

The Effect of Peer Assessment on English Language Writing Instruction & the Perceptions of Students: The Case of Selected Accounting CEP Students at Hawassa University in Focus.

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Abstract: The objective of this study was investigating the interaction patterns among Basic English Language writing skills, the effects of peer review on improving the students' writing skills, and the inspiration aroused by writing in a peer reviewed writing environment. Forty- four accounting department students, Continuous Education Programme (CEP) attendants, were chosen randomly and were divided into two, experimental and control groups. , Both groups were taught Basic English writing skills for 3 months. The control group received teacher feedback, while, the experimental group received peer-feedback; the students were trained as how to assess peer's work at the beginning of the semester. The process provided opportunities for the students to pick up good vocabulary, language use and style of writing from their peers. Students learned through an exchange of ideas during the discussions. Writers became more aware of the reader's perspective. They also learned about their own errors as well that of their peers. The data were collected using a pre-test and a post-test for language proficiency and performance skills and Perception questionnaire towards peer feedback. The mean score of pre-test of experimental group and control groups were 61.66 and 65.64 respectively, while the mean score of post-tests of experimental and control groups were 73.045 and 68.82 respectively. Besides, the perception test results of the treatment group in pre and post-test were 3.06 and 3.48 respectively. It was found that the students' writing ability was improved significantly, at $**p<.01$ level. As the result, the writing performances of the students in the experimental group excelled those in the control group. Highly positive Perceptions towards the teaching technique were also found, in particular on the following aspects: the writing ability development, self-directed learning, co-operative learning, and self-confidence. It was concluded that peer review provides learners with an authentic audience, increases the students' motivation for writing and enables them to receive different views on their writing. Finally, the researcher recommended possible avenues for further works.

Key Words: *Basic writing skills, Experimental & Control groups, Peer Assessment, Pre-test & Post- test, Teacher's Feedback.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the concept of peer assessment, a method of teaching and learning in which, to a greater or lesser extent and within a structured framework, students assess their peers' work. In particular, it evaluates students' writing skills proficiencies and perceptions of students at the Hawassa University. The present study is carried out in order to gain insight for improving the administration and teaching English writing skills.

Background Of The Study

In the past, teaching professional development was considered as the teachers' responsibility. However, professional development has recently become the accountability of the education institutes and finds its place in long-term higher education programs. Evaluation of educational activities must be on the agenda of education managers, of all teachers, and students as well. Studies, according to Albon, (2006), show that in the world many autonomous universities have a history of teaching assessment and lecturer evaluation through formal and non-formal structures.

Alternative assessment, however, asks students to show what they can do and produce rather than on what they are able to recall (Almahboub, 2000). As one of the main forms of alternative assessment, peer assessment has

gained much importance in educational learning and educational research. It is considered as "an arrangement in which individuals consider the amount, level, value, worth, quality, or success of the products of learning of peers of similar status" (Birdsong & Sharplin, 1986).

Language education is mainly confined with the teacher as the sole knowledge dispenser which is called 'sage on the stage', on a one-to-many mode. Affected by the traditions of teacher-centeredness, students have long been exposed to conventional and authoritative learning environments so that they are accustomed to be passive and dependent. With this traditional problems (poor access and equity, irrelevancy, poor quality and less student-centered or less self-initiated education system) the learners tend to be ineffective and inefficient (Black, & William, 1998).

Traditionally, summative assessment aims to assess the effectiveness of a teacher's teaching. The assessment results are used to appoint, promote or reward teachers, e.g. to increase a teacher's salary. The assessment is usually done after the completion of a course or after a certain teaching course of a teacher. Formative assessment, however, is to identify where to improve the teaching and learning process. Formative assessment evaluates where teachers should improve, and not what teachers have done (Boud & Falchikov, 2006). Formative assessment can be carried out at any time of the academic year. The feedback information can be collected from different sources such as teacher's self-assessment, student assessment, peer assessment or expert assessment (for young and novice teachers).

Strong support for peer review has come from theories that emphasize the social nature of language, thought, writing, and learning. According to social constructivism, learning requires exchanging, sharing, and negotiation, and it involves both personal inner process and social aspect (Cheng & Warren, 2005). Perspective on learning a language strongly supports the use of peer review. For learning is not an individual, secluded activity, but rather a cognitive activity that occurs in, and is mediated by, social interaction, (Black & William, 1998). Thus, on the theoretical level, peer interaction is vital to writing development because it allows students to construct knowledge through social sharing and interaction. Peer review is also built on the notion of collaboration, which assumes that learning emerges through shared understandings of multiple learners, and that learning effectively occurs within interactive peer groups. Peer assessment process was well-accepted and provided a positive experience for the participants (Linda, 2007; Jahin, 2012).

Statement Of The Problem

In teaching learning context of English language writing class, written assignments are normally a requirement in students' academic pursuit. Freshmen students, however, have never arrived at college with impressive writing skills. When it comes to implementing the writing requirement, few institutions have managed to do what is necessary to achieve success. Students regard writing as the most complex component of their English language acquisition skills Jahin & Idrees (2010), for example, studied students' writing proficiency and perceptions towards learning English; they found out that students view writing not only as a particularly challenging discipline but also as the singly most difficult aspect of English language acquisition.

We live in a society in which we are held to account for our performance, especially if we perform professional functions. It is no longer enough to do a job to the best of one's ability. Other people have to be assured that professionals can be trusted, and interest is growing in the concept that colleagues might be well placed to make these judgments.

In Ethiopia Universities, as far as the researcher knowledge is concerned, the current education system has been found to over-emphasize academic knowledge and achievements measured solely by tests and examinations. The regular testing procedures in the classroom are basically administered by the teacher only and the notion of peer assessment is relatively new.

Despite progresses have been made in the past decades through the Writing courses in the EFL classroom, subject-matter courses usually encounter serious writing tasks. In part, this is an instructor workload issue. Writing evaluation is extremely time intensive and effort demanding and the research findings also confirmed this (Trochim, 2006).

Multitude research findings manifest that one of the main problems with common assessment practices is the unilateral assessment of students' work by staff in tertiary education; assessment and feedback have predominately been seen as the exclusive role and responsibility of academic teaching staff. This not only greatly limits the diversity of perspectives students are exposed to but raises troubling questions about how students will develop the self-regulation skills needed for life outside of university (Mulder, 2014).

It was very difficult to predict how students would think about getting adequate feedback from their peers. Therefore, the investigation was interested in comparing the perceptions of students towards peer assessment in general and peer assessment of language proficiency in particular. Second, the study needed evidence that students are able to fairly and responsibly assess their peers' written performances. This study, thus, hopes to contribute to the existing knowledge on the perception of students towards peer feedback to improve their English language writing competency and performance.

Objective of the Study

General Objective

The general objective of this paper is to find out whether the students will improve their academic English writing skills with the help of peers assessment.

Specific Objective

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- identify how peer evaluations improve student writing skills
- assess students perception towards how peer evaluations develop students' writing skills

Research Questions

The following research questions were therefore investigated:

- How does peer evaluation influence students' writing skills in the classroom?
- What are the students' perceptions about English language basic writing skills course using peer evaluation?

Guided by the peer assessment theory and the bulk of studies identified in the literature, it is hypothesized that students participating in peer review could be more critical in their feedback than would students participating in conventional assessments.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design and Methodology

In order to gain insight for improving the administration and teaching English writing skills instruction technique in the present research was conducted using Basic Writing Course (Enla., 1012) provided for first year accounting CEP students at Hawassa University in focusing 2016 second semester. The participants were students who enrolled in the English writing course in the academic year.

Research Design

The study employed mixed methods design which consists of experimental and descriptive survey. The experimental research group received peer assessment with pre & post-tests, and control group received conventional type of assessment along with pre & post-tests of writing skills.

Descriptive survey was used to investigate the level of motivation and the perceptions held by students based on the objectives and basic research questions, the study needed to use both qualitative and quantitative methods better suited to make intense study on peer assessment on writing skills.

First, a pre-test of proficiency was given to both experimental and control groups followed by asking both the learners groups to write their paragraphs according to the instruction and writing guidelines and criteria they had already received. However, the learners in the experimental group were provided with an additional peer review trainings including the provision of constructive feedback to their peers and evaluating and correcting the peers' performances.

Participants

The total Participants of this study were 44, 22 control group and 22, experimental group freshman students who were 21- 30 years of age. Prior to beginning the study, the students' were asked how volunteer enough they were, and they made agreement to participate in the study. The total number of students was 24. Out of these students, 23 agreed to allow the researcher to use their classroom activities as a part of the research; however, only 22 students nine and thirteen girls and boys respectively participated in all parts of the research.

Instruments of Data Collection

The quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used in order to get a broader picture of the perceptions and knowledge of students towards peer assessment. In this regard, the pre & post writing performance tests, & the pre & post- perception questionnaire were used in the study.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 23 items asking the subjects about their perceptions towards assessing peer's work and their writing. Also it included open-ended items allowing the respondents to express their perceptions, both positive and negative, towards the assessment process.

Pre-test

The main purpose of the pre-test administration was to discover if there would be any significant difference between the treatment group and the comparison group in their writing abilities. In this part, the groups were given information, and asked to write paragraphs and essay using the given information; besides, students were given different tasks to complete various sentences. The students in the control group were conventionally handled in the classroom by the teacher who assigned them the homework and corrected them by himself, giving feedback to them the next session.

Post- test

At the end of the course, both groups were given the same post-tests corrected by the two of the expert colleagues. The inter-rater reliability was measured and proved to be acceptable. At the end of the term, a survey assessed the students' opinions about specific aspects of the peer review method through a multiple-test questionnaire.

Writing Course

The students' three months Basic Writing Course (Enla1012) was a semester mandatory for-credit module in which every year a student had to enroll. Its focus was to develop students' writing abilities in various genres: specifically, composing error free sentences, composing varieties of paragraphs and essays in preparation for writing academic essays in such contents. Participants needed to take the writing course twice on week end days, each class lasting three hours. The students were assigned to write about four issues of their interest out of a topic list including descriptive, narrative, argumentative paragraphs and one descriptive essay compositions. Fifty minutes of the three hours were allotted to students for peer review activities.

Peer Review Training

All the students were new to peer-editing and revision activities, so a special training session was held at the beginning of the course adapting the training manual (Bartels, 2003). It was aimed to introduce them to a new phenomenon, peer review. In addition, later in the semester when the students get used to working this way, a special feedback session was run to discuss their experience in peer-editing. They were taught what they could comment on their peers' works and what to pay attention to.

The researcher designed "Three-Legged Stool" to describe peer review training" process which consists of three phases: the modeling stage, the exploring stage, and the awareness raising stage, which allowed him to provide the 22 students with sufficient training and scaffolding before the actual peer review activities.



Figure 1:

This three-legged stool peer review training workshop lasted for three weeks and took place during the last hour of the first three-hour tutorials in the second semester. The flow of the training workshop was as follows:

Awareness Raising Stage: Week 1

First, the researcher introduced and defined peer review. The purpose of adopting peer review activities in the writing course explained to the students. While briefing students about the benefits of peer review for writing, the objectives of this training workshop was also shared with them: to equip attendees with sufficient revising skills to complete peer review tasks and to raise their awareness in giving effective peer feedback to their course mates.

Next, students were introduced and demonstrated a four-step procedure adapted from Min, (2006) study to prepare students for the peer review session. Among the four procedures, the nature of errors and providing feasible suggestions were the crucial steps in helping writers to make further modifications of their drafts, because, without a sound justification, writers may be unconvinced of the need to adopt peer comments in their revisions (Ibid).

Modeling Stage: Week 2

After going through the modeling stage, students were invited to practice the four-step procedure with some authentic exemplars collected from writing samples composed by students studying in the previous cohort of the same writing course. This hands-on practice aimed to assess how well the students were able to identify both content and language errors and accordingly explain them and provide their peers with appropriate suggestions for modification.

Exploring Stage: Week 3

For the purpose of training, students were asked to write a mini-essay describing about themselves (the first draft) in the genre of categorization as an assignment; after the week 2, tutorials were expected to bring it to class; in week 3 to continue with their training.

Data collection procedures

The researcher provided the students different trainings on peer evaluation techniques and strategies. Students were also given earlier written paragraphs and essays by other batch students, and they tried to correct errors made by senior year students. These created them better opportunities to evaluate others' compositions and improve their writing performances.

The learners in the experimental group were provided with an additional peer review instructions including the provision of constructive feedback to their peers and evaluating and correcting the peers' performances. The experiment was run over a three-month period, receiving the group peer feedback from their peers.

Marking Guidelines for the Pre-and Post- tests

In testing writing skills, marking students' compositions was a crucial issue for instructors. In the same concern, suggestions made by Mulu & Menna (2016) that there are three chief methods that student's achievements were marked: the impression (multiple marking methods), the analytic method and the error count method.

In addition to peer raters, the researcher and two senior most EFL instructors from the School of Language and Communication Studies of Hawassa University were chosen to assess and mark the writings. The scoring procedures were explained to them, and they followed the same scoring procedures and used the same answer keys oriented to the instructors about assessment schema: content, organization of ideas and cohesion, language, and style (accuracy of grammar, vocabulary, and spelling) have been suggested in pre and post-performance tests (Widodo, 2006).

III. DATA ANALYSIS

The scores obtained from administering the pre-and post-tests, which were divided into 4 parts, and results from the questionnaire were converted into percentages for a more accurate result in the data analysis. The data were then analyzed by performing a set of dependent t-tests to identify the difference between means of the two tests. The information about the subjects' perceptions towards the assessment techniques sought from the questionnaire was first counted from the number of subjects who responded each test item. All data collected from the study were entered into a computer database, cleaned, verified categorized and analyzed using statistical package of social sciences 21 to determine means and standard deviation.

The acceptable statistical significance level was set at alpha (α) <0.05. After the receipt of the completed data, it was statistically analyzed by using SPSS 21 through the following:

Steps: First, the data of perceptions toward peer feedback of pre and post perceptions were used to calculate for average means. Second, the means of pre and post perceptions toward peer feedback were divided into three levels and interpreted in the form of range based on the criterion of (mean \pm 0.5SD).

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Students' Background Information

Table 1. Students' Background Information (N=44)

		Male	Female	Total
Age	21-25	29	15	44
Group	Experimental	13	9	22
	Control	16	6	22

Inter-Rater Correlations of Experimental and Control groups

In order to compare the average performance in pre-and post- instruction tests of the experimental group and Control group, the researcher wanted to make sure that both pre-and post-tests were scored objectively.

Table 2. Inter-Rater correlations of Experimental and Control Groups (N=44)

Variables		Rater 1		Rater 2	
Experimental Group	Pre-test	Rater 1	1	.753**	
		Rater2	.753**	1	
	Post-test	Rater 1	1	.756**	
		Rater 2	.756**	1	
Control Group	Pre-test	Rater 1	1	.527**	
		Rater2	.527**	1	
	Post-test	Rater 1	1	.501**	
		Rater 2	.501**	1	

**p < .01

- The experimental group pre-test correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
- The same group, post-test **p < .05(**. correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).
- The pre-test control group(**. correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
- The same group, post-test correlation is significant at the *p < .05* (2-tailed).

In Table 2, the second row shows the inter-rater correlation of experimental group Rater 1 against Rater-2 in pre-test, $r = .753$. This may possibly point out that the raters' marking of the same exam paper is not greatly consistent. As pinpointed in the same table, the inter-rater of post experimental group Rater 1 against Rater 2 was $r = .756$. This shows that there is a strong positive correlation between the two raters. Whereas, as shown in the next row, the inter-rater correlation of control group rater 1 against rater 2 was $r = 0.527^*$. This depicts that the raters' marking is consistent. As indicated, there is a positive correlation between the scoring of the two assessors. On the same table above, the P-value of Rater 1 against Rater 2 correlates $r = 0.756^{**}$. This shows that the raters' marking was very reliable.

Comparison of Control and Experimental Groups

The participants in the study were 44 students from accounting department, 22 students in control group and the other 22 students in experimental group. The results provided information about 44 students' scores on the two writing assignments completed during the study. The first writing assignment's mean score, where students were to write about a past writing experience, shows students' writing ability prior to giving and receiving peer feedback in a peer evaluation session.

The changes in the overall mean score on the pre- and post-samples are reported in the following table.

Table 3. Independent samples t-test summary (N=44)

Tests	Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	P-value
Post-test	Experimental group	22	61.77	3.85			
	Control. group	22	68.82	2.39	21	0.000192	
	Experimental group	22	73.045	3.91			

**p<.01

According to the first research question, the table 3 specifies that students are in need of a writing intervention. It points out that peer evaluation is a topical issue that can be exercised in the classroom to help students improve their writing performance. It is important, as this study indicates, to have a very careful process for students to complete as peer evaluators. It is clear that, for this particular study, peer evaluation played a pivotal role in helping students write better.

As shown in Table 3, the independent samples t-test technique was applied to the mean pre-test scores for the control and experimental groups in order to examine the initial differences in writing performance. The mean value of control group was 65.64, and the standard deviation was 2.65; on the other hand, the mean value of

experimental group was 61.77, and standard deviation was 3.85. Besides, the df stands for 21, $t=0.000433$ and P-value is .34300. According to the test results, there was no significant difference in the writing performance in the course between the control and experimental groups in the beginning.

As the above table (table 3) shows, the mean value of control group in post-test is 68.82; and the standard deviation was 2.39, whereas, the mean value of experimental group was 73.045, and the standard deviation was 3.91. On the other hand, the $df= 21$, $t= 0.000192$, and p valued= 0.000. According to the post- test results, there was significant difference in course achievement between the control and experimental groups ($p<.001$). The experimental group's mean score on the achievement test was higher than the control group's mean score.

In general, the statistical results indicated that the peer evaluation mode of instruction had a positive effect on students' writing performances. There was no statistically significant difference in prior knowledge of English basic writing skills between the experimental group, and the control group. Due to the limited amount of time devoted to the study, the differences were not as great as anticipated. However, students' scores increased from their first writing assignment to their second which is in response to research question 1 that queried how peer evaluation influences students' writing skills in the classroom.

In terms of content, organization of the essays, language and style, 22 students showed an increase in their performance. 80% of the students showed remarkable increase in content and organization after they edited the essays which were read and commented by their peer editors prior to submission. The other 20% of the students showed neither increase nor decrease in their content and organization performance. However, the students' performance in content and organization is above four marks which is more than average.

In general, the subjects performed better in all writing aspects in the post-test, compared with that of the pre-test, namely the completeness of content, idea organization, writing mechanism, and grammatical structure. Thus, it can be concluded that implementing peer assessment technique in the writing class could satisfactorily improve the learners' writing ability.

Students' Perceptions towards peer Assessment

According to the second research question, the responses of the students to question 1-22 statements ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Students' pre and post perception to the peer assessment(N=22)

No.	Survey Questions		Mean	S.D	Perce. Lev.
01	Peer review is helpful in revision of my paper.	pre	3.18	1.140	moderate
		post	3.36	0.902	Highest
02	Feedback from my peers is constructive.	pre	2.95	0.722	low
		post	3.18	1.140	moderate
03	Feedback from my peers is clear & understandable.	pre	2.50	1.472	low
		post	3.32	0.894	High
04	I like peer review for future writing assignments.	pre	2.95	0.722	low
		post	2.95	0.722	low
05	I feel good about peer assessment	pre	3.14	0.468	moderate
		post	3.23	0.429	High
06	Students should take part in assessing their peers	Pre	3.32	0.894	High
		Post	3.50	0.512	High
07	I believe a first- year student should be able to assign grades to peers in a responsible manner	Pre	3.32	0.894	High
		Post	3.59	0.503	High
08	I became comfortable in making peer assessments	Pre	3.23	0.922	High
		post	4.00	0.000	High
09	I made a fair and responsible assessment of my peers	pre	3.45	0.912	High
		post	3.86	.710	High
10	The peer review process helps me increasing my writing skills	pre	3.23	.429	High
		post	3.95	.785	High
11	My reviews of my peers' papers are beneficial to me for identifying errors in spelling	pre	3.23	.429	High
		post	3.73	.456	High
12	Comments provide by my peer reviewers of my papers are beneficial to me for identifying errors in punctuation.	pre	3.14	.468	moderate
		post	3.45	.912	High
13	The class discussions about the comments written by my peer evaluator caused me to be more conscious about writing skills.	pre	3.23	.429	High
		post	3.50	.913	High
14	If I can choose, I would choose to have peer assess my	pre	3.14	.468	moderate

		post	3.23	.922	High
15	I want the friends who have higher ability than me to assess my writing (***)	pre	2.50	1.472	low
		post	3.14	.468	low
16	After my writing was assessed by peer, I want my teacher reassess it	pre	3.14	.468	low
		post	3.86	.640	High
17	I want the friends who have lower ability than me to assess my writing (***)	pre	1.59	1.141	low
		post	3.14	.468	low
18	I feel embarrassed when my writing was assessed by peer (***)	pre	3.14	.468	low
		post	2.50	1.412	low
19	I felt that the peer kept finding faults in my writing when he or she assessed. (***)	pre	2.95	.722	low
		post	3.14	.468	moderate
20	I felt uncomfortable when I had to assess peer's writing (***)	pre	3.14	.468	moderate
		post	3.27	.456	moderate
21	Peer assessment is a boring learning method and Wastes of time. (***)	pre	3.45	.912	High
		post	4.14	.710	High
22	If I can choose, I would choose to have merely a teacher assess my writing. (***)	pre	3.45	.912	High
		post	4.59	.503	High
Average		pre	3.06	.769	moderate
		post	3.48	.678	High

*** The statistical value of the negative Perception questions have been adjusted.

A summary of the students' reactions prior to the peer assessment exercises is displayed in Table 4.

Level of students' pre and post Perception toward Peer feedback

The means of pre and post perceptions toward peer feedback were divided into three levels and interpreted in the form of range based on the criterion mentioned earlier, of mean \pm 0.5 SD.

a) Three categories of the students' Perceptions toward peer feedback in the following polarities:

1. $3.21 \pm (0.5) (0.67) \rightarrow 3.21 \pm 0.33$
2. $3.21 - 5.00$ High/positive
3. $3 - 3.20$ Moderate/neutral
4. $1.00 - 2.98$ Low/negative

The study showed that the level of post perception toward students feedback (3.48 *.678) was higher than that of pre perceptions toward peer feedback (3.06, *.769) (Table 4). This indicates that the students improved their perception towards peer feedback after post treatment.

A significant difference was found between pre-perception and post-perception in on the knowledge about the peer evaluation.. Table 4 revealed that The level of perceptions toward peer feedback was highest (mean =3.48) among sixteen positive polarity items, and the lowest for queries of liking peer review for future writing assignments (item number 4) and liking friends who have higher ability than the participant to assess the writing (Item 15) (2.95 and 2.70), respectively. The others all are in highest quantum leap. The lowest are in negative polarity, but when changing into its implied sense, they are all significant and positive

In general, the differences are shown in linear as (3.48, *.678), (3.06, *.769), (3.48), (0.34300), (2.95 & 2.70) level of post perception toward students feedback, pre perceptions toward peer feedback, the highest mean, P-value, and the lowest mean indicated in items 4 & 15 respectively (Table 4).

The students had somewhat different perceptions. However, based on the t-test results, the increase of score differences between the pre- and post-surveys are statistically significant. Students were, at first, very hesitant of the process of peer evaluation; but going through the process made them more comfortable and improved their perceptions towards peer evaluation.

The students had positive perceptions towards peer assessment with an overall mean of 3.48. In terms of changing perceptions, the students were not of the opinion that peer assessment could stimulate writing at first, but they changed their views later (Item xxx). They also changed their perceptions of having more chances to improve writing in English getting adequate feedbacks from their peers as well as bettering their writing skills through peer assessment (Item xx).

. Of all the perception questionnaires, students expressed the low agreement in very few statements, from 16-22(. They also expressed the highest agreement with positive polarity statements, 1-15 except in statement 4 and 15. The results of this study, with regard to perception showed that the post perception of per evaluation result scales up the pre-perception of experimental students. The students in the pre-test scored less mark in contrast with the post perception test.

Students had high expectations of peer review being of value to their learning, with over 90 per cent expecting either 'very useful' or 'useful' outcomes in pre survey. However, this result was increased remarkably after using the peer review system. The students' post-user evaluations exceeded their pre perception. Very few students, however, have negative perception that assessment and evaluation are the sole responsibilities of the teacher. This might be happened that they had no that much exposure to peer evaluation.

The participants had already a positive attitude towards peer assessment from the beginning (Table 4). Such an attitude was kept and enhanced in the post perception questionnaire (Table2). Similar findings were reported by Zeineb Ayachi (2017) who pointed out to the positive trend among the participants towards peer assessment. The present findings are also in line with Hansson (2014) who value peer assessment as it helps learners be more in control of their learning. However, KaufanShuun, (2010) in Zeineb Ayachi (2017)reported a negative perception of peer assessment in both the pre and post survey. Unlike Linda, (2007) participants, the present participants expressed more agreement on peer assessment as it helped them learn from their peer mistakes and develop their writing skill as reported by eleven participants in the pre-questionnaire. In the post questionnaire twelve participants expressed the same opinion.

the participants, as shown in Table 4, perceived peer correction as a way that helped them think about criteria assessment when writing their essays as reported in part two of the post-questionnaire. Peer correction would help them be more aware of the different criteria required in writing a composition, and teacher assessment was the most reliable authority that would reflect their real levels. In fact, the participants felt that as peer assessors, their writing improved, a view supported by (Maarof et al., 2011).

Summary of the Open-ended Questions

Students were finally asked whether they thought peer review had aided in improving their written assignments. They were given the opportunity to write comments both before and after the review process.

One of the students commented saying "The reviews on my writing assignment helped me, however, they were a bit confusing as they all said different things. One review would say something is good but another would say that it needs a lot of work, so it made the process harder to expel exactly what was incorrect with my paragraph..."The other student pin pointed that "Although it took time to do, it made me look at my own writing ability in a different view, as well as exposing me to friends' opinions to my compositions. I like it".

Another student said that "Comments on my papers were awfully helpful as each critic saw errors that neither I nor other reviewers saw, which helped me in improving my written works. I also appreciated writing reviews for other people's reports, as it helped me repeat what was right and wrong to do in my own writing."

Very few comments indicated a concern about the quality of the reviews but the majority of comments were positive. Whilst most of these positive reviews made broad-spectrum comments about helping to improve their writing, some in addition expressed concerns about the difficulty in relying on other students to give high quality reviews.

Five students(2 percents) specifically mentioned that receiving reviews was not helpful, but writing them was helpful. They expressed some concern about the fairness of other students contributing to the assessment of their work. Their concern was that other students might not review fairly due to either lack of understanding of how to grade the work, or due to deliberately trying to manipulate the system either to be kind to others or to gain themselves a higher mark.

They indicated that the major disadvantages of peer feedback included lack of confidence in giving comments and suggestions and incompetency in language. students regarded teacher feedback as the most successful revision method because they had had confidence in the teacher's knowledge and skill in English. In addition, they wanted to make use of teacher comments to improve their future compositions.

It is important to note, however, that students had a fairly positive view of peer reviewing as it related to writing improvement. The overall feedback from students however, was extremely positive. They appreciated that not only did the process improve their own work but it also improved their skills to evaluate technical work. Students gained a better understanding of how their group was progressing, and reported a 'feeling of being part of a learning community.

The common comments made by experimental students support the impressions gained from the survey in that there was some anxiety before the review process as to the ability of students to write useful reviews. However, the post review survey and comments suggest that this uneasiness was largely unfounded and that there was some recognition that much of the value in the process came from actually writing reviews of their peers.

Although student peer review has been trialed in relatively a small number of subjects across the university –and its effectiveness evaluated in even fewer –these evaluations suggest that it is generally perceived to be effective in improving learning, and is well received by students. However, like any other aspect of teaching, student peer review is not a one-size-fits-all solution and staff should be mindful of potential problems and pitfalls.

On the other hand, findings from the open-ended questions are schematized/ categorized in the following categories. As summary entails, most of the participants agreed that learning writing made them recognize the errors and learn how to use grammar rules in writing. Learners get closer to their classmates. They learned how to work in groups; they enjoyed having produced compositions which contained better contents, idea organization, and grammar. They also learned about their own writing ability through their work being assessed by peer.

The writing process, peer assessment, helped them remember the errors and language rules. It was an interesting learning technique in which better learners had an opportunity to help poorer learners. However, some participants suggested that the technique may cause certain errors in the assessment because the learners have different levels of language ability. Research finding indicates that students sometimes regard peer assessment as unfair and often believe that peers are unqualified to review and assess students' work. Furthermore, students' perceptions about the fairness of peer assessment drop significantly following students' experience in doing peer assessment (Fei, 2006; Nikta, 2010).

Research findings, in this regard, maintained that learners' perceptions have direct effect on learners' second language learning process and achievement. Learners' positive perceptions were an important learning catalyst because they helped open learners different perspectives towards writing. The learners, thus, feel relaxed with the learning task they are encountering Ellis (1994), Rollinson, (2004) in (Nikta, 2010).

The open-ended questionnaire analysis in general revealed that subjects highly agreed with the implementation of peer assessment in teaching writing. The positive reasons for changing Perceptions include the increase of motivation and participation, separation of individual effort from group products, usefulness of peers' comments and suggestions and enjoyment of voicing opinions.

Relative Challenges

When taking the course offered in the portrayed mode, the students face a number of challenges, some of which are connected with learning to write itself and others with the mode in which the course is delivered. Common limitations of learning to write are most likely to the majority of learners are working on the development of their writing skills, such as designing appropriate topics for their essay, developing it with adequate support, and organizing their ideas logically and consistently. Another challenge on the writing side is connected with the students' ability to write their works at an adequate level of grammar, vocabulary and style.

Most students have never participated in any kind of academic peer review before, and therefore advice and training in reviewing are critically important forms of support that should accompany peer review assignments. The session includes advice on the process of reviewing (reading and annotating a manuscript, preparing and proof-reading the review, completing the review form), the importance of providing both praise for the positive aspects of a study as well as highlighting the weaknesses, examples of helpful and unhelpful reviews, tips for time management of reviews, and references to online resources. Students nevertheless reported that they find their first experience with peer review overwhelming. Thus, while tutorials are important and necessary, they may be insufficient on their own without some form of opportunity for 'learning by doing'.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The current study sought to explore the effect of peer assessment on English language writing instruction and the Perceptions of accounting CEP students at Hawassa University in focus. The research has presented new direction in assessing and responding to student's writing by encouraging them to work collaboratively through peer editing sessions. Students in peer assessment learned and practiced basic writing skills that they could then use to articulate ideas about their own writing. While the majority of revisions that students made were surface level adjustments, the changes they made as a result of peer editing were more often meaning-level changes than those revisions they made on their own. It was also found that writing multiple drafts resulted in overall essay improvement.

Peer review gives teachers more quality time to work with students. Peer editing also decreased the amount of paperwork for teachers. In addition, it also provides students with plenty of opportunities to inspirations of ideas and to learn from each other. The students in the pre-experimental test scored less achievement in contrast with the post perception test.

Students understood the peer-editing process better when the teacher went through the lesson steps, scaffolding, modeling, using checklists and rubrics helped students to be more focused in achieving the lesson objectives; allowing ample opportunities for students to seek clarification and exchange ideas made the learning richer; giving students autonomy to choose their own partners enabled them to work better in their groups. Therefore, it could be concluded that the treatment of basic writing skills course using peer evaluation method significantly improved the peer evaluation Perceptions of the students.

Students' comments after the experiment showed that students, as reviewers, benefited from this training regarding writing improvement, confidence build-up, language and acquisition. Correspondingly, student writers were able to approach topics of interest to them from multiple perspectives. On the other hand, the quantitative analysis of the data revealed the positive effect of peer review method on students' writing skill, indicating that the learners engaged in this interactive method were motivated to write more essays and enjoy writing. The quality, consistency, and grades of the final papers were significantly improved. The mean scores of the experimental group in the first experience shifted from 61.66 to 73.045 in the last experiment, but this shift for the control group was ranged from 65.64 to 68.82 (Table 3).

VI. CONCLUSION

This study focused on the writing progress and perception of accounting students' through peer review method. The two leading research questions, described in the beginning, presented the basis for this research, and the results of this research were described in this section.

R1: Do Peer Evaluations Increase Student Writing Skills?

for control group the conventional method where teacher makes corrections on the student's errors were applied. However, for treatment group the alternative method, peer editing activities were applied for paragraph and essay compositions. The grades for both evaluations were compared, analyzed and tabulated into the findings. The quality, consistency, and grades of the final papers were significantly improved. The mean scores of the experimental group in the first experience shifted from the mean scores of the experimental group in the first experience shifted from 61.66 to 73.045 in the last experiment, but this shift for the control group was ranged from 65.64 to 68.82. It was found that not only did students enjoy the process and product, but also a significant development and change was observed in their writing skills.

R2: What are the students' perceptions towards writing skills course using peer evaluation?

the increase of score differences between the pre- and post-surveys, the mean value of pre perception = 3.06 (.769) and post perception = 3.48 (.678) and they were statistically significant. Students' opinions of peer assessment became more positive.. peer evaluation improved students' writing; the information students gain from peer evaluation increases versus a typical lecture and test class. The peer review process engaged the students in frequent reading and writing, fostered their critical reading and reflection, sharpened their writing knowledge and skills, increased their motivation and joy of writing, and promoted their information literacy.

Students' Perceptions about peer evaluation are overall positive; and students' value being the evaluator in the peer evaluation process. Students were also positive about the peer review processes making contributions to their writing skills.

The data from the questionnaire also revealed that students were happy with the peer editing activity. Very few informants, however, suggested that they devalued peer editing. In open ended questionnaires, they replied that they were fellow students who might make similar errors on their writing, so they couldn't provide improvement for each other. They preferred to get feedback from their instructors in order to avoid wrong information.

The paradoxical features of the study seem to indicate that students have positive Perception of the helpfulness of peer editing. However, the study could not escape away from some complaints. Few students felt very worried and frustrated, because their essays were exposed to useless criticism. Students felt doubtful about the quality of peer suggestions and hesitated to use peer comments in their writing. This completely challenges the belief that peer feedback is more informative at the learners' level of development, than the teacher's feedback, despite the assumption that the teacher is "Omni Scient and Omni Potent".

successful revision involves a focus on issues of meaning and rhetorical aspects of text, an ability to detect mismatches between intended and understood meaning, and a supply of viable text alternatives.

Although peer response remains an important source of giving feedback in many writing courses, as well as this work, there is clearly a need for further investigation to conform the effectiveness of peer review as an effective means of improving English as a Second Language writing. Peer editing also provided students with plenty of opportunities to brainstorm ideas and to learn from each other and one another. Also, students' Perceptions towards peer evaluation and writing is positive, and that there was a constant cycle between practicing effective evaluation and improving students' perceptions. Students also indicated that they increased their writing skills from the comments provided by their peer reviewer regarding spelling, grammar and punctuation. In general, having such a program was proved as a worthwhile endeavor to undertake in educational settings.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Setting up a peer evaluation program in the classroom would not be without difficulty; however, if done properly, problems would be minimal. One way of getting the program started is to bring in sample papers and tape recordings of actual peer editing sessions. The entire class could read, listen to, and discuss the process of evaluating writing. With this kind of practice, teachers can deal with questions or fears about peer feedback and point out the suggestions that are helpful and those that are not.

- Students should be trained to be responsible for applying editing strategies in their own work before undertaking peer evaluation. If they are more accountable for editing their own language errors before participating in the peer review activity, peer reviewers can attend specifically to any content errors in their partners' writing and may generate more constructive feedback for effective revisions.
- Teachers have to change their role from being merely an instructor who spends the whole time teaching and grading students' work to coach and facilitator.
- Moreover, further study should be made in large study scale to confirm the result of this study. On the other hand, it is recommended that the peer assessment technique be introduced to learners of different levels, especially, to high school, preparatory, college and to undergraduate students at different year levels.

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