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From Positive Perceptions to Fragile Practice: Feedback Literacy in LMS-Mediated Peer Review among Vietnamese EFL Learners

Nguyen Van Long*

The University of Danang – University of Foreign Language Studies,
131 Luong Nhu Hoc, Cam Le, Danang, Vietnam

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Abstract: This convergent mixed-methods study looked at how Vietnamese English majors took part in LMS-mediated peer review during an academic writing course. Seventy second-year students answered a questionnaire, and seven of them were later interviewed. Their Moodle records added 592 peer comments from three review rounds. Students valued online peer review, mainly because classmates' comments could be opened at any time and a history of feedback stayed saved. Giving comments was another matter. Students felt more at ease receiving feedback than writing it, and many doubted that they had the authority to judge a peer's draft. The Moodle data complicated the picture further: comment numbers peaked in the second round and fell back in the third, while nearly two thirds of all comments (65.2%) dealt with grammar and vocabulary instead of content or organisation. LMS-mediated peer review, the study argues, is better seen as a socially sensitive feedback literacy practice than as a convenient digital activity.

Keywords: Peer review; feedback literacy; Moodle; EFL writing; reviewer authority.

1. Introduction

Asking students to comment on each other's drafts is now a routine step in many second language (L2) writing courses. In doing so, the reviewer has to decide how good a classmate's essay is and where it goes wrong. A suggestion for revision is often expected too. Peer review is therefore valued as much for the judgement about quality it trains as for the comments it produces, with learners taking a more active part in writing development instead of only receiving teacher correction [1, 2].

In Vietnamese university EFL classes, English majors are required to write academic essays. Many of them, though, still regard an essay as a finished product that goes to the teacher for a grade and for correction. Peer review asks them for something they are less used to. Reading a classmate's draft against the criteria and deciding which parts work is demanding enough, and after that the reviewer

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: nvlong@ufl.udn.vn

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still has to word the weak points in such a way that the classmate will accept them.

A learning management system (LMS) such as Moodle appears to make this work easier, at least in practical terms. Drafts can be uploaded and commented on outside class hours. The saved comments then remain available when the writer sits down to revise. As regards research, the LMS has another advantage, namely its record of what each reviewer wrote during the writing cycle; spoken comments in a classroom are usually lost once the lesson ends. Because of this record, the current study could examine what students actually commented on, in addition to whether they used the platform at all.

Regular use of an LMS, of course, does not by itself teach students how to give useful feedback or how to use the feedback they receive. The question for the current study is how students build feedback literacy through LMS-mediated peer review, and where they fail to build it.

Carless and Boud [3] describe feedback literacy as the capacity to understand feedback and make judgements about it, to manage the emotions it brings, and to use it in later work. Peer review asks for this literacy twice over. Students receive comments on their own drafts as writers; as reviewers, they must also produce comments for others. Of the two roles, reviewing is the more fragile, since a student first has to feel entitled to judge a classmate's text. Without that feeling, peer review easily slides into a polite course requirement with little real revision coming out of it.

Prior research on online peer feedback has examined design features, rubric effects, and training conditions [4, 5], but less attention has been paid to the social and epistemic position of the reviewer, that is, how students come to feel, or not feel, that they have some right to judge a classmate's text. The present study addresses this gap by examining Vietnamese English majors' perceptions and actual reviewing practices in a Moodle-supported academic writing course, asking how students' largely positive views of the process compared with what they actually produced as reviewers. In this article, 'peer review' refers to the wider classroom process in which students read and respond to classmates' drafts, while 'peer feedback' refers more specifically to the written comments produced during that process.

The study is guided by two research questions:

RQ1. How do Vietnamese EFL undergraduates perceive the value, constraints, and revision potential of LMS-mediated peer review in academic writing?

RQ2. What patterns characterise their actual engagement in LMS-mediated peer review, particularly in the focus and distribution of comments across writing tasks, and in students' reported use of peer comments for revision?

Feedback literacy works in both questions as an interpretive lens rather than as a measured variable. RQ1 looks at how it appears in students' views of the process, while RQ2 looks at what they actually wrote and did as reviewers.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Peer Feedback and Feedback Literacy in L2 Writing

Early research on L2 peer feedback mostly asked whether students used peer comments at all. Later work has turned to the conditions under which students trust such comments and act on them. Students' attention to surface features need not mean that they cannot see larger problems in a draft; correcting the surface simply carries less social risk [2]. In a meta-analysis, Huisman et al., [6] found that formative peer feedback improved students' writing overall, though the effect was not the same under every learning condition. Including peer review in a course, in other words, guarantees rather little, since a great deal

depends on how students understand the process and use it. For any particular course it is more useful to ask what kind of feedback students are able to give there and which comments they trust enough to take up.

Carless and Boud [3] offer a framework of feedback literacy with four features (appreciating feedback, making judgements, managing affect and taking action). I use it here to read the issues above. Hattie and Timperley [7] set a more general standard, under which effective feedback tells learners where they are going, how they are progressing, and what they might do next; peer comments in the current study met it only in part. In a writing class none of these dimensions stays abstract for long. A student who receives a peer's comment has to work out whether it is correct and whether it suits the present draft. Whether the change is worth the time is a further, practical question. Reviewers face one more demand, because the students receiving comments are the same ones who are expected to write them. Studies of feedback dialogue have made a related point, namely that feedback is worked out between people through interaction and is not just passed on to learners [8, 9].

Dong et al., [10] developed and validated a scale of peer feedback literacy in writing. Their account links what students do with feedback to identity and confidence as well as to social interaction. It also includes the ability to make evaluative judgements. That notion has its own literature, where evaluative judgement means students' capacity to make informed decisions about the quality of their own and others' work [11, 12].

2.2. Online Peer Feedback and the Visibility of Comments

When peer feedback moves online, students have more time to compose a comment. Some of the pressure of responding face to face is gone as well. A posted comment remains on the platform long after the review session, which helps the writer during revision, while the reviewer may see this permanence differently, as a reason to say less.

A good deal of recent research on online peer feedback deals with design. A systematic review by Gao et al., [4] found that online peer feedback in higher education often relies on rubrics and training, plus some structuring of the task, to support comment quality. Working with a Moodle forum, Xie and Zhang [5] reported that rubrics, anonymity, templates and traceable feedback histories could all affect the quality of online comments. Both studies look mainly at the platform and at how its design and scaffolding shape students' behaviour over time. The reviewer's own position gets less attention.

2.3. Reviewer Authority and Face Concern in EFL Peer Feedback

By reviewer authority I mean a student's confidence that he or she has the standing to judge a classmate's text. Many peer feedback studies say little about it. Students can be told to comment without feeling entitled to do so. In EFL writing this doubt tends to be stronger when the reviewer is unsure of his or her own English. A student who notices a problem may then hold back, thinking 'Who am I to say this?' The hesitation has a linguistic side and a social one. Where classmates know each other well, direct criticism may put a friendship at risk or cause someone to lose face.

Concern for face can push reviewers toward softer comments. A weak argument or a badly organised paragraph may go unmentioned while a misspelt word gets marked, partly because a grammar comment can pass as technical correction, whereas a remark on the argument is easily heard as a verdict on how the writer thinks. Local feedback is therefore not always a sign of limited ability. Sometimes it is a cautious social choice.

Research on how students engage with feedback is consistent with this view. For Zhang and Hyland [13], engagement has behavioural, affective, and cognitive sides. In

an earlier paper [14] the same authors had separated deeper engagement, in which students revise with thought, from a surface kind where advice is mostly followed or ignored. Read together, the two studies suggest that feedback literacy grows unevenly, more so when students are not yet at ease making strong judgements about a peer's text.

I take the distinction between surface and deeper engagement directly from Zhang and Hyland [13, 14], although the evidence here is of a different kind. Their studies relied on reflective journals and analysis of revisions. The current study puts Moodle trace data together with survey and interview evidence, so that what students said about reviewing can be checked against the comments they actually wrote.

Unlike scale-based studies such as Dong et al., [10], the current study does not measure feedback literacy as a composite construct. Nor were the questionnaire items combined into an overall feedback literacy score. What it examines instead is how that literacy shows itself in one situated practice: reviewing a classmate's draft on Moodle. Two of the four features in Carless and Boud's model [3] receive most attention, making judgements and managing affect, because these are the ones the reviewer role puts under pressure. Reviewer authority is treated as the condition linking them. Table 1 sets out each dimension and the evidence used to examine it.

Table 1. Conceptual framing and empirical indicators for the present study

Conceptual focus	Meaning in this study	Why it matters for analysis	How it is examined
Feedback literacy	Students' capacity to understand, judge, manage, and use feedback.	It moves the study beyond attitudes toward what students can actually do with feedback.	Not scored as a whole; read through the rows below, across all three data sources
Evaluative judgement	Students' capacity to judge the quality of a peer's text and of comments received	It shows which judgements students were willing to make in writing, and which they held back.	Local vs global comment targets, Tasks 1–3 (Table 4, Figure 2); students checking comments against the rubric (S4, S7)
Reviewer authority	Students' perceived right and confidence to comment on peers' writing.	It explains why students may value peer review but still avoid direct or global critique.	Confidence item (M = 3.05); hesitation in interviews (S3, S6)
Traceability	The saved record of comments in the LMS across review rounds.	It allows comparison between self-reported engagement and documented commenting behaviour.	Comments per round (Table 3); coded corpus (N = 592)
Socially cautious feedback (managing affect)	Feedback shaped by politeness, face concern, and relationship maintenance.	It explains why local language comments may be safer than comments on argument or coherence.	Nervousness (M = 3.75), worry about wrong advice (M = 3.80), fear of offending (M = 3.85); face accounts (S2, S3); share of local comments

Note. Uptake is examined through interview accounts and the item on motivation to revise (M = 4.10). Revised drafts were not analysed.

What remains less clear is how these issues appear when online peer review is examined through both students' accounts and their actual written comments across repeated tasks. Much existing work shows that online peer feedback can be useful, and recent studies have

examined design features such as rubrics, anonymity, and traceability. Less attention has been given to the fragile reviewer position itself: how students feel authorised, or not authorised, to judge a peer's text in a socially close EFL classroom. The current study comes at that gap from the side of practice. By linking students' perceptions and interview accounts to their Moodle comment records, it reads feedback literacy in what students did as well as in how they felt about peer review.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Research Design and Setting

I chose a convergent mixed-methods design. Quantitative and qualitative data came from the same course and were brought together at the interpretation stage. Each source had its own job. Broad patterns in perceptions and self-reported practice came from the questionnaire, while the interviews helped explain why students felt as they did about giving and receiving comments. For what students actually wrote as reviewers, the Moodle comment records were used. A survey on its own would have shown what students believed, but not how those beliefs played out in practice [15].

The study was conducted at a public university in Central Vietnam in two Academic Writing classes for second-year English majors. Peer review was part of the normal course requirements. Moodle was used as the course space for draft submission, peer commenting, and later review of comments. Its value for the study was that it kept a record of peer feedback across the writing cycle.

3.2. Participants

Questionnaire participants were 70 second-year English majors, including 5 male and 65 female students. Every one of them had used the LMS for course tasks before, though for most, regular use went back less than two years. Seven students were then chosen purposively for interview. Selection was based on variation in participation and confidence. I also took into account how useful each student found online peer feedback. In this article they appear as S1 to S7. Their accounts were used to interpret patterns found in the questionnaire and in the Moodle records.

3.3. Instructional Procedure

The course ran three rounds of writing and peer review over about two and a half months. In every round, students wrote an opinion essay at home and posted it on Moodle, after which each of them chose at least one classmate's draft and commented on it using Moodle's comment function. Since comments were posted in the ordinary class space, the reviews were not anonymous. The teacher gave instructions orally and supplied the evaluation criteria (task response, coherence/cohesion, lexical resources, and grammatical range and accuracy). Students were asked to mention strengths as well as areas for improvement, but nobody was told how many comments to write. Once comments on their own drafts came in, writers read them online and revised.

The cycle was repeated on purpose. Peer feedback in this course was never meant as a one-off event, and students went through drafting, uploading, commenting and revising three times (Figure 1).

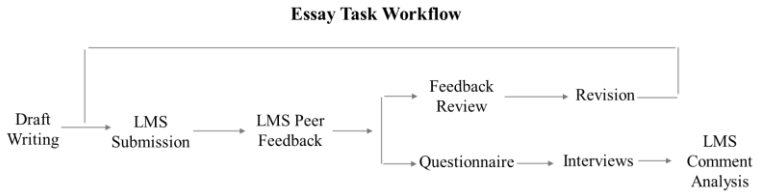

Figure 1. Repeated LMS-mediated peer-review cycle used in the course.

Over three rounds it became possible to see whether participation held steady from task to task and whether the focus of comments moved.

3.4. Data Sources

Three sources of data were used. The first was a structured questionnaire of 50 closed-ended items on students' perceptions and self-reported peer feedback practices, each rated on a five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Its items fell into three clusters. One dealt with the perceived value and understanding of LMS-mediated peer feedback and another with reported practices of giving and receiving feedback; perceived difficulties made up the third. I adapted the items from established instruments on peer feedback practices [2, 10] and online feedback engagement [5] and reworded them for the Moodle writing context of this course, after which a bilingual back-translation was carried out to check their clarity before the questionnaire was administered. Cronbach's alpha was .96, .94 and .83 for the three clusters, which indicates strong internal consistency. Reliability indices of this kind, of course, do not settle the question of construct validity [16].

Second, seven students took part in semi-structured interviews. The protocol had ten open-ended questions. Students were asked about giving and receiving peer feedback online and how far they trusted peer comments, as well as how they felt while reviewing and how they decided which comments to use in revision. All interviews were held in Vietnamese so that students could speak more naturally. After the recordings had been transcribed and anonymised, only the extracts needed for reporting were translated into English.

The third source was the Moodle record of peer comments from all three review rounds, 592 comments in total. Using classroom texts as a small corpus has precedent in Vietnamese EFL research, where corpus methods have been applied to English textbooks, for example [17]. Here the comments gave direct evidence of how students reviewed. From them it was possible to count participation in each round and to see the target of each comment, as well as the type of response a reviewer gave.

3.5. Data Analysis

Questionnaire data were analysed descriptively. Means and standard deviations were computed for each cluster and for the key items. No causal model was tested; I was looking for patterns to set beside the interview and Moodle data.

I read the interview transcripts several times while coding them. The first codes included perceived value, hesitation, trust and face concern, along with reviewer confidence and revision decisions. These were later grouped into larger themes. For the analysis, the theme that mattered most was a contrast between how easily students received feedback and how uncertain they were when giving it. Each Moodle comment received two codes, one for its target and one for its response function. Target codes followed the four course criteria (task response, coherence/cohesion, lexical resources, grammatical range and accuracy), whereas the four function codes were identifying a problem, suggesting a change, asking for clarification, and offering praise or encouragement.

Reliability was checked separately for the two kinds of coded data. For the Moodle data, a second coder independently coded 148 of the 592 comments (25%), drawn by stratified random sampling so that each round kept its share of the corpus: 48 comments from Task 1 (n = 190), 60 from Task 2 (n = 240), and 40 from Task 3 (n = 162). Cohen's kappa, calculated on this sample only, was 0.87 for comment target and 0.84 for response function, which indicates strong agreement [18]. The interviews were handled differently, and no

agreement coefficient was calculated for them. Instead, the second coder read S3's transcript in full against the preliminary coding guide. I chose S3 purposively as an information-rich case. A first reading had shown that this transcript covered both the benefits of receiving comments and hesitation in the reviewer role, including face concern and reviewer confidence, two codes at the centre of the guide. Where our readings of an extract differed, the two of us discussed it and tightened the code definitions. I then coded the remaining six transcripts with the revised guide and kept an audit trail of each analytic decision. One double-coded transcript is admittedly a limited check for qualitative data, and so the interview findings also lean on detailed description and direct quotation.

3.6. Linking the Data to Feedback Literacy

As noted above, no feedback literacy score could be derived from any of the three data sources. They were treated as evidence of how some dimensions of that literacy appeared in practice. For evaluative judgement, i.e., the capacity to decide on the quality of a piece of work [12], I relied mainly on comment targets. A comment on grammar or word choice in L2 peer review can usually be checked against a rule or a dictionary. Commenting on task response or coherence is harder, since the reviewer has to weigh how far the whole text meets the criteria. The split between local and global comments [2] was therefore read as a sign of which judgements students were prepared to make in a space where comments were saved and visible to others. It was not read as proof that they failed to notice global problems. The interview data served as a check on this. Regarding the action dimension [3], selective uptake was used as the indicator, because deciding which comment to accept already involves judging that comment. This is reported uptake only. Revised drafts were not compared, so the evidence rests on what students said they did. Taken together, these indicators point to a feedback literacy that was present but uneven, and that is the sense in which "fragile" is used in this article.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

Students were told what the study was for and that taking part was voluntary. They could withdraw at any point without penalty, and it was made clear that joining or not joining would have no effect on their course grades. Survey and interview data were kept apart from course assessment records. Pseudonyms are used throughout the reporting, and identifying details were removed from the interview transcripts as well as from the Moodle extracts.

4. Findings and Discussion

Findings and discussion are presented together here, in the order of the two research questions. Throughout the section, what students reported is set against what the LMS recorded them doing as reviewers; the two did not always match.

4.1. Positive Perceptions of LMS Peer Review, but a Fragile Reviewer Role

On the whole, students viewed LMS-mediated peer review positively. Their overall understanding of online peer feedback was high ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.58$), and they agreed that Moodle made the process easier to access and to come back to. Many of them valued the saved comment history. Comments were still there after class, and a student could reopen them before revising and compare one suggestion with another before deciding what to change. So on the receiving side of feedback literacy the LMS was clearly useful. The role of online resources accessed through personal devices in English-majored students' learning practices has also been examined in earlier work [19].

Interview accounts were in line with the survey. Students said they could read Moodle comments in private and at their own pace, and for this reason found them less threatening

than on-the-spot correction by a teacher. According to S2, the comments being kept online meant "I can read again when I forget what my friend means". S5 also mentioned traceability, saying Moodle was useful because "the comment is still there, so I do not need to ask again and again".

The picture was different when the same students were asked about reviewing. Their confidence in giving feedback (M = 3.05, SD = 0.94) sat considerably below their rating of how easy the LMS was to use (M = 4.15, SD = 0.67), and they also reported nervousness when giving feedback (M = 3.75, SD = 0.88) along with worry that their advice might be wrong (M = 3.80, SD = 0.85). Operating Moodle was easy. Judging a peer's writing was not, and that difficulty was social and epistemic rather than technical.

In the interviews, few students appeared unwilling to give feedback, and many said they wanted to help their classmates. Their doubts concerned whether their comments were accurate and how the writer would take them. S3, for example, said:

"When I write comments, I always read them three or four times. I do not want my friend to think I am showing off or being mean. Sometimes I see a big problem with their argument, but I just write good job because I do not know how to say it softly".

A similar account came from S6:

"I know I should point out mistakes, but what if they stop trying? I usually find one small grammar error and only mention that. The rest I ignore".

In the reviewer role, then, feedback literacy depends partly on skill and partly on legitimacy, meaning whether students feel permitted to judge a peer's work. For students such as S3 and S6, that sense of permission came and went.

Table 2. Selected questionnaire items on perceptions and reviewer confidence (N = 70)

Dimension	Selected indicator	Mean (SD)	Interpretive point
Understanding	Overall understanding of LMS peer feedback	4.12 (0.58)	Students recognised peer feedback as a meaningful course activity.
Giving feedback	Confidence when giving feedback	3.05 (0.94)	Reviewer authority was relatively weak.
Giving feedback	LMS is easy to use for peer feedback	4.15 (0.67)	Technical ease was high, but this did not ensure confident reviewing.
Giving feedback	Nervous when giving feedback	3.75 (0.88)	Giving comments involved emotional pressure.
Giving feedback	Worried about incorrect feedback	3.80 (0.85)	Students doubted their right and ability to advise peers.
Receiving feedback	Motivated to revise after receiving feedback	4.10 (0.71)	The receiving role was more comfortable.
Receiving feedback	More comfortable with peers than teachers	4.10 (0.74)	Peer comments felt less hierarchical.
Benefits	Learn from peers' mistakes	4.25 (0.65)	Students valued learning-by-reviewing, at least at the level of perception.

4.2. Face Concern and the Cost of Direct Feedback

Among the difficulties listed in the questionnaire, fear of offending classmates was rated highest (M = 3.85). Limited English proficiency came next (M = 3.75), with lack of confidence in their own writing skills somewhat lower (M = 3.50), whereas unclear lecturer guidance was evidently not seen as a major problem (M = 2.05). Teachers can supply the criteria, yet the social risk of applying them to a friend's essay remains the students' own to manage.

S2 put it this way:

"I am very afraid that my comment will make my friend lose face. In our class, we are all close, so if I say something too direct, maybe they will feel embarrassed in front of the teacher. I write very soft comments, like maybe you can check this part instead of this is wrong".

S2 knew that feedback ought to point out problems. Even so, the problem was softened until it felt safe to post, and this says a good deal about how classroom relationships shape peer feedback. Managing affect is often taken to mean coping with one's own disappointment when criticised. For a reviewer it also involves the likely emotional effect of a comment on the writer. Given their fear of damaging peer relations, students may understand the rubric quite well and still avoid applying it critically when the social cost feels too high.

It is possible that the visibility of Moodle comments made students even more cautious. Once posted, a comment stays on record, and the peer can read it again, as can the teacher in some cases. For some students this permanence was helpful when they were receiving feedback, but it may have made a comment feel more consequential for the one giving it. The same feature that made comments traceable for revision also made them more public and longer lasting, which may be why visibility on its own did not lead to better peer feedback. Ajjawi and Boud [8] describe feedback as negotiated between people rather than simply transmitted from one writer to another. In the current data, too, the relationship between reviewer and writer seemed to matter at least as much as any design feature of the LMS.

4.3. Reported Engagement Versus Moodle Trace Data

On the questionnaire, students described themselves as active reviewers. Agreement was high for giving feedback through the LMS during writing tasks (M = 4.04, SD = 0.72) and for following lecturer guidance (M = 4.06, SD = 0.70). Of these items, mentioning both strengths and areas for improvement had the highest mean (M = 4.20, SD = 0.68). Use of rubrics and checklists was rated a little lower (M = 3.96, SD = 0.81).

Several interviewees agreed, though with some reservations, and the rubric was mentioned more than once as something that made them feel safe. In S5's words:

"The rubric is like a safety net. Before I had the rubric, I did not know where to start. I would just look for spelling mistakes. But with the rubric, I can say your task response is clear but your coherence needs work. That sounds more professional, and I do not feel like I am attacking my friend".

Keeping the rubric open while commenting was helpful for S1 too, because "it tells me exactly what to look for, so I do not have to guess".

The Moodle log does not fully match this picture. Comment numbers did not rise steadily from Task 1 to Task 3; they went up from 190 to 240 in the second round and fell to 162 in the third (Table 3). Participation varied from one round to the next. Timing and task pressure probably affected it, and so perhaps did motivation and how seriously students took each round. Had the study relied on the survey alone, students would have looked highly engaged, whereas the log calls for a more cautious reading. Participation in online peer review has been discussed as a concern for some time, for example in earlier work on wiki-mediated peer review [20].

A number of interviewees linked the fall in Task 3 to timing. The final writing task, they said, came at the same time as deadlines in other courses. At least two of them (S4, S6) said they spent less time on peer comments when their own draft was taking longer to finish. End-of-semester fatigue is a plausible factor. Students' workload over the semester was not recorded, however, so the current data cannot separate fatigue from genuine disengagement, and the pattern is reported here as one that needs further investigation.

Table 3. Number of Moodle peer comments across the three review rounds

Review round	Number of comments	Percentage of total (%)	Interpretive note
Task 1	190	32.1	Initial participation level
Task 2	240	40.5	Highest participation
Task 3	162	27.4	Participation declined again
Total	592	100	Full Moodle comment corpus

4.4. Local Comments as Safe Participation

The Moodle comments also showed that students' feedback focus was uneven. Grammatical range and accuracy received the largest share of comments, followed by lexical resources, task response, and coherence/cohesion. Grammar-related comments accounted for about 35.0% of the corpus, lexical comments about 30.2%, task-response comments about 20.2%, and coherence/cohesion comments about 14.6%. Most comments focused on local language issues.

Students did not simply comment on grammar because grammar was the only thing they could see. They also used grammar and vocabulary as safer entry points into peer review. A grammar comment is easier to justify, less likely to sound personal, and more likely to be accepted as correction. Pointing out a weak argument or a poorly developed paragraph is a different matter. Doing so needs more confidence in one's own evaluative judgement, and the comment may also be heard as a criticism of the writer's thinking.

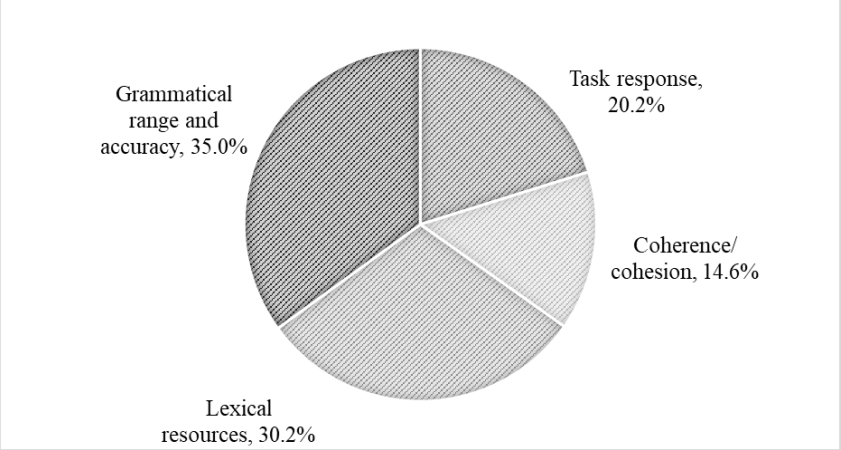

Figure 2. Overall distribution of LMS comment targets.

Table 4 gives the same figures round by round. Grammar accounted for 38.0% of comments in Task 1 and again in Task 2 before falling considerably to 27.0% in Task 3, while lexical comments grew from 23.5% to 33.0% and then 34.0%. Task-response comments dropped to 13.0% in the second round and recovered to 27.5% in the third. By then, repeated practice may have made some students more willing to comment on content. Coherence and cohesion stayed between 11.5% and 16.0% in every round and ended lowest of the four in Task 3. Explaining how one paragraph led to the next, or how an argument might be better organised, was apparently something students did not feel confident about.

Over the three rounds, grammar and vocabulary together made up 65.2% of all comments. On these local points students wrote with some confidence. The remaining 34.8% went to argument and organisation, i.e., comments that depend more heavily on evaluative judgement [12], and their share never settled across the three tasks. Students' feedback literacy held up at the level of language and was less secure at the level of the whole text.

Table 4. Comment targets across the three Moodle review rounds

Criterion	**Task 1 (%)**	**Task 2 (%)**	**Task 3 (%)**	**All tasks (%)**	**Interpretive reading**
Task response	23.0	13.0	27.5	20.2	Content-level attention returned in the final round.
Coherence/cohesion	15.5	16.0	11.5	14.6	Organisation drew the smallest share of comments overall.
Lexical resources	23.5	33.0	34.0	30.2	Vocabulary became a more visible focus over time.
Grammatical range and accuracy	38.0	38.0	27.0	35.0	Grammar dominated early but became less dominant later.
Total	100.0 (n = 190)	100.0 (n = 240)	100.0 (n = 162)	100.0 (N = 592)	

Note. Percentages are calculated within each review round; n = number of comments.

4.5. Selective Uptake and Emerging Feedback Literacy

Students reported that they used peer comments for revision, but interviews showed that uptake was selective. S4 explained:

"I read all the comments, but I do not use everything. If a comment is just good point with no explanation, I ignore it. But if someone says your third paragraph is confusing, maybe move this sentence to the second paragraph, that is useful. I check the rubric and if the comment matches, I make the change".

S7 also said:

"Grammar comments are easiest to accept because there is a right or wrong. For organisation, sometimes I disagree with my peer, so I keep my original structure. I am the one who will be graded, so I decide".

Uptake was evidently far from mechanical. Students weighed comments and checked them against the rubric before deciding what to use. They were less sure of their decisions with global comments than with those on grammar, as S7's remark about grammar and organisation suggests.

S6 described a change between the first two essays:

"For the first essay, I only fixed the grammar that my peer circled. I did not change anything about my ideas. For the second essay, I tried harder. A classmate said my introduction was too long, so I cut it down and moved one sentence to the conclusion. That felt like real revision, not just editing. But I still cannot do that for every comment".

S6 went from fixing the grammar a peer had circled in the first essay to shortening an introduction in the second. On a small scale, this is the main shift found in the study. For some students peer feedback opened a way from editing towards real revision, although the change was partial and did not always last, as S6 admitted. Students appreciated feedback more readily than they acted on the harder comments. Reorganising paragraphs or sharpening an argument stayed difficult. Zhang and Hyland [13, 14] likewise describe engagement with feedback as developing unevenly.

5. Pedagogical Implications

First, reviewer legitimacy can be addressed before peer review starts. Students such as S3 and S6 knew what they wanted to say but did not feel they had the right to say it. There is no need to claim that peer comments carry the same authority as teacher feedback; it is enough to tell students plainly that a reasoned observation based on the criteria is both expected of them and legitimate.

Second, teachers should model comment language. Many students knew what they wanted to say but did not know how to say it without sounding rude. Short sentence frames can help, especially for global feedback, and Box 1 offers a few that teachers can adapt. Three of them mention something that works before raising the concern. In the fourth, a structural point is softened with a hedge and a question. Students may find it easier to begin a global comment with such a frame than to write one from nothing.

Box 1. Sentence frames for global peer comments

Coherence: "Your main idea is clear to me. I am not sure, though, how paragraph 2 leads into paragraph 3".

Development: "I can see your opinion here. Could you explain it a bit more?"

Support: "The example is interesting. I am just not sure how it supports your topic sentence".

Structure: "Maybe I am wrong, but the conclusion seems to bring in a new idea. Would it fit better in a body paragraph?"

Third, handing out the rubric before the task is not enough, as students also need practice in using it. One simple activity is to put two sample comments side by side and let students discuss which is more useful, and why. In another, students take a weak comment that only notices grammar and rewrite it so that it says something about organisation or task response.

Finally, comment logs can become teaching material in their own right. In the current study, the Moodle record showed what students noticed as reviewers, which a survey alone could not have done. Teachers with access to such logs can bring them back into the course. A short class discussion of comment types after each round, without exposing any individual writer, would let students see for themselves that most comments went to grammar while coherence and argument received much less attention, and a pattern that has been pointed out is easier to work on.

6. Conclusion

Students in this study generally liked peer review, and they did engage with it. Their engagement, however, was socially managed. The Moodle records show them commenting where it felt safe and holding back where a wrong or unwelcome judgement seemed too risky. Laziness, then, does little to explain the distance between their positive perceptions and their fragile practice. That distance lay between being willing to help and feeling entitled to judge.

I have argued that LMS-mediated peer review is best understood as a feedback literacy practice situated in classroom relationships. In the current study Moodle clearly made peer feedback more flexible and easier to revisit, while the depth of the feedback hardly changed because of it. Deeper comments would have required a firmer sense of legitimacy on the students' part and some language for constructive critique, as well as help in moving from local correction to global revision. The platform itself brought little that was new to peer review. Its value lay more in making the weak points of peer feedback easier to see.

The study has limitations. Data were collected at one university only, with seven interviewees, and the three review rounds took place in about two and a half months of one course. Self-report may also have made engagement look more positive in the survey than it appeared in the LMS records. A longer study following peer feedback through a whole writing programme could show how the reviewer role develops over time. Comparing LMS design features, for example anonymity or structured comment templates, would be another direction for future work.

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