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Exploring Students' Perceptions of Peer Assessment in a Scientific Writing Course

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ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study investigates the lived experiences of 14 master's students enrolled in an English Education program at a public university in Yogyakarta. The study explores how these students engaged with and perceived the peer assessment process within a scientific writing course. Key areas of focus include students' emotional responses, cognitive engagement, perceived benefits and drawbacks, and the overall impact on their academic development. Data were gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews and analyzed thematically. Results show that peer assessment played a significant role in enhancing students' understanding of scientific writing conventions, fostering critical thinking, and promoting collaborative learning. Despite encountering challenges related to bias, objectivity, and content familiarity, students recognized the process as instrumental in improving their writing skills and academic confidence. The study concludes with pedagogical implications for effectively integrating peer assessment in writing instruction and offers practical recommendations for future implementation.

Keywords: Higher Education, Peer Assessment, Perceptions, Phenomenology, Scientific Writing

INTRODUCTION

Graduate students get a scientific writing course as part of their academic program to build important skills for effectively examining research findings. This course provides them with the skill to construct research papers, theses, proposals, and scholarly articles that comply with academic integrity. Scientific writing emphasizes clarity, precision, and structure, which are important for ensuring that comprehensive ideas and findings are accessible

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to various audiences, including peers and reviewers. The reason for including this course is multifaceted. Firstly, strong writing skills are integral to academic success and career advancement in research-oriented fields. Lack of communication research can decrease its influence, even if the findings are significant. Secondly, graduate students are expected to contribute to the body of knowledge in their field, often through publications in reputable journals. Mastering scientific writing enables them to meet this expectation and improves the opportunities for their work to be accepted for publication. Lastly, clear scientific writing promotes interdisciplinary collaboration, which is significantly essential in addressing global challenges.

Lecturers often face significant challenges when assessing students' work in a scientific writing course due to the complexity and subjectivity involved in evaluating written communication. One of the main difficulties is ensuring fairness and consistency, as scientific writing often differs in organization, style, and tone based on the discipline and the students' level of expertise. Evaluating elements such as argument clarity, evidence integration, and adherence to academic integrity needs comprehensive judgment, which can be impacted by interpretation or personal bias. Another challenge is providing constructive feedback that is both detailed and actionable. Scientific writing assignments often involve lengthy texts, such as research papers or proposals, making it time-consuming for lecturers to review every detail thoroughly. In addition, students may come from various linguistic and educational backgrounds, further complicating assessment as some students may feel difficulty with language proficiency, while others may lack previous exposure to scientific writing course. Moreover, examining academic integrity and originality can be challenging, particularly with the improved utilization of paraphrasing tools and artificial intelligence in writing. Lecturers must distinguish between authentic student work and overly assisted content, which can be a sensitive and resource-intensive process. Balancing these challenges while maintaining the focus on students' development as competent scientific writers needs significant effort, expertise, and time. To address these challenges, lecturers can utilize peer assessment as a tool to evaluate students' work in scientific writing course.

Peer assessment is an essential assessment and increasingly used pedagogical strategy in higher education, particularly in scientific writing courses. It involves students assessing their peers' work based on certain criteria, improving a collaborative and reflective learning environment. This approach not only motivates students to critically engage with the material but also gives them to develop metacognitive skills, such as iterative improvement and self-assessment (Topping, 2003; Min, 2018). Scientific writing, characterized by its highlighting on precision, clarity, and evidence-based reasoning, demands significant cognitive and linguistic skill development. In this context, peer assessment has dual purposes: improving students' writing quality while deepening their comprehension of communication strategies and scientific principles (Gao & Liu, 2021; Zhang

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et al., 2020). For instance, involving peer feedback requires students to recognize issues, suggest improvements, and reflect on the quality of the writing, which contributes to higher-order cognitive engagement (Nelson & Schunn, 2009).

Empirical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of peer assessment in improving writing quality. Research by Patchan and Schunn (2015) found that students who participated actively in peer assessment made essential revisions that followed teacher feedback in quality. On the other hand, Cho et al. (2020) noted the advantages of scaffolded peer assessment, where students were provided with structured rubrics and guidelines, leading to improved trustworthiness of the feedback provided. In addition to the benefits, it also has several disadvantages. Students often ask some questions about the fairness and reliability of peer evaluations, specifically when compared to teachers' assessments. Concerns with inconsistency, bias, and lack of expertise are common. Furthermore, some studies noted that these issues can be overcome through deep training, clear rubrics, and iterative practice.

The novelty of this study lies in its focused investigation of peer assessment within the context of scientific writing courses, an area that remains underexplored compared to its application in general academic writing. Scientific writing demands unique competencies, including precision, evidence-based reasoning, and discipline-specific conventions, which set it apart from other forms of academic writing. While previous research has conducted the benefits of peer assessment in improving writing skills and fostering collaborative learning, its specific impact on the development of scientific communication skills is not well-documented. This study aims to explore the multidimensional engagement of students' cognitive, behavioural, and affective during peer feedback in this specialized context, addressing gaps in understanding how these dimensions contribute to learning outcomes and writing quality. Furthermore, the research aims to examine how structured interventions, such as the use of detailed rubrics and training, influence the reliability and effectiveness of peer assessment, areas often highlighted as challenges in existing literature. Therefore, this study explored how students perceived their experiences and challenges they encountered during peer assessment activities, the effects of peer assessment on students' ability to evaluate and improve their writing skills, and the roles of reviewer and reviewee shape students' learning experiences and strategies in peer assessment in scientific writing course

METHOD

This study adopts a phenomenological research design, which is well-suited to explore the lived experiences of individuals involved in peer assessment for scientific writing. Phenomenology allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' perceptions, feelings, and cognitive processes as they engage

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in the peer assessment process. This approach is particularly valuable for uncovering the essence of their experiences and identifying patterns that inform effective pedagogical practices (Creswell & Poth, 2018; van Manen, 2016). The phenomenological design complements the thematic analysis employed in this study, as both approaches emphasize capturing the depth and richness of human experiences. Through interviews and reflections, the study explores how participants perceived and navigated the peer assessment process, focusing on their roles as both reviewers and authors. By analysing these lived experiences, the research aimed to generate insights into the challenges, benefits, and pedagogical implications of peer assessment in the context of scientific writing education.

The participants of this study were 14 master's students involved in an English Education program at one public university in Yogyakarta academic year 2024/2025. Before conducting the interview section, the students signed the consent forms, which means they agreed the results of the interview were recorded, and their names were anonymized to ensure confidentiality. These students were selected through purposive sampling to ensure that they had previously participated in academic writing and were engaged in scientific writing as part of their curriculum, the participants criteria in study were graduate students majoring English education study program in the second semester who participated in scientific writing class. This participant group was appropriate for the study as they possessed both the academic maturity and the requisite skills to engage meaningfully in peer assessment (Palinkas et al., 2015).

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, a method that combines the flexibility of open-ended questions with the focus provided by a structured framework. The interviews were designed to explore students' experiences, challenges, and perceptions of peer assessment in the context of scientific writing. Each interview lasted approximately 30–45 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participants' consent. This method allowed for a deep exploration of individual perspectives while maintaining the ability to probe specific themes (Kallio et al., 2016). The researchers formulated semi-structured interview questions aimed at investigating students' experiences with peer assessment during the course. Participants were asked to describe their overall experience engaging in peer assessment and to reflect on any challenges they encountered while reviewing a peer's work, including how they addressed those challenges. They were also reinforced to share their thoughts and feelings about receiving feedback from their peers, discussing whether the feedback was helpful and explaining the reasons behind their perceptions. Moreover, the interview sought to understand the impact of peer assessment on students' ability to critique and improve their own writing. Another area of focus was the comparison between the participants' approach to giving feedback versus receiving it, and how these differing roles may have shaped their learning experience. Lastly, the participants were asked whether they ever felt biased during the review process and how they

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managed such biases, offering insights into the fairness and objectivity of peer evaluations.

Thematic analysis was utilized to examine the data, following the six-phase approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). In the first stage, familiarization, the audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed, and the transcripts were read multiple times to build a complex understanding of the data. This step made sure that the researchers were deeply involved in the data, which is important for investigating the stages. The second stage is generating initial codes, which included systematically identifying and coding key phrases and ideas across the dataset. These codes highlighted significant features of the participants' experiences and perspectives. In the third phase, searching for themes, related codes were grouped to form potential themes. The purpose of this step is to get significant aspects of the participants' experiences structured.

The fourth stage, reviewing themes, involved refining these initial themes by cross-checking multiple times to ensure they represented the data accurately. Any themes that lacked sufficient support or were not in line with the dataset were modified. The fifth stage, defining and naming themes, focused on clearly defining each theme and identifying sub-themes to add further detail and granularity to the analysis. Finally, in the sixth phase, producing the report, the findings were organized into a coherent narrative. This narrative was enriched with direct responses from participants, which served to give an illustration of the main points and provide evidence for the identified themes. This approach ensured that the analysis was both rigorous and reflective of the participants' lived experiences.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After analysing the interview responses, several themes emerged that highlight the participants' experiences with peer assessment during a scientific writing course. First, students expressed ambivalent feelings about peer assessment. While they found it enriching and insightful, learning from diverse writing styles and improving their skills, they also described it as challenging due to difficulties in understanding peers' research and managing subjectivity. Second, the process involved role shifts as students alternated between reviewer and reviewee. As reviewers, they developed critical thinking by focusing on structure, coherence, and grammar. Meanwhile for authors, they reflected on feedback and applied it to enhance their writing. Finally, students employed various coping mechanisms, such as using rubrics for guidance, collaborating with peers, consulting AI tools, and seeking references to overcome challenges. These strategies fostered adaptability and a collaborative learning environment. The results of this study, obtained through thematic analysis, are presented in summary form in Table 1.

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Table 1:
Themes and Subthemes from Peer Assessment Experiences

Peer assessment experiences	
Ambivalent Feelings	Enriching Challenging
Forms of Roles Shifting	Reviewer: structure, coherence & grammar Reviewee: feedback & apply suggestions
Coping Mechanism	Rubrics and guidelines Collaboration and use AI tools Additional references

Mixed Feeling

Our analysis reveals that students had mixed feelings about their experiences in participating in peer assessment activities during their scientific writing course. On one hand, they found the process intellectually enriching and beneficial for improving their writing skills. On the other hand, they faced challenges related to understanding peers' research content, managing subjectivity, and ensuring fairness in evaluations. For example, one participant noted (D is for Data, P is for Person):

> D1: "The main challenge is understanding the content of my peer's research. To address this, I had to seek additional references and discuss it with my co-reviewer." (P1)

This duality reflects the complex learning dynamics of peer assessment. While addressing unfamiliar content required effort, participants acknowledged that the process helped them develop critical thinking and reflective skills. It also allowed them to improve their understanding of writing techniques, as one student stated:

> D2: "Reviewing others' work made me reflect on my own. I started noticing areas in my writing that needed improvement, like coherence and structure." (P3)

Another student added:

> D3: "Through peer assessment, I became more aware of the importance of clarity and detail in writing. Seeing others' approaches helped me adopt new strategies to enhance my own work." (P14).

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Such challenges, however, were not without solutions. Participants often relied on collaborative discussions with their peers, referring to rubrics, or consulting AI tools to ensure their feedback was both constructive and aligned with evaluation criteria.

The study aimed to examine the pedagogical impact of peer assessment in scientific writing courses and its alignment with developing critical academic skills. The findings confirm that the activity serves as a meaningful pedagogical tool, encouraging intellectual engagement and skill-building, even as students deal with the challenges.

The challenges identified, such as understanding complex research content, can be attributed to the interdisciplinary nature of scientific writing, which often requires familiarity with diverse fields. The need to consult additional resources and collaborate underscores the active learning process involved in peer assessment. Furthermore, the use of tools like rubrics and AI support suggests an adaptive approach, where students leverage available resources to improve their evaluative accuracy and fairness.

These findings align with existing research that highlights peer assessment as both a strong learning tool and a process full of challenges (Cheng et al., 2023). Peer assessment enhances writing skills through feedback and fosters analytical thinking by requiring evaluation of others' work. However, it can be affected by biases, inconsistent standards, and limited expertise, potentially reducing feedback quality. Prior studies have noted similar benefits, including improved writing quality and critical analysis, as well as challenges like subjectivity and limited expertise in evaluating peers' work (Senden et al., 2023; van Heerden & Bharuthram, 2021; Xue et al., 2023).

However, our study expands on these by highlighting the role of adaptive strategies, such as collaborative discussions and AI assistance, as mechanisms to address these challenges. Specifically, these strategies foster a supportive learning environment, enhance problem-solving abilities, and promote deeper engagement with the material. By integrating collaborative discussions, learners can exchange diverse perspectives, clarify complex concepts, and build confidence in their understanding. Meanwhile, AI tools provide personalized feedback, streamline repetitive tasks, and support independent learning, thus complementing traditional pedagogical approaches. This dual approach not only mitigates barriers but also equips learners with the skills needed to thrive in dynamic educational settings. Future research should continue exploring how combining traditional peer assessment with innovative tools impacts students' engagement, writing quality, and critical thinking skills, especially in diverse educational contexts.

The implications of these findings are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, they reinforce the notion that peer assessment is not merely an evaluative activity but a pedagogical strategy that promotes metacognitive awareness and academic growth (Li & Jiang, 2024). Therefore, educators are

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encouraged to balance the critical aspects of peer assessment with sufficient training and resources to foster a supportive and effective learning environment for students (Dinh et al., 2024). This balance ensures that students feel confident in both giving and receiving feedback, reducing anxiety and promoting constructive engagement. Training should focus on developing students' ability to provide specific, actionable, and respectful feedback, as well as teaching them how to incorporate critiques into their revisions effectively. Workshops, guided practice sessions, and exemplars of quality feedback can be particularly helpful in this regard.

In summary, while students had mixed feelings about their experiences in peer assessment activities during their scientific writing course, the process proved to be intellectually enriching and beneficial for developing writing skills, despite challenges. Students faced difficulties in understanding complex research content, managing subjectivity, and ensuring fairness in evaluations. However, they adapted by seeking additional resources, engaging in collaborative discussions, and utilizing tools like rubrics and AI to improve the quality and accuracy of their feedback. These findings confirm that peer assessment is a valuable pedagogical tool that fosters critical thinking, reflective skills, and improved writing, despite the challenges it presents. The study builds on existing research by emphasizing the role of adaptive strategies in addressing these challenges, highlighting the need for educators to provide sufficient training and resources. This will help students feel more confident in both giving and receiving feedback, ultimately enhancing the peer assessment process and promoting academic growth.

Constructive Criticism

Peer assessment significantly impacted students' abilities to critique and enhance their writing. The dual roles of reviewer and reviewee allowed them to internalize best practices from peers while identifying weaknesses in their work. A participant mentioned:

> D3: "Through peer assessment, I learned to compare my writing with my friends' work. I adopted their good practices and became more critical of my own." (P2)

Another participant emphasized the benefits of the review process:

> D5: "Peer assessment helped me improve my understanding of how to present research results clearly and coherently. I became more sensitive to spotting mistakes, both in my work and others'." (P8)

Additionally, the process fostered self-awareness about common mistakes, such as grammatical errors, lack of coherence, or insufficient detail in findings. This motivated students to be more diligent during revisions.

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Another participant highlighted how the review process shaped their perspective:

> D4: "Seeing my friend's excellent work motivated me to improve. It's like having a benchmark of what I should aim for." (P5)

One participant further elaborated on how the feedback experience contributed to their writing growth:

> D6: "Receiving suggestions from peers made me realize areas I had overlooked, like aligning my arguments better with the evidence. It pushed me to refine not just the content but also the presentation of my ideas." (P10)

The study aimed to investigate the impact of peer assessment activities on students' scientific writing skills and their self-perception as writers. The results support these goals by showing that peer assessment not only enhances technical abilities but also promotes metacognitive development and intrinsic motivation.

The results can be attributed to the distinct cognitive challenges involved in peer assessment. Through evaluating the work of their peers, students engage in higher-order thinking, which enables them to internalize essential writing principles. Similarly, receiving feedback exposes students to diverse perspectives that enable them to refine their work based on constructive criticism. This iterative process of reviewing and revising cultivates a deeper understanding of writing as a craft, promoting self-regulated learning.

The findings are consistent with earlier research that highlights the benefits of peer assessment, including enhancing critical thinking and improving writing quality (Irgin & Bilki, 2024; Zhang et al., 2022; Zou et al., 2023). Peer assessment encourages learners to engage more deeply with the material, analyze others' work critically, and reflect on their writing processes. These interactions not only foster a deeper understanding of the subject matter but also help build communication skills and confidence in academic or professional settings. Nevertheless, our study extends this understanding by emphasizing the motivational role of peer assessment. Unlike studies that primarily focus on skill acquisition, these results suggest that peer assessment also serves as a source of inspiration, with exemplary peer work setting aspirational standards.

The implications are significant for both pedagogy and writing instruction. Theoretically, these findings reinforce the concept of peer assessment as a metacognitive tool that promotes active learning and self-reflection (Carvalho & Santos, 2022). Peer assessment encourages students to engage deeply with the material by analysing, evaluating, and providing feedback on their peers' work. This process requires students to articulate

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their thoughts clearly and justify their critiques, which fosters a higher level of cognitive engagement and understanding. Practically, Liu et al. (2023) suggest that incorporating peer assessment into scientific writing courses can create a collaborative learning environment where students learn from one another's strengths and shortcomings. This approach not only enhances individual writing skills but also fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility for learning. By engaging in peer assessment, students are exposed to diverse writing styles, approaches to argumentation, and problem-solving techniques, which can broaden their perspectives and inspire creativity in their work.

However, to maximize its benefits, educators should provide clear guidelines, training, and support to ensure constructive feedback and minimize potential challenges such as subjectivity or demotivation. Structured rubrics and the facilitation of open discussions can further enhance the effectiveness of peer assessment activities (Dinh et al., 2024). By providing clear guidelines and fostering open communication, these strategies ensure that feedback is constructive, specific, and actionable. Structured rubrics help students focus on key evaluation criteria, such as organization, argumentation, and evidence quality, reducing ambiguity and promoting fairness in assessments.

To conclude, peer assessment has a significant impact on students' writing development, enhancing their ability to critique and improve both their own and their peers' work. By taking on the dual roles of reviewer and reviewee, students internalized best practices from others while identifying weaknesses in their own writing. This process fostered greater self-awareness, motivating students to revise their work with greater attention to detail. The study demonstrates that peer assessment not only improves technical writing skills but also supports metacognitive growth and intrinsic motivation, encouraging students to critically engage with their work and the work of others. These findings align with prior research on the cognitive and motivational benefits of peer assessment, while extending this understanding by highlighting how exemplary peer work can inspire students and set aspirational standards. From both theoretical and practical perspectives, peer assessment is an effective tool for fostering active learning, self-reflection, and collaborative skills. To maximize its effectiveness, educators should provide clear guidelines, training, and structured rubrics to ensure constructive feedback and minimize subjectivity. Ultimately, peer assessment serves as a powerful pedagogical.

The Role of Perspectives in Peer Assessment

The distinct roles of reviewer and reviewee provided students with valuable perspectives on their learning strategies. As reviewers, they became analytical and detail-oriented, focusing on structure, content, and grammar. As authors, they reflected on the feedback received and worked on integrating suggestions into their writing. A student explained:

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> D5: "When reviewing, I concentrate on coherence and content. When being reviewed, I focus on understanding the feedback and applying it to my work." (P4)

Another student elaborated:

> D6: "As a reviewer, I focus on aligning the content of the writing with general facts and ensuring that each section connects seamlessly to the next. This helps me develop a critical eye for detail." (P10).

Similarly, as a reviewee, a student shared:

> D7: "Receiving feedback often highlights areas of improvement, like clarity and structure, while providing fresh perspectives I might not have considered. It helps me refine my writing process significantly." (P12).

These different perspectives highlighted the aspects of learning within the peer assessment process. Participants admitted to occasional biases, such as overvaluing a friend's work or being more forgiving toward peers they knew personally. To address these issues, they referred back to rubrics or consulted co-reviewers to maintain objectivity.

> D8: "Sometimes I felt biased, especially towards close friends. To address this, I double-checked my assessments with a co-reviewer or the evaluation rubric." (P6)

Another participant shared a similar sentiment about overcoming bias during the review process:

> D9: "I sometimes had expectations based on how well someone performed in class, which made me less critical of their work. I learned to re-evaluate using objective criteria and seek input from others to ensure fairness." (P13)

The third research question is to explore how participating in peer assessment activities influences students' writing development and critical evaluation skills. The findings align with the objectives by illustrating how the roles promoted critical analysis, self-reflection, and adaptability among students.

The contrasting perspectives observed in peer assessment can be attributed to the cognitive challenge of transitioning between the roles of evaluator and feedback recipient. Acting as reviewers required students to articulate clear, evidence-based critiques, sharpening their ability to analyze

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text. In contrast, receiving feedback offered students an external perspective that helped them identify areas in their writing that needed improvement. The occasional biases observed reflect a natural tendency toward social leniency, which students counteracted by using rubrics and seeking collaborative input, demonstrating their capacity for self-regulation.

These findings support earlier research that underscores the educational value of peer assessment, particularly in enhancing critical thinking and promoting collaborative skills (Tang et al., 2024). Peer assessment encourages the development of collaborative skills, such as effective communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork. Through the exchange of diverse perspectives, students learn to articulate constructive feedback and respond to critiques in a productive manner. These interactions simulate real-world professional scenarios, preparing students for environments where collaboration and feedback are integral to success.

Nonetheless, this study contributes new insights by highlighting how students consciously mitigate biases and leverage rubrics and peer collaboration to maintain objectivity. This suggests a higher level of metacognitive awareness than previously reported in similar studies. Furthermore, the findings underscore the importance of structured guidance and collaborative frameworks in fostering critical self-reflection and decision-making among learners. By actively engaging with rubrics as benchmarks and incorporating diverse perspectives through peer collaboration, students demonstrate a proactive approach to refining their academic and cognitive skills. These practices not only enhance the quality of their work but also align with broader educational goals of promoting independent and ethical scholarship.

Theoretical and practical implications arise from these findings. Theoretically, they advocate for peer assessment as a comprehensive learning tool that nurtures the growth of both cognitive and social skills (Issa & Hall, 2024). From a cognitive perspective, peer assessment challenges students to engage in higher-order thinking processes, such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis. By assessing others' work, students refine their understanding of key concepts and develop a critical eye for their own writing. This aligns with constructivist theories of learning, which emphasize active engagement and the co-construction of knowledge. Practically, they underscore the importance of providing students with structured tools, such as detailed rubrics and co-review opportunities, to enhance the reliability and fairness of peer assessments (To et al., 2024). These tools not only standardize the evaluation process but also guide students in delivering more precise and constructive feedback. Detailed rubrics help ensure that assessments are aligned with the intended learning outcomes by breaking down complex criteria into clear, actionable components. This structure minimizes subjectivity and allows students to focus on specific aspects of the work, such as argument strength, evidence quality, or clarity of expression.

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Furthermore, understanding the importance of feedback in reflective practice implies that educators should encourage students to view peer assessment as an ongoing process rather than a single event. This approach can deepen students' understanding of the writing process and foster a culture of mutual support and accountability in academic settings. By framing peer assessment as an iterative process, educators can help students recognize the value of revisiting and refining their work in response to constructive input. This perspective encourages a growth mindset, where feedback is seen not as criticism but as an opportunity for continuous improvement. It also aligns with the principles of lifelong learning, equipping students with skills they can apply beyond the classroom.

To sum up, the peer assessment process facilitated significant development in students' writing and critical evaluation skills. By assuming the roles of both reviewer and reviewee, students honed their analytical abilities, becoming more detail-oriented and reflective. As reviewers, they focused on coherence, content, and structure, while as review, they applied feedback to improve their work. Despite occasional biases due to personal relationships, students mitigated these through rubrics and collaboration, demonstrating metacognitive awareness. The findings affirm the value of peer assessment in fostering critical thinking, self-regulation, and collaborative skills, while also suggesting that structured tools like rubrics and co-reviewing opportunities enhance the fairness and reliability of assessments. The study also highlights the importance of viewing peer assessment as an iterative process, encouraging continuous improvement and aligning with principles of lifelong learning. These insights contribute to existing research by emphasizing students' conscious efforts to maintain objectivity, enriching the understanding of peer assessment's role in educational development.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the experiences of students participating in peer assessment activities during a scientific writing course, focusing on their perceptions, the challenges they faced, and the strategies they employed to improve their writing. The findings indicate that while peer assessment proved to be a valuable learning tool, it also introduced significant challenges. These challenges included difficulties in understanding peers' research, managing subjectivity in evaluations, and ensuring fairness. However, students employed a variety of coping mechanisms, such as utilizing rubrics, engaging in collaborative discussions, and consulting AI tools, to overcome these obstacles. The study thus provides insight into the dual role of peer assessment as both an intellectual challenge and an opportunity for academic growth.

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