

The Effect of Passive Voice Writing Checklist on the Writing Task of Mathayom Suksa 4 Students

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Abstract

This classroom-based research aimed to enhance the writing skills of Grade 10 (Mathayom Suksa 4) students in an intermediate English class at Surawiwat School, Suranaree University of Technology. Initial writing assessments revealed recurring grammar errors, especially in the use of passive voice, despite students' familiarity with basic English grammar. The study hypothesized that integrating peer feedback with a passive voice grammar checklist could improve accuracy in writing. Students engaged in peer review using the checklist over three writing assignments. Results showed an increase in the number of students correctly using passive voice: from 58 students (70.73%) in the first task, to 64 (78.05%) and 71 (86.59%) in subsequent tasks. The mean writing score significantly improved from Task 1 to Task 2 ($p = .001$), though no significant differences were found between later tasks. The findings support the effectiveness of checklist-based peer feedback in improving grammatical accuracy.

Keywords: grammar checklist, passive voice, writing skills

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Introduction

English serves as a global language for communication across economics, education, science, and technology (Crystal, 2012). Moreover, the global role of English makes writing skills especially important for students who expect to express ideas clearly and participate in academic communities. In Thailand, the Basic Education Core Curriculum in 2008 emphasizes the importance of strengthening learners' English proficiency prepare them for the challenges and skills required in the 21st century (OBEC, 2008).

Among the four language skills, writing is widely regarded as the most cognitively demanding for English as a foreign language learners, as it requires the simultaneous control of grammatical accuracy, syntactic complexity, lexical selection, and logical organization (Nation, 2009). In the Thai EFL context, students' writing difficulties are further compounded by negative language transfer, particularly due to structural and rhetorical differences between Thai and English which often result in persistent errors and reduced clarity in written task. In other words, writing challenges in Thailand often result from language transfer due to differences between Thai and English structures (Prapaisit de Segovia & Hardison, 2008).

Moreover, long-standing reliance on traditional, grammar-oriented, teacher-centered instructional practices have limited opportunities for meaningful writing practice and learner autonomy. Such approaches tend to emphasize rule memorization over communicative purpose, thereby constraining students' ability to develop fluency and critical thinking in written discourse. In contrast, learner-centered pedagogical approaches that integrate process-based writing, feedback, and authentic communication have been shown to foster greater engagement and improved writing performance (Brown, 2007). Collectively, these factors highlight the need for instructional reforms that address both linguistic and sematic issues.

Based on the principles of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), one of the key theories related to the development of writing skills is Ellis's (2009) concept of corrective feedback, which emphasizes that receiving feedback on errors plays a crucial role in helping learners revise and improve their language use effectively. In particular, the process of peer feedback has been supported by empirical evidence demonstrating its significant contribution to the development of writing skills. Through peer feedback, learners are required to analyze and evaluate their peers' written work, which simultaneously enhances their awareness of their own errors (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009).

From a practical perspective, integrating a grammar checklist with the peer feedback process is considered an effective instructional strategy. This approach provides learners with a concrete tool to systematically monitor grammatical accuracy, such as the appropriate use of the passive voice, and helps reduce recurring errors in their writing (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012).

Given the observed problems among Mathayom Suksa 4 or Grade 10 students at Surawiwat School, Suranaree University of Technology, who frequently demonstrate repeated errors in the use of passive voice structures in their writing and lack the ability to self-correct these errors, this study aims to investigate the effects of using a passive voice grammar checklist in conjunction with peer feedback on students' English writing development. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of instructional strategies that are better aligned with the Thai EFL context and that promote sustainable language learning, and pedagogical challenges in order to enhance EFL learners' writing competence.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of using a passive voice grammar checklist on the development of English Writing skills among Mathayom Suksa 4 or Grade 10 students at Surawiwat School, Suranaree University of Technology. The study aims to address the following research questions:

1. Does peer feedback increase the number of students correctly using passive voice structures?
2. Does peer feedback improve students' overall accuracy in using passive voice?
3. Do peer-assessed scores correlate with teacher-assessed scores of passive voice accuracy?

Literature Review

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theory

Learning English as a second or foreign language, particularly in relation to writing skills, is a complex process that requires the development of both grammatical accuracy and effective meaning-making. Among various grammatical structures, the passive voice is frequently perceived by EFL learners as especially challenging due to its structural complexity and its divergence from learners' first languages. For instance, Thai typically favors active voice constructions, which contributes to persistent difficulties when learners attempt to produce passive structures in English. Consequently, insights from Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory are essential for understanding how learners develop writing competence and acquire complex grammatical forms such as the passive voice. This is particularly relevant when examining the comparative effects of peer feedback and teacher feedback within the writing process.

The Importance of Passive Voice in English Writing

The passive voice plays a significant role in English writing, especially in academic and formal contexts, including research reports, scholarly articles, and professional correspondence. Appropriate use of passive constructions allows writers to adopt a more formal tone and to emphasize actions or results rather than agents. Despite its importance, Thai learners often struggle to use the passive voice accurately due to both its grammatical complexity and its contrast with Thai sentence structures. As a result, systematic instruction, repeated practice, and focused feedback on passive voice usage are essential components in the development of students' English writing proficiency.

The Use of Grammar Checklists to Enhance Writing Skills

A grammar checklist serves as a practical instructional tool that enables learners to review and evaluate the grammatical accuracy of their own writing. By providing clear criteria and structured guidance, checklists help learners identify recurring errors and revise their work more effectively. Previous research has demonstrated that the use of grammar checklists in conjunction with feedback can significantly improve students' writing performance, particularly with respect to grammatical accuracy (Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). When learners are equipped with such tools, they are better able to monitor their language use systematically and develop greater autonomy in the writing process.

Peer Feedback in Writing Development

From a theoretical perspective, Krashen's (1982) Monitor Model offers important insights into the role of feedback in language learning, particularly through the Input Hypothesis and the Affective Filter Hypothesis. According to The Input Hypothesis, it finds that the most effective way to learn new language is when learners are exposed to input that is slightly beyond their current level of competence ($i+1$), while the Affective Filter Hypothesis highlights how anxiety and stress can hinder language learning. In this regard, peer feedback may provide a less threatening environment than teacher feedback, thereby lowering learners' affective filters and facilitating writing development.

Peer feedback involves learners exchanging comments and suggestions on one another's written work, enabling them to gain alternative perspectives and to develop analytical and evaluative skills. According to Processability Theory (Pienemann, 1998), learners acquire grammatical structures in a developmental sequence determined by their language-processing capacity. The passive voice, which requires coordinated control of tense, auxiliary verbs, and past participle forms, represents a relatively advanced structure. Consequently, systematic and well-scaffolded feedback plays a crucial role in supporting learners' ability to produce accurate passive constructions once they reach the appropriate developmental stage.

Empirical studies provide strong support for the effectiveness of peer feedback. Lundstrom and Baker (2009) found that peer feedback contributes significantly to improvements in writing quality, particularly in grammatical accuracy and organizational structure. Similarly, Topping (1998) reported that peer feedback fosters greater learner responsibility and engagement in the revision process. Furthermore, Rollinson (2005) demonstrated that combining peer feedback with structured tools such as checklists enables learners to identify and correct errors more effectively, resulting in notable improvements in writing quality.

In addition to linguistic benefits, peer feedback promotes critical thinking skills and language awareness, as learners must analyze both form and content in their peers' writing (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). This reflective process often leads learners to recognize similar issues in their own work. Peer feedback also helps reduce fear of criticism and supports a learner-centered classroom environment, which encourages active participation and collaborative learning.

Peer Feedback and Teacher Feedback: A Complementary Approach

While teacher feedback is generally more accurate and particularly valuable for addressing complex grammatical issues such as passive voice usage, it may also increase learner anxiety or foster excessive dependence on the teacher (Ferris, 2006). Research suggests that integrating both peer and teacher feedback yields the most effective outcomes. Peer feedback encourages self-reflection and independent problem-solving, whereas teacher feedback provides authoritative guidance and clarification of complex grammatical structures. Together, these feedback modes offer complementary benefits that enhance learners' writing development.

This study focuses on the development of English writing skills among Grade 10 students enrolled in an intermediate English course during the second semester of the 2022 academic year at Surawiwat School, Suranaree University of Technology. The grammatical focus of the study is the passive voice, specifically constructions in which the grammatical subject functions as the receiver of an action. Across three assessed writing tasks, students were

required to incorporate passive voice structures into their compositions. These tasks were designed to evaluate both the accuracy of passive voice usage and students' ability.

Methodology

Participants

The participants in this study were 82 Grade 10 students drawn from five intact classes enrolled in an intermediate English course during the 2022 academic year at Surawiwat School, Suranaree University of Technology. All participants shared a similar instructional background and followed the same curriculum and course objectives.

Research Instruments

Three primary instruments were employed in this study: writing tasks, analytic scoring rubrics, and a passive voice grammar checklist. The writing tasks were designed to elicit the use of passive voice structures within meaningful and contextually appropriate written texts. The scoring rubrics were used by the teacher to assess students' writing performance, with particular emphasis on grammatical accuracy and appropriate use of passive voice. The passive voice checklist served as a structured tool to guide students during the peer feedback process, enabling systematic identification and correction of grammatical errors related to passive constructions.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through three consecutive writing assignments administered over the instructional period. In the first task (Task 1), students completed an initial writing assignment, which served as the baseline measure of their passive voice usage. Following Task 1, students engaged in a peer feedback process using the passive voice checklist to review and comment on their peers' writing. Based on the feedback received, students revised their work and submitted subsequent drafts in Task 2 and Task 3. Teacher assessments were conducted after each task using the established scoring rubrics to ensure consistent evaluation of writing performance across all stages.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize students' writing performance across the three tasks. To examine changes in writing performance over time, a Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted. In addition, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated to investigate the relationship between students' scores derived from the peer feedback process and the teacher-assigned writing scores. Statistical analyses were performed to determine the effectiveness of the instructional intervention and the relationships among key variables.

Results

Background Characteristics of the Participants

The participants in this study consisted of 82 Grade 10 students from Surawiwat School. The majority of the participants were female (58.84%). With regard to class distribution, students from Class M.4/4 represented the largest proportion of the sample (34.15%), followed by students from Class M.4/5 (24.39%), Class M.4/3 (14.63%), and Classes M.4/1 and M.4/2 (13.41% each). Detailed demographic information is presented in table 1.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Participants (n = 82)

class \ gender	male		female		total	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Class 4/1	6	54.55	5	45.45	11	13.41
Class 4/2	5	45.45	6	54.55	11	13.41
Class 4/3	7	58.33	5	41.67	12	14.63
Class 4/4	10	35.71	18	64.29	28	34.15
Class 4/5	6	30.00	14	70.00	20	24.39
Total	34	41.46	48	58.54	82	100.00

Number of Students Able to Accurately Use Passive Voice Structures

Research Question 1 (RQ1): Does the number of students who can accurately use English passive voice structures increase after the implementation of peer feedback? The analysis revealed that 39 students (47.56%) were able to use English passive voice structures correctly across all three writing tasks. When examining each measurement point separately, the number of students demonstrating accurate use of passive voice increased progressively over time. Specifically, 58 students (70.73%) used passive voice correctly in the first writing task, 64 students (78.05%) in the second task, and 71 students (86.59%) in the third task. These results indicate a consistent improvement in students' ability to use passive voice structures following the peer feedback process. Detailed results are shown in table 2.

Table 2

Number and Percentage of Students Demonstrating Accurate Use of Passive Voice Across Three Writing Tasks

Accuracy	Number of Students (n = 82)		Task number	Accuracy	
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent
none	1	1.22	First task	58	70.73
once	8	9.76	Second task	64	78.05
twice	34	41.46	Third task	71	86.59
No mistake	39	47.56			

Differences in Passive Voice Writing Ability Across Measurement Times

Research Question 2 (RQ2): Does peer feedback lead to improvement in students' ability to write English passive voice structures? Descriptive statistical analysis of students' writing scores across the three measurement occasions revealed differences in mean performance and score dispersion. The highest mean writing score was observed in Task 2 (M = 8.976, SD =

0.853), followed by Task 3 ($M = 8.726$, $SD = 0.900$) and Task 1 ($M = 8.463$, $SD = 1.009$). In terms of score variability, Task 2 exhibited the lowest coefficient of variation ($CV = 9.503\%$), indicating more consistent performance among students compared to Task 3 ($CV = 10.314\%$) and Task 1 ($CV = 11.922\%$).

Prior to conducting the repeated measures analysis, Mauchly's Test of Sphericity indicated that the assumption of sphericity was violated ($W = .920$, $p = .035$). Therefore, the Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied. The results of the repeated measures ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference in mean writing scores across at least one pair of measurement occasions, $F(2, 1.851) = 7.752$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .087$.

Post-hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni adjustment indicated that the mean writing score for Task 2 was significantly higher than that of Task 1 (Mean Difference = 0.512, $p = .001$). However, no statistically significant differences were presented between Task 1 and Task 3 or between Task 2 and Task 3 at the .05 significance level. The detailed results are presented in table 3.

Table 3

Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA and Pairwise Comparisons of Passive Voice Writing Scores

Task	n	M	SD	CV	SE	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 st task	82	8.463	1.009	11.922	0.111	8.242	8.685
2 nd task	82	8.976	0.853	9.503	0.094	8.788	9.163
3 rd task	82	8.726	0.900	10.314	0.099	8.528	8.923
Mauchly's Test of Sphericity = .920 , $p = .035$							
Greenhouse-Geisser = 10.758 , $F(2, 1.851) = 7.752$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .087$							
Pairwise comparisons (Post-Hoc Test): Bonferroni							
Tasks	Mean Diff.	SE	p	95% Confidence Interval			
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1 st and 2 nd task	0.512	0.140	.001*	-0.855	-0.170		
1 st and 3 rd task	0.262	0.138	.182	-0.599	-0.075		
2 nd and 3 rd task	0.250	0.140	.078	-0.019	0.519		

Relationship Between Peer-Assessed and Teacher-Assessed Writing Scores

Research Question 3 (RQ3): Is there a relationship between students' peer-assessed passive voice writing scores and teacher-assessed English writing scores? Pearson correlation analysis revealed that students' peer-assessed passive voice writing scores in Task 2 and Task 3 were positively correlated with their teacher-assessed English writing scores. This finding indicates that students who received higher passive voice writing scores through peer feedback also tended to receive higher writing scores from the teacher. Correlation coefficients for all measurement occasions are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Peer-Assessed and Teacher-Assessed Writing Scores

Task	1 st peer	2 nd peer	3 rd peer	1 st teacher	2 nd teacher	3 rd teacher
peer 1 st task	1.000					
peer 2 nd task	-0.147	1.000				
peer 3 rd task	-0.096	.310**	1.000			
teacher 1 st task	0.188	-0.043	0.148	1.000		
teacher 2 nd task	0.052	.418**	0.109	0.068	1.000	
teacher 3 rd task	0.022	0.150	.284**	0.188	.414**	1.000

Discussion

The present study aimed to examine the effects of integrating a passive voice grammar checklist with a peer feedback process on the development of English writing skills among Grade 10 students at Surawiwat School, Suranaree University of Technology. The findings provide several important insights into the role of structured feedback and learner involvement in EFL writing development.

First, the results revealed a consistent increase in the number of students who were able to accurately use English passive voice structures throughout the intervention period. The proportion of students demonstrating correct usage increased from 70.73% in the first measurement to 78.05% and 86.59% in the second and third measurements, respectively. This progressive improvement supports Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which emphasizes that learning is mediated through social interaction and collaborative support. In this context, peer feedback functioned as a form of scaffolding that enabled learners to internalize grammatical knowledge through interaction, reflection, and shared problem-solving.

Second, analysis of mean writing scores indicated a statistically significant improvement between the first and second writing tasks, suggesting that the combined use of a grammar checklist and peer feedback had a substantial impact on students' writing performance during the initial stage of the intervention. However, no significant difference was observed between the second and third measurements. This pattern suggests a plateau effect in later stages of development, which may reflect limitations in the instructional challenge provided or the need for more advanced or varied writing tasks to stimulate higher-level language development. These findings imply that while structured peer feedback is effective in supporting early improvement, sustained progress may require more complex tasks and deeper cognitive engagement.

Third, the results demonstrated significant positive correlations between peer-assessed passive voice writing scores and teacher-assessed writing scores in the second and third measurements. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that learners benefit not only from receiving feedback but also from actively providing feedback to others (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009). Engaging in peer assessment appears to enhance learners' metalinguistic awareness and self-monitoring abilities, leading to improved writing performance. The ability to identify and

evaluate grammatical errors in peers' writing may, therefore, contribute to more accurate and reflective language use in students' own written work.

Conclusion

The findings of this study provide empirical support for the effectiveness of integrating a passive voice grammar checklist with peer feedback as a pedagogical approach to EFL writing instruction at the secondary level. The results highlight the importance of learner participation in the feedback process and demonstrate how structured, collaborative assessment can contribute to improved grammatical accuracy and writing development.

Recommendations

Expansion of the Sample Population

Future studies should be conducted with a more diverse sample, including students from different grade levels and educational institutions with varying contexts. This would enhance the generalizability and external validity of the research findings.

Longitudinal Investigation

It is recommended that future research examine the long-term effects of using writing checklists in combination with peer feedback. Such longitudinal studies would allow researchers to evaluate the sustainability of writing skill development and identify factors that influence the retention of these skills over time.

Comparison of Feedback Modalities

Further research should compare the effectiveness of peer feedback and teacher feedback in order to determine which feedback approach contributes most effectively to the development of students' writing skills.

Additional Qualitative Inquiry

Future studies are encouraged to incorporate qualitative data collection methods, such as interviews and classroom observations, to gain deeper insights into students' cognitive processes and the strategies they employ when revising their writing based on feedback.

In addition, the lack of statistically significant improvement in writing scores between the first and third writing tasks may be attributed to differences in task conditions. Specifically, both the first and third writing tasks were completed under time constraints in a classroom setting, whereas the second task, which showed a statistically significant increase in scores compared to the first task, allowed students to complete the writing assignment outside the classroom after initial in-class instruction. As a result, students may have utilized additional writing support tools, which could have influenced their performance. Therefore, future data collection should ensure that writing task conditions are as consistent as possible across all assessment occasions to obtain more reliable results.

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