be better:

_____

5. Body paragraph 1 has concrete examples and details that support the   YES   NO
topic sentence. If no, suggest details that would make the paragraph stronger:

_____

6. Body paragraph 1 has irrelevant information.   YES   NO
If yes, write which information you think is irrelevant.

_____

7. Body paragraph 1 has some information（words, sentences, or ideas）   YES   NO
you couldn't understand. If yes, write which information you couldn't understand.

_____

8. Body paragraph 1 has a concluding sentence.   YES   NO
If no, suggest an appropriate concluding sentence.

_____

[Points 4-8 would be repeated for each subsequent body paragraph.]

9. The concluding paragraph provides a summary of the three categories in   YES   NO
this essay.

_____

10. The concluding paragraph contains irrelevant information.   YES   NO
If yes, write which information you think is irrelevant.

_____

11. This essay has enough transition words and logical connectors.   YES   NO
If no, suggest where the author should insert transition words and logical connectors:

_____

12. This essay has spelling, capitalization, or typing mistakes.   YES   NO
If yes, write the mistakes you found:

_____

13. This essay has grammar mistakes, including sentence fragments   YES   NO
and run-on sentences. If yes, write the grammar mistakes you found:

_____