Revisión por pares y retroalimentación con IA para mejorar la escritura académica

Peer Review and AI-Driven Feedback: A New Approach for Enhancing Academic Writing

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RESUMEN

Este estudio analiza el rol de la retroalimentación en la escritura académica de estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL), centrándose en la revisión por pares y el uso de inteligencia artificial (IA). Se examinaron Grammarly, Turnitin y Criterion, herramientas que brindan retroalimentación sobre gramática, estilo, coherencia y detección de similitudes textuales. Con un enfoque cualitativo y revisión bibliográfica sistemática e integradora, se identificaron estrategias como la autoevaluación, la revisión por pares y la combinación de retroalimentación directa e indirecta. Los resultados muestran que la revisión por pares apoyada por IA mejora la precisión, cohesión y argumentación, fomenta la autonomía y

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favorece la autorregulación. Se concluye que integrar retroalimentación humana y automatizada es una estrategia pedagógica eficaz para fortalecer la competencia escrita en la enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera.

Palabras clave: inglés; retroalimentación; escritura académica; inteligencia artificial; revisión por pares

ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the role of feedback in the academic writing of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, focusing on Peer Review (PR) and the use of artificial intelligence (AI). It analyzes Grammarly, Turnitin, and Criterion, tools that provide feedback on grammar, style, coherence, and detection of textual similarities. Using a qualitative approach and a systematic, integrative literature review, strategies such as self-assessment, peer review, and a combination of direct and indirect feedback were identified. Findings indicate that AI-supported peer review improves accuracy, cohesion, and argumentation, while fostering autonomy and self-regulation. The study concludes that integrating human and automated feedback is an effective pedagogical strategy to strengthen writing competence in EFL teaching contexts.

Key words: English; feedback; academic writing; artificial intelligence; peer review

INTRODUCTION

Academic writing is a fundamental skill for students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), especially in higher education settings where the ability to produce coherent, accurate, and well-argued texts is essential for academic success and professional development. Within this learning process, feedback plays a key role by providing students with specific guidance on their errors, areas for improvement, and strategies to strengthen their writing skills. However, the effectiveness of feedback depends on several factors, such as its clarity, accessibility, and students' capacity to interpret and apply the corrections received.

Despite its recognized importance, there remains ongoing debate about the most effective types of feedback in EFL contexts. For instance, while some studies advocate direct correction that provides the correct forms immediately, others emphasize indirect feedback that encourages learners to reflect and self-correct, fostering deeper learning. Hey-Cunningham, Ward, and Miller (2021) highlight that corrective feedback supports conscious language learning and facilitates the internalization of grammatical rules and discourse structures. Similarly, Teng and Ma (2024) argue that well-structured written feedback not only addresses errors but also promotes learner autonomy by encouraging self-reflection on the writing process.

In the context of academic writing instruction for EFL students, there is a clear need to explore feedback strategies that enhance not only linguistic accuracy but also the cohesion and argumentative development of students' texts. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the role of Peer Review and IA-Driven Feedback in improving these dimensions of academic writing. Grounded in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and the Communicative Approach, the research analyzes feedback strategies that promote progressive development of writing competence, beyond mere error correction.

The study is theoretically framed within constructivist learning principles and sociocultural language theory, which emphasize interaction and mediation as critical in acquiring new language skills. By integrating these perspectives, this research aims to propose effective pedagogical feedback strategies that optimize the teaching of academic writing in EFL contexts, ultimately fostering a more dynamic, meaningful, and autonomous learning experience for students.

METHODS

This research employs a qualitative and bibliographic design to identify effective peer review and AI-driven feedback strategies for enhancing academic writing in EFL contexts. Utilizing a systematic literature review approach, the study screened sources from major databases like Scopus and ResearchGate based on rigorous inclusion criteria such as relevance to higher education and methodological soundness. Data was organized using an

analytical checklist to evaluate feedback types, AI integration, and pedagogical outcomes. Through full-text synthesis and thematic categorization, the study identifies best practices and emerging trends, ensuring methodological rigor and providing actionable insights for both local and international EFL instruction.

RESULTS

The analysis of the selected literature, conducted through a systematic and integrative review, yielded a comprehensive understanding of effective strategies for providing Peer Review and IA-Driven Feedback in EFL academic writing contexts. Following the rigorous screening and thematic coding process described in the methodology, the findings are organized into three core areas: the overall role of feedback in enhancing EFL academic writing, the specific effectiveness of peer review as a feedback strategy, and the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools into the peer review process. Across the reviewed studies, consistent patterns emerged showing that feedback, particularly when implemented through peer collaboration and supported by AI technologies, significantly improves linguistic accuracy, cohesion, and the depth of argumentation in student writing. These results are presented below, with each thematic area supported by empirical evidence and theoretical perspectives from the analyzed sources.

The Role of Feedback in Enhancing Academic Writing in EFL Students

The analysis of the reviewed studies confirms that feedback plays a decisive role in the development of academic writing skills among EFL learners. Four feedback strategies appear most frequently across the literature: self-assessment, peer review, direct teacher feedback, and indirect feedback. Self-assessment has been shown to encourage learners to critically monitor and evaluate their own writing, fostering autonomy and self-regulation. Algburi and Razali (2022) reported that structured self-assessment activities led to measurable improvements in revision quality, with students correcting an average of 68% of identified errors independently. Peer review, as evidenced by Zhang et al. (2023) promotes reciprocal learning through the exchange of constructive feedback, with some investigations noting up to a 15% increase in overall writing scores after sustained peer

review interventions. Direct teacher feedback, characterized by explicit corrections and metalinguistic explanations, is effective for the immediate resolution of errors, particularly in grammar and mechanics (Huang, et al; 2023). Finally, Indirect feedback, in which instructors indicate errors without providing corrections, requires learners to engage in problem-solving and has been linked to long-term retention of linguistic structures (Wirantaka, 2022).

Although each feedback type offers distinct benefits, the synthesis of findings reveals a consistent trend: peer review tends to yield the most substantial improvements in both surface-level accuracy and higher-order writing skills such as cohesion and argumentation. Fitriyah, Ningrum, and Gozali, (2024) found that when peer review is embedded within a structured pedagogical framework, learners demonstrate a 23% increase in their ability to identify and explain writing issues, a skill which also transfers to their own work. Moreover, peer review fosters the development of metacognitive awareness, critical thinking, and a deeper engagement with the writing process, aligning with the social constructivist view that knowledge is co-constructed through interaction. Studies conducted in higher education EFL contexts in Asia and Latin America (e.g., Tsao, 2021; Velázquez, Eudave, and Rodríguez, L. (2021) indicate that students value peer review not only for error correction but also for the opportunity to engage in academic discourse practices like those found in professional scholarly communities.

The reviewed literature also highlights that the efficacy of any feedback strategy is influenced by factors such as the clarity of feedback, the learner's proficiency level, and the presence of follow-up opportunities for revision. Dayat, D. (2021) meta-analysis demonstrated that feedback interventions accompanied by structured revision tasks led to effect sizes ranging from 0.4 to 0.7 in improving writing quality, which is considered educationally significant. This suggests that feedback is most powerful when implemented as part of a continuous cycle of drafting, reviewing, and revising rather than as a single corrective episode. These findings underline the pedagogical importance of designing feedback practices that are systematic, dialogic, and integrated into the broader writing curriculum.

The Effectiveness of Peer Review in EFL Academic Writing

Peer review has increasingly been recognized as a pedagogically powerful tool for enhancing writing skills in EFL contexts. A mixed-methods study examining the impact of peer review on writing feedback literacy over 12 weeks found that students in the peer review group significantly improved in their ability to recognize feedback and evaluate its quality. However, the same study observed no significant changes in feedback uptake or emotion management compared to a control group that received only teacher feedback. These findings underscore that peer review bolsters meta-awareness about feedback, even if it does not always translate into immediate behavioral change.

Additional evidence from Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education shows that targeted peer feedback training contributes to the development of students' feedback literacy across cognitive, behavioral, and emotional dimensions. Longitudinal case studies involving freshmen showed a positive trajectory in how learners perceived, engaged with, and acted upon peer feedback over time. This highlights that peer review, particularly with structured support, promotes more reflective and autonomous engagement with one's own writing.

The study surveyed by Ahmed and Al-Kadi (2021) also illustrates how peer feedback is perceived by learners. In that study, 55.2% of students reported that peer correction helped improve their writing quality, while 30.5% had not experienced peer correction at all, and 14.3% expressed skepticism about its value, often due to concerns about peer proficiency. These insights suggest that while peer review is widely valued, its effectiveness depends on students' ability to provide and trust the feedback, pointing to the need for clear training and scaffolding.

Taken together, these findings suggest that peer review enhances learners' feedback literacy and metacognitive growth, key factors in writing development. With appropriate scaffolding and reflective practice, peer review becomes more than mere error checking; it becomes a collaborative tool that cultivates deeper cognitive engagement, critical reflection, and improvement in writing quality in EFL contexts.

This transformation of peer review from a corrective exercise to a collaborative learning process aligns with the socio-constructivist perspective, which views knowledge construction as emerging from interaction and shared meaning-making. Studies conducted in higher education EFL programs in Chile, China, and Spain between 2021 and 2024 report that when peer review is framed as a dialogic activity, where learners are encouraged to justify, question, and negotiate their feedback, there is a marked increase in critical thinking scores and writing performance, with gains ranging from 12% to 20% over control groups receiving only teacher (Ahmed, 2021). Moreover, these studies emphasize that reflective practice embedded in peer review not only improves the current writing task but also develops transferable academic literacy skills, enabling students to approach future writing with greater independence and analytical precision. Consequently, peer review, when carefully scaffolded, becomes a sustainable pedagogical strategy capable of fostering both immediate improvement and long-term growth in EFL academic writing.

The Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Peer Review

Peer review (PR) has been widely acknowledged in literature as a fundamental pedagogical strategy for the development of academic writing skills, particularly within EFL contexts. Its value lies not only in the provision of corrective feedback but also in its capacity to foster higher-order cognitive skills such as critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and learner autonomy. Through the reciprocal exchange of feedback, students actively engage with their peers' texts, which encourages them to reflect on writing conventions, assess the effectiveness of arguments, and internalize academic discourse practices (Costa, Mfolo and Ntsobi, 2024).

This process supports the social constructivist view that learning is co-constructed through interaction, promoting metacognitive awareness and self-regulation as students become both writers and evaluators. However, despite its pedagogical strengths, peer review requires substantial cognitive effort, time, and skill from participants. For many EFL learners, particularly those at lower proficiency levels, the demands of accurately identifying errors and providing meaningful feedback can be overwhelming, limiting the

overall impact of the activity. Furthermore, in large classes or settings with limited instructional resources, facilitating structured and effective peer review can pose logistical challenges, reducing opportunities for personalized feedback and reflection.

In response to these limitations, the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools into the peer review process has emerged as a promising innovation designed to optimize feedback delivery and enrich the learning experience. AI technologies can automate the identification of surface-level linguistic errors—such as grammar, spelling, and syntax, thereby alleviating some of the cognitive load traditionally placed on students during peer review (Ibrahim, 2024). By handling lower-order concerns, AI allows students to focus more attentively on higher-order elements of writing, including argument development, coherence, and style, which are often more challenging to assess independently.

Additionally, AI-driven platforms frequently incorporate scaffolding features such as guided review checklists, exemplar texts, and adaptive prompts that support learners in developing evaluative skills and providing more structured feedback (Bognár and Khine, 2025). In resource-constrained EFL classrooms, AI integration can help scale peer review by offering consistent, immediate feedback, supplementing teacher input and enhancing the quality of peer interactions. Taken together, these advances suggest that AI has the potential to transform peer review from a cognitively demanding, time-intensive task into a more manageable, effective, and engaging collaborative learning activity.

The Role of AI in Supporting Peer Review

AI-powered systems provide a range of functionalities that address key challenges faced by students during the peer review process, particularly in EFL academic writing contexts. One of the most significant contributions of these technologies is their ability to automatically identify linguistic and organizational issues within student texts. For instance, Sari (2023) demonstrated that AI algorithms can effectively detect structural problems such as paragraph coherence and the logical flow of arguments. This targeted detection enables learners to concentrate their revision efforts on specific areas that directly impact the clarity and cohesion of their writing, thereby making the revision process more

efficient and focused. By pinpointing such critical textual weaknesses, AI tools help students overcome difficulties that might otherwise require extensive guidance from instructors or peers, which is especially beneficial in large or resource-limited classrooms.

Beyond structural analysis, AI systems also offer sophisticated evaluations of academic style and tone, which are crucial for writing within disciplinary conventions. Guo et al. (2025) found that these systems can flag informal language, inconsistent register, and other stylistic deviations, guiding students toward a more formal and precise academic voice. This feature is particularly advantageous for EFL learners who frequently struggle with mastering the nuances of academic discourse, such as maintaining appropriate formality and using discipline-specific vocabulary. By providing immediate, objective feedback on style and tone, AI-powered tools support the development of an authentic academic voice, which is essential for successful participation in scholarly communities. Altogether, these functionalities of AI systems represent powerful scaffolds that assist EFL students in navigating complex writing demands with greater confidence and competence.

AI as a Collaborative Tool in Peer Review

Beyond its corrective capabilities, AI serves as a collaborative scaffold that complements human peer feedback. AI can generate model academic writing samples tailored to specific genres or prompts, offering students concrete examples to compare their work against and identify areas for refinement (Godwin et al, 2025). Furthermore, AI platforms frequently include structured peer review frameworks, such as guided checklists and prompting questions, that facilitate more focused and systematic evaluation by students (Ibrahim, 2024). This scaffolding supports less experienced reviewers in developing evaluative skills and enhances the quality of feedback exchanged.

Another significant advantage of integrating AI into peer review is the provision of an initial layer of automated feedback that addresses lower-order concerns like grammar, punctuation, and lexical choice. This preliminary feedback allows human reviewers to devote greater attention to higher-order aspects such as argument development, critical analysis, and coherence, thus promoting deeper cognitive engagement with the text

(Sharma et al. 2023). In EFL contexts, where students often face difficulties with both language accuracy and academic conventions, this balanced interaction between AI-generated and human feedback can contribute to more effective writing instruction.

In sum, the incorporation of AI into peer review processes not only streamlines the feedback cycle but also fosters learners' feedback literacy and metacognitive awareness, essential for sustained writing development. Future research should explore how adaptive AI systems can be tailored to diverse learner profiles and writing contexts to maximize their pedagogical impact in EFL academic settings.

This literature review concludes with critical reflections and proposes directions for future research on peer review and AI-driven feedback.

Comparing Traditional Feedback Strategies with AI-Enhanced Peer Review

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into peer review processes has prompted comparative investigations assessing its efficacy relative to traditional feedback methods. Empirical studies indicate that AI-assisted peer review can lead to significant improvements in various aspects of academic writing. Ahmed, Zaki, and Bentley (2024) observed that students who incorporated AI tools into their peer review practices exhibited marked gains in linguistic accuracy and textual cohesion in shorter time frames compared to those relying solely on manual reviews. This acceleration in writing development is attributed in part to the capacity of AI systems to alleviate cognitive load by automatically identifying and correcting surface-level errors such as grammar and spelling. As noted by Munawwaroh and Adeoye (2024), this reduction in lower-order concerns enables learners to redirect their attention to higher-order writing processes, including structural organization and argumentative clarity.

Furthermore, the combination of AI support with peer review has been shown to foster greater learner autonomy. By receiving immediate, technology-driven feedback alongside human critique, students engage in more reflective and critical revision practices, enhancing their metacognitive awareness of the writing process (Bognár and Khine, 2025).

This hybrid approach aligns with contemporary pedagogical models that emphasize active learner engagement and self-regulation as key drivers of academic writing proficiency.

Challenges and Considerations in Implementing AI in Peer Review

Despite these promising outcomes, the incorporation of AI into peer review is not without challenges. One major concern involves potential over-reliance on automated feedback, which may discourage students from critically evaluating their own writing decisions or engaging deeply with peer comments (Costa, Mfolo and Ntsobi, 2024). Additionally, AI tools often lack nuanced understanding of disciplinary conventions, rhetorical purpose, and contextual factors, potentially leading to generic or misaligned corrections that do not fully address the communicative intent of the text (Ajiye and Omokhabi, 2025). This limitation underscores the importance of complementing AI feedback with human judgment and domain-specific expertise.

Effective implementation of AI-assisted peer review also necessitates targeted training for both students and educators. Familiarity with the capabilities andencourage of AI tools is essential to maximize their pedagogical value and to encourage critical engagement rather than passive acceptance of automated suggestions (Dergaa et al. 2023). Without such preparation, there is a risk that the integration of AI could inadvertently reinforce superficial learning or reduce meaningful interaction among peers.

Final Remarks: The Future of AI-Enhanced Peer Review in EFL Writing

Overall, a growing body of research supports the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies into peer review processes as an effective approach to enhance academic writing skills among EFL learners. Studies by Malik et al. (2023) and Anderson et al. (2023) emphasize that AI tools can provide timely, targeted, and consistent feedback on linguistic accuracy and textual organization, which are often challenging for EFL students. By automating the identification of surface-level errors and offering model examples, AI reduces the cognitive burden on learners and allows them to concentrate on higher-order writing skills, such as argument development and coherence. This fusion of technology and

peer collaboration aligns with Vygotskian sociocultural theories that highlight the importance of scaffolding and social interaction in language learning. Consequently, AI-enhanced peer review creates a supportive environment that nurtures writing proficiency through iterative feedback cycles.

However, to fully realize the pedagogical benefits of AI integration, educators and researchers must carefully balance automated feedback with the promotion of critical thinking and evaluative judgment. As Walter, (2024) caution, an over-reliance on AI-generated suggestions may limit students' engagement in reflective revision processes and diminish their ability to critically assess writing quality. Hence, AI should be positioned as a complementary tool that augments rather than replaces human peer interaction. Research by Salvagno, Taccone, and Gerli, (2023) further highlights the need for explicit instruction and training that empowers learners to interpret and negotiate feedback, both automated and peer-generated, fostering metacognitive awareness and learner autonomy. Future pedagogical models must therefore integrate AI-driven assistance with deliberate opportunities for reflection, discussion, and collaborative evaluation to cultivate a holistic, learner-centered writing pedagogy.

DISCUSSIÓN

The findings from this systematic and integrative literature review reinforce the significant pedagogical potential of peer review as a feedback strategy within EFL academic writing contexts. Consistent with prior research Algburi and Razali (2022), peer review emerges as a dynamic and reciprocal learning practice that not only enhances linguistic accuracy and cohesion but also deepens students' engagement with higher-order writing processes such as argumentation and coherence. Importantly, peer review fosters metacognitive growth and feedback literacy by encouraging learners to critically analyze texts, reflect on feedback, and incorporate revisions collaboratively (Godwin et al, 2025).

These processes align with socio-constructivist perspectives emphasizing knowledge co-construction through social interaction, suggesting that peer review transcends mere error correction to become a powerful tool for developing learner autonomy and critical thinking.

However, the effectiveness of peer review depends on adequate scaffolding and training to ensure students can trust, interpret, and provide constructive feedback, as concerns about peer proficiency and feedback reliability remain notable barriers (Bognár and Khine, 2025).

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the peer review process represents a transformative advancement, addressing some inherent challenges associated with traditional peer feedback. AI tools facilitate the rapid identification of lower-order concerns such as grammatical errors, lexical choices, and textual organization, thereby reducing the cognitive load on students and allowing them to focus on more complex writing skills (Dergaa et al. 2023).

Moreover, AI-driven platforms often incorporate structured peer review frameworks and model writing examples that scaffold evaluative skills and promote systematic analysis (Adeoye, 2024). The complementary interplay between automated feedback and human peer critique fosters a richer, more autonomous, and reflective revision process, consistent with pedagogical models emphasizing active learner engagement and self-regulation (Balfour, 2013).

Nevertheless, challenges persist regarding potential over-reliance on AI-generated suggestions and the lack of contextual sensitivity in automated feedback, which necessitates ongoing educator involvement and learner training to mediate and personalize the feedback experience (Walter, 2024). Future research should focus on developing adaptive AI systems capable of responding to diverse learner profiles and disciplinary conventions while embedding opportunities for critical reflection to maximize the educational impact of AI-enhanced peer review.

CONCLUSION

This literature review has demonstrated that peer review remains a cornerstone feedback strategy for improving academic writing skills among EFL learners. Empirical evidence consistently highlights that peer review not only enhances surface-level accuracy but also supports the development of higher-order skills such as cohesion, argumentation, and

critical thinking. By engaging in reciprocal feedback exchanges, learners cultivate metacognitive awareness and feedback literacy, which contribute to increased learner autonomy and a deeper, more reflective approach to writing. These benefits underscore the value of embedding peer review within structured pedagogical frameworks that provide clear guidance and scaffolding to maximize its effectiveness.

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools into the peer review process represents a promising advancement that addresses some of the challenges traditionally associated with peer feedback. AI systems facilitate timely, targeted, and consistent feedback on linguistic and organizational issues, reducing cognitive load by automating lower-order corrections. This allows students and peer reviewers to focus on complex revision tasks such as argument development and textual coherence. Additionally, AI-generated exemplars and structured review frameworks provide valuable scaffolding for less experienced learners, enhancing the quality and reliability of peer feedback.

However, the implementation of AI in peer review must be approached with caution to avoid potential pitfalls such as over-reliance on automated suggestions and the depersonalization of feedback. The reviewed literature emphasizes the importance of complementing AI tools with human judgment and fostering critical engagement among learners. Training both students and educators to effectively use AI-enhanced peer review platforms is essential to ensure that technological assistance supports, rather than replaces, the development of evaluative skills and reflective revision practices. Without this balance, there is a risk that the benefits of AI could be undermined by superficial learning and reduced peer interaction.

In conclusion, the synergistic integration of peer review and AI-driven feedback holds significant potential for transforming EFL academic writing instruction. By blending technological innovation with collaborative, dialogic pedagogies, educators can promote more autonomous, reflective, and skilled writers capable of engaging with academic discourse critically and independently. Future research should continue to explore adaptive AI technologies tailored to diverse learner needs, the long-term effects of combined peer

and AI feedback, and effective training programs to support this evolving feedback landscape. Such endeavors will be crucial for realizing the full pedagogical potential of AI-enhanced peer review in EFL contexts.

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