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Peer Feedback and Language Development for English L2 Learners in a Swedish Context

Kamratrespons och språkutveckling för elever med engelska som andraspråk i Sverige

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Peer feedback
Abstract

The question whether peer feedback can contribute to language development in an English second language (L2) classroom in a Swedish context is investigated through the use of a research synthesis. The syllabus for English 5-7, the document detailing the skills that should be developed and the content of English L2 upper secondary education in Sweden, suggests that peer feedback is an important feature in English L2 learning. Results of the current study indicated that peer feedback could have beneficial effects for pupils’ writing and language development. These results were supported by sociocultural theory. Furthermore, some of the issues regarding peer feedback, for instance that pupils mistrust their peers’ ability to give comments, could be circumvented through training pupils to give and incorporate peer feedback. Despite the fact that results indicated that peer feedback could be a valuable learning tool, results cannot with any certainty be generalized to a Swedish upper secondary context due to the fact that the primary research was conducted mostly at a small scale of approximately twenty to forty pupils, that all research was at university level, and that most of the research pertained to Asian pupils.

Keywords: L2 learning, language development, peer feedback, second language learning, sociocultural theory, Sweden, writing.
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Peer feedback
1. Introduction

One of the core contents for production and interaction in the syllabus for English 5 is “processing of their own and others' oral and written communications in order to vary, clarify and specify, as well as to create structure and adapt these to their purpose and situation” (Skolverket, 2014). The syllabuses for English 6 and English 7 similarly have core content that revolves around pupils processing their own and others’ productions. Furthermore, the curriculum for the upper secondary school states that one of the goals for the school in relation to the responsibility and influence of the students is that students take responsibility for their studies and that they “strengthen confidence in their own ability to individually and together with others take initiatives, take responsibility and influence their own conditions” (Skolverket, 2013, p.11). Thus, pupils need to be able to process their own and other pupils’ output and take responsibility for their studies.

Peer feedback is a method that can help pupils to process their own and others’ productions, as well as giving an opportunity to take responsibility for what they have learned and therefore influence their own learning (Min, 2006; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Skolverket, 2011). Hyland and Hyland (2006), for instance, argued that peer feedback could positively influence pupils’ autonomy and self-confidence, in that peer feedback require active participation in the editing process. Skolverket (2011) also suggested that peer feedback can increase a pupil’s capacity for evaluation of their own production by giving different examples of how a task could be solved. Wakabayashi (2013), however, showed that peer feedback had less of an effect than self-reviewing and Hyland and Hyland (2006) noted that pupils may not be able to give useful feedback to each other, and that they might be unwilling to incorporate their peers’ feedback into their product. They suggested that a reason for pupils’ unwillingness to incorporate peer feedback may lie in the pupils’ beliefs about the value of peer feedback versus teacher feedback.

Peer feedback could, furthermore, be valuable for pupils’ language development, but it may be neglected in favour of more traditional assessment methods and evidence for
grading, such as classroom observation of pupils’ oral production, teacher produced tests and essays. Oscarson and Apelgren (2011) showed this by distributing a questionnaire to 605 language teachers in Sweden and asking which kinds of evidence they used when grading pupils. The results showed that only 11.1% of the participants used any form of peer feedback for grades. This does not necessarily mean that peer feedback activities are not present in the classroom, only that they do not contribute much to the final grades of the pupils, which could be viewed as endorsed by the syllabus for English 5-7 where processing of others’ productions are only written into the core contents, whereas processing their own production is a part of the knowledge requirements as well (Skolverket, 2014).

Thus, while peer feedback is encouraged by the syllabus for English and seems to have positive effects on learners, it is important to regard peer feedback in a Swedish context with focus on peer feedback and its effects on second language development. By using a research synthesis and investigating the results of prior relevant research into the area of peer feedback, the question whether peer feedback on written productions can contribute to language development in an English L2 classroom in a Swedish context will be discussed.
2. Theoretical background

The literature review aims to provide an overview of relevant prior research and to describe and define central phrases and terms. In order to be able to discuss peer feedback and its role in language development in a second language classroom, it is imperative to understand to what the concepts refer. A discussion of the term peer feedback and other related terms results in a proposed definition, after which the activity is related to language development and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) in particular. Certain linguistic features are identified and related to language development and peer feedback. Lastly, peer feedback is connected to the syllabus for English and the curriculum in order to discuss peer feedback in a second language context in Sweden.

2.1 Peer feedback and peer assessment

There are several different terms associated with peer related activities, which can broadly be divided into peer feedback and peer assessment. It is important to be able to distinguish between peer feedback and peer assessment, since the two terms, while having peer interaction as a central theme, have different goals and outcomes. Peer feedback will be discussed first and later contrasted with peer assessment. Wakabayashi (2013) discussed several different definitions of peer feedback. All the different definitions emphasized learners as agents. Some focused on the negotiation process between learners or the learner as a source of information. Wakabayashi (2013) finally defined peer feedback as “a collaborative learning task by which learners acquire revision procedures while taking on the dual role of writer and reviewer” (p. 179).

Lundstrom and Baker (2009) equated the term “peer review” with “peer editing”, “peer response” and “peer evaluation”, whereas McGarrel (2010) decided to consider
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“peer feedback”, “peer response” and “peer comment” as interchangeable. Lundstrom and Baker (2009) defined peer editing as an activity in which pupils receive more than only the teacher’s feedback on their papers and which will give pupils a new perspective on the writing process while including meaningful interaction with their peers. McGarrel (2010) argued that peer feedback was “supportive, constructive but non-evaluative criticism” (p. 72) from a person in a situation similar to that of the writer and would help the writer see how a reader would perceive their text. Suzuki (2009) used the term peer revision to describe an activity where writers revised their draft while interacting with their peers. Consequently, while there are several different terms being used to refer to peer feedback, they seem to refer to an activity characterised by supportive and constructive interaction with peers that will help the writer view their text from a new perspective. This will be the definition used in this paper.

Peer assessment, however, is described by Oscarson and Apelgren (2011) as “more student-centered formative assessment techniques” (p.14), which is similar to McGarrel’s (2010) “peer critique”, “peer editing” and “peer correction” which accordingly included an appraising quality that could be used for assessment purposes. Liu and Carless (2006) added that peer assessment includes pupils grading the work of their peers. Therefore, while peer feedback and peer assessment both incorporate a learner centred perspective, peer feedback is more about commenting and discussing, whereas peer assessment includes evaluative components and grading. The choice of focusing on peer feedback in favour of peer assessment was due to the fact that grading would involve issues of reliability and as Liu and Carless (2006) argued there is a reluctance to use peer assessment due to reasons of reliability, power relations, the fact that teacher has more expertise and because it is time consuming.

Thus, peer feedback is an activity where the learners are engaged in an actively collaborative task where they give and receive feedback and supportive, constructive and non-evaluative comments from a person in a similar situation as the learner. Peer assessment, on the other hand, always include an evaluative element and is associated with grading and assessment. This paper will focus exclusively on peer feedback, thus removing questions of assessment and grading and removing the associated issues with reliability and validity.

Peer feedback can take many different forms. Skolverket (2011) suggested a simple method for using peer feedback in the classroom called “two stars, one wish”. The method entailed that pupils would give two sorts of feedback, first praise in the form of
the stars and secondly, in suggestions for improvement in the form of a wish. They further emphasized that for peer feedback it was important to provide suggestions for how to behave towards one another. One way of providing support in peer feedback and help direct the feedback so that it is more useful is to give the pupils a list of criteria to look at, a peer feedback sheet (Skolverket, 2011; Liou & Peng, 2009; Min, 2005; Min, 2006; Xu, 2007). This will not only provide the pupils with a helpful structure and guide when providing peer feedback, but may also give them an idea of what should be included in a certain type of task. By giving the pupils the opportunity to view criteria and to see how other pupils had solved the task, the pupils would be given support in their own work in that they were given the opportunity to see important signs of quality in other pupils’ productions (Skolverket, 2011). Electronic aids such as the track changes and comment function in Microsoft Word can also be used for peer feedback or comments can be written on paper (Xu, 2007). Peer feedback can take the form of face-to-face interactions or for instance comments on a blog (Liou & Peng, 2009).

2.2 Language development

The value of peer feedback can be considered in relation to theories of language learning, specifically Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, which argues that learners best acquire new skills within their zone of proximal development (ZPD) and that language development occurs as a result of social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). The ZPD refers to the zone between where a learner is able to perform a task on their own and where they can perform it with the help of another person. Learning occurs through interaction in the learner’s ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). The theory claims that in order to learn something mediation is required. In other words, when pupils engage in meaningful discussion, with for instance their peers, this will enable them to reach higher levels of performance than they could have reached on their own (Diab, 2011). Pupils can help each other, since they vary in their strengths and weaknesses and can therefore provide each other with the required support and scaffolding to reach higher levels of performance (Min, 2005). According to Min (2005), development will occur during peer feedback when “partners have different areas of competence and interact positively in oral or written communication” (p. 294). Thus, language development can occur in
relation to peer feedback in the ZPD where pupils engage in discussion and help each other.

Instead of focusing on a language learning theories, it is possible to look at the relationship between peer feedback and specific improvement in a given text. Leijen and Leontjeva (2012) studied, through the use of a corpus based investigation, how peer feedback affected what they called fundamental writing issues, which is “lower-level features such as spelling and grammar, word choice, and sentence structure” (p. 181). This would be one example of studying specific improvements in a text in relation to peer feedback. Choi (2013) described L2 writing as different from L1 writing, in that the former concerned both composition skills and L2 learning, whereas the latter only concerned composition skills. Composition skills were divided into three broad categories: ideas, which related to main message and content, organization, which concerned structure and finally, voice, which was associated with the sense that a real person was writing and caring about the subject. L2 skills were also divided into three categories: Word choice, sentence fluency and conventions, the latter which included spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Other ways of looking at improvement on writing, in relation to peer feedback, included looking at idea development and organization only (Min, 2006) or dividing comments into local and global, where the former regarded spelling and grammar and the latter ideas and organization (Xu, 2007; Liou & Peng, 2009). It is also possible to look at surface level, sentence level and discourse level revisions, where surface level concerned punctuation, spelling and work choice, where sentence level regarded sentence types, voice and complexity and where discourse level referred to organization and paragraphing (Suzuki, 2009). All these ways of looking at improvement of the product can be categorized according to the broader categories of local and global comments. Local comments would include Leijen and Leontjeva’s (2012) lower level features, Choi’s (2013) L2 skills, and Suzuki’s (2009) surface and sentence levels. Global comments would include composition skills (Choi, 2013) and idea development and organization (Min, 2006). Consequently, language development can be connected to peer feedback through specific improvements in a pupils’ text. This paper will primarily use the broad categories of global and local writing aspects when referring to specific improvements in a learner’s text.

Thus, language development should occur naturally during peer feedback due to the collaborative and communicative nature of peer feedback. Furthermore, the
improvement of certain linguistic features after peer feedback can also be considered as a low-level form of language development. In short, positive effects on pupils’ writing, after receiving and giving peer feedback, can be considered short term development.

2.3 Peer feedback in a Swedish L2 learning context

Considering the context for peer feedback is important, since different cultures and countries may have different approaches to teaching. A Swedish L2 learning context is in focus for this paper. Therefore, it is important to consider the different documents that dictate English as a subject in the Swedish school system, the syllabus and the curriculum. As previously mentioned, the syllabus for English 5-7, for upper secondary school, which is the group in focus for this paper, includes core content that can be related to peer feedback. The formulation of the core content for English 5 is: “processing of their own and others' oral and written communications in order to vary, clarify and specify, as well as to create structure and adapt these to their purpose and situation” (Skolverket, 2014, p.4). For English 6 the processing of the pupil’s own and others’ productions should also consider formal English, whereas in English 7 pupils are required to process formal English as well as process to create adaptation to genre, style and purpose. Consequently, there is justification in the syllabus for English for the upper secondary school to use peer feedback in a Swedish upper secondary context.

However, while the core content seems to indicate that it is as equally important for pupils to be able to process their own products as well as others’, the knowledge requirements and grades indicate otherwise. In the syllabus for all three English courses and for all grades the formulation is some adaptation of “students work on and make improvements to their own communications” (Skolverket, 2014, p.4). Thus, while the central content mentions the processing of others’ production, the knowledge requirements do not acknowledge this. This does not mean that peer feedback is completely neglected in the knowledge requirement, considering that self-revision is a vital part of peer feedback. It may simply be formulated in a manner that excludes the processing of others’ productions to minimize the teachers’ burden. With this formulation, the teacher is not obliged to track all the pupils’ comments to each other, but due to the central contents there should still be activities included where pupils are
given the opportunity to process each other’s productions. This may further explain Oscarson’s and Apelgren’s (2011) findings that pupils’ grades are rarely based on peer feedback activities, since the central content requires peer feedback activities whereas the knowledge requirements do not.

Peer feedback can also be connected to the curriculum for upper secondary school. One of the knowledge goals, as stated in the curriculum is that the pupils “can learn, explore and work independently and together with others, and feel confident in their own ability” (Skolverket, 2013, p.8). Furthermore, the curriculum includes goals of personal responsibility that states that pupils should be able to take responsibility for their own studies and that they further should be able to “strengthen confidence in their own ability to individually and together with others take initiatives, take responsibility and influence their own conditions” (Skolverket, 2013, p.11). According to Min (2006), training pupils in peer feedback had positive effects on pupils’ confidence in their own skills and it made them more autonomous, in that they found that they could “reflect on their own problems and seek out solutions for themselves” (p. 301). Consequently, peer feedback may not only be an activity that is supported by the syllabus, but may, if it encourages personal responsibility and confidence in the pupil, also be supported by the curriculum.

2.4 Purpose and research question

Justification for using peer feedback can be found in Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory, in that peer feedback includes scaffolding between pupils and an opportunity for meaningful social interaction that can lead to language development (Vygotsky, 1978). The syllabus for English 5-7 endorse peer feedback (Skolverket, 2014) and, if Min (2006) is correct, endorsement for peer feedback may also be found in the curriculum for the upper secondary school (Skolverket, 2013). Even with support from official documents, an evaluation of the effectiveness and usefulness of a tool should be conducted before widespread use of it. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to investigate prior research on the topic of peer feedback and its effects on learners of English as a second language, to be able to evaluate peer feedback as a tool for learning. The following question guides the research:
How can peer feedback on written production affect English L2 pupils’ language development in a Swedish learning context?
3. Method

The primary method used in this paper will be research synthesis, using the format of a literature review. Hart (1998) proposed a definition of literature review:

The selection of available documents (both published and unpublished) on the topic, which contain information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint to fulfil certain aims or express certain views on the nature of the topic and how it is to be investigated, and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed. (p.13)

Another definition of the research synthesis was proposed by Norris and Ortega (2006): “the systematic secondary review of accumulated primary research studies” (p.4). The two definitions are largely similar, in that they both emphasize the importance of prior research and the evaluation of it.

The research synthesis is important to achieve understanding of a topic and previous research and its aim is to show understanding of the problem and subject area as well as to defend the paper’s research topic, design and method (Hart, 1998). According to Bell (2010), the aim of the research synthesis is not only to collect information but to critically analyse it. Furthermore, a research synthesis should discuss key concepts, include recent material, critically evaluate and analyse material (Hart, 1998), as well as be systematic with a replicable methodology (Ortega, 2010). In order for a research synthesis to be meaningful, it must be critical, which means that the researcher is required to question assumptions, consider the findings of researchers and compare, contrast and evaluate in regards to other research (Bell, 2010). However, Ortega (2010) cautioned that a research synthesis is “purely descriptive and correlational and cannot completely dispel debates surrounding causality” (p. 120) because the researcher cannot influence how previous studies have been conducted.

The research synthesis is a suitable approach to the research question, due to the fact that there is rich prior research in the area, yet nothing that relates directly to peer
feedback as a tool for language development. This means that there is plenty of information and studies to base my research on, but that nothing conclusive has as of yet been presented. Clarification in the area could be achieved by providing an overview of the field and comparing, contrasting and, summarizing the findings in the area. Other approaches, such as a case study, could have been a viable option, but would not fit within the scope of this paper.

3.1 Data gathering

Data for this research synthesis were collected primarily through electronic database searches via Education Research Complete (ERC) and Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA), but also by perusing references from relevant prior research.

The database search in ERC used the search phrases “peer feedback”, “language development”, “second language learning”, and “writing”, and was limited to peer reviewed journals that were available in full pdf-file between 2005 and 2014. The search resulted in 123 articles. The same search phrases in LLBA resulted in 20 articles. A subsequent search in LLBA with the exclusion of “language development” as a search term, with only peer reviewed articles published in 2005 and later resulted in 34 articles. This latter search was included due to the fact that more primary research was required for this paper.

3.1.1 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Ortega (2010) suggested that studies should be included in the research synthesis based on a set of inclusion criteria. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were selected with English L2 learners in a Swedish context in mind and a focus on peer feedback and its effect on writing. Furthermore, inclusion criteria were included that favoured more recent research, since Hart (1998) emphasized the important of recent material. After searching through the databases, articles were included or excluded based on the following criteria:
Inclusion criteria
- Focus on peer feedback and its effect on pupils
- Focus on peer feedback in an L2 context
- Focus on peer feedback on writing
- Date range between 2005 and 2014.

Exclusion criteria
- Focus on peer assessment
- Focus on a teacher perspective
- Focus on attitudes towards peer feedback
- Focus on oral production
- Focus on any other form of feedback
- Focus on error correction
- Peer work or peer interaction without feedback
- Unavailable via Malmö Högskola

Applying the criteria on the search in ERC resulted in four relevant articles, whereas the criteria applied to LLBA resulted in six relevant articles, out of which three were unavailable in full text. Applying the exclusion and inclusion criteria on the second search in LLBA resulted in eight new articles, out of which one was unavailable via Malmö Högskola and a second was published in a Lithuanian journal and could not be found. Five additional articles were found through perusing other article’s references. These articles were included due to the fact that they added interesting new perspectives and they passed the inclusion and exclusion criteria. A total of 18 articles were included.

Articles were not included or excluded based on the quality of the research. This is in line with Norris and Ortega (2006), who emphasize that research quality can be difficult to determine and that it can be dependent on the researcher’s biases. Furthermore, making judgement about the quality of the research can introduce biases into the research synthesis. Instead of excluding articles with less than perfect quality, Norris and Ortega (2006) suggested that a discussion of the quality of research be included in the research synthesis instead of risking bias by excluding research.
4. Results

In order to be able to answer the research question regarding the role of peer feedback in language development for English L2 learners in Sweden, several studies will be consulted, compared and contrasted. This section is organized into four parts. The first concerns the general effects of peer feedback, including its effects on writing, on learner autonomy and comparisons between peer feedback and other types of feedback. The second part discusses a couple of issues with peer feedback and offers possible solutions, while the third part details the effects of training for peer feedback and compare the effects of trained peer feedback with untrained. Lastly, the fourth part details the connection between language development and peer feedback.

4.1 Effects of peer feedback

In order to be able to link peer feedback to language development, it is necessary to examine the effects of peer feedback, starting with its effects on pupils’ writing. Peer feedback in comparison to other types of feedback will also be examined, as well as the effects of peer feedback on learner autonomy and learner evaluation of their own productions.

4.1.1 Effects on writing

The amount of peer feedback, as well as how it is presented, may impact implementation. Leijen and Leontjeva (2012) conducted a study in Estonia on 13 L2 master students. They investigated, through a corpus investigation of academic essays, how different types of peer feedback influenced what the writer implemented in their
final draft. A few important features were whether the feedback was directive or non-directive, if it was mentioned by other peers and if a solution was offered by the peer. The study suggested that directive comments, which are comments pointing to a specific part or problem in the text, would increase the chance for implementation when compared with non-directive, which the study suggested might have a negative impact on implementation. It was also shown that if multiple peers commented on the same issue it would have a larger effect on implementation than if a solution was offered. Xu (2007) also found that if more than one peer commented on an issue, chances for implementation increased. Thus, it would seem that the way comments are structured and presented, and the amount of feedback can have effects for whether or not the writer chooses to implement the feedback. Judging from these studies, comments should be directive, offer a clear solution and multiple peers should comment on the same issue to increase chances of implementations. This means that comments should be precise and point to a specific instance in the text and offer a clear solution for that particular problem.

Hirose (2012) compared two different sorts of peer feedback, written comments only and written comments together with spoken. The study was conducted in Japan with 26 L2 university students. The results did not show statistically significant improvement for either group’s writing. The written only group had a mean score of 153.62 on Wilcoxon matched-pairs on their post-course production, while the spoken and written group had a mean score of 146.08. This means that the group that received only written comments improved their subsequent writing marginally more than the group that received both written and spoken comments, but not enough to be statistically significant. With sociocultural theory in mind, the prediction should have been that the written plus spoken group improved more than the written only, considering that theory holds that interaction would enhance learning. This is due to the fact that learning should create a zone of proximal development, and this will only happen in interaction with other people and peers (Vygotsky, 1978). Here it is important to note that while there was a slightly difference, the results were not statistically significant, which makes it difficult to draw solid conclusions and to generalize. Furthermore, in this study the pupils were only giving feedback to each other, without the possibility to revise their writing, which may also have had an impact on the results, in that implementation of comments may have resulted in internalization of knowledge. Thus, this study showed no significant improvement of writing after using peer feedback.
However, other studies have shown that peer feedback can be linked to writing improvement. Hu and Lam (2010) conducted a study on 20 L2 university students in Singapore and showed, through a quantitative analysis of peer comments and revisions, that improvement of written drafts could be linked to peer feedback. They further showed that out of all the suggestions pupils offered during peer feedback, 74.58% were valid, as in correct and useful feedback. A higher percentage of the suggestions that regarded global aspects of writing were deemed valid when compared to the suggestions that regarded local issues. Overall, however, most comments concerned local issues, such as spelling, grammar, and L2 skills, and pupils were more likely to revise according to comments addressing local issues, where the uptake was at 82.76%, than global, where the uptake was below half. Xu (2007) corroborated that pupils, without training, focused largely on local issues. This shows that while pupils are able to give valid suggestions, they are more prone to revising according to peer suggestions for local issues than global. This might have something to do with trusting their peers’ competence for giving feedback and the effects of training for peer feedback, which will be discussed in more depth later. Furthermore, there may be a point to training pupils to give each other more global feedback on ideas, content and organization, due to the fact that pupils reported that they believed that they benefitted more from comments regarding global aspects than comments regarding local (Xu, 2007).

Choi (2013) conducted a study regarding peer feedback in combination with teacher feedback on 75 Korean L2 learners on college level. The results indicated that peer feedback in combination with teacher feedback had beneficial effects for pupils’ L2 learning, which is a local aspect, and writing anxiety, but not composition skills, which is a global aspect of writing, when compared to a group that only received teacher feedback. This is in line with Hu and Lam’s (2010) findings that pupils incorporated more feedback regarding local issues and Xu’s (2007) discovery that pupils when giving peer feedback tended to focus on local issues such as grammar, spelling and L2 skills. It is not strange that pupils did not improve the global aspects of their writing in Choi’s (2013) study, considering Hu and Lam’s (2010) and Xu’s (2007) results, since those results would suggest that pupils are not all that comfortable with giving feedback regarding global aspects, nor comfortable implementing that feedback into their texts.

Peer feedback activities can be used with or without technological aids. Xu (2007) compared peer feedback with pen and paper to peer feedback using Microsoft Word. The study was conducted in America, on 12 L2 learners, where a majority came from
Asian countries. Results suggested that there was no significant difference between the two and that pupils used similar language and sentence structures, and style of comment, with the exception that in the beginning Microsoft Word generated more comments than pen and paper. Xu (2007) suggested that because Microsoft Word provided a novel way of giving comments, it encouraged more comments in the beginning. These findings are not all that surprising, considering that the act of engaging with the text, and negotiating meaning with others are more significant for peer feedback than the method for doing so, the latter much so according to sociocultural theory.

Another aspect of peer feedback to be considered is the differences between giving feedback and receiving it. Lundstrom and Baker (2009) investigated whether giving feedback to peers would improve writing more than receiving feedback from peers. Their study was conducted in the U.S on 91 L2 university students. One group was given anonymous papers that they were to comment on, while not receiving any feedback on their own writing, whereas another group was given feedback on their writing but would not give any feedback. Results indicated that those giving feedback improved more than those only receiving feedback. They used two groups, one group for beginning learners and one for intermediate learners. For the beginners group, giving peer feedback improved their writing more than receiving it and results showed that for this group, the givers performed better on all global writing aspects when compared to the receiver group. For the intermediate group, both groups improved in regards to global writing aspects, but there was no significant difference between the group giving and the group receiving peer feedback. Lundstrom and Baker (2009) suggested that this might be due to the fact that this group had some experience with peer feedback and when separating the pupils with experience with peer feedback from those without in the intermediate group, the results were similar to that of the beginners group. Thus, giving feedback is more important for beginning learners and learners unfamiliar with peer feedback, whereas those who already have experience with peer feedback improved equally much by giving and receiving feedback. However, keeping sociocultural theory in mind, the results may have been affected by the fact that neither group included a social dimension where the pupils could negotiate for meaning in their zone of proximal development.

Thus, it would seem that peer feedback generally has positive effects on pupils’ writing and on their language development. For instance, improvement in writing could
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be linked to peer feedback. Furthermore, most of pupils’ comments were valid and it has been shown that peer feedback could have positive effect for L2 skills and prevent anxiety. While both giving and receiving peer feedback improved writing, for novices of peer feedback giving peer feedback seemed to have the larger effect. Furthermore, the type and frequency of comments affected implementation. Thus it would seem that the effects of peer feedback are largely positive and many of them can be linked to writing improvement and language development.

4.1.2 Comparisons of feedback types

There have been a few comparative studies between peer feedback and other types of feedback, for instance self-editing, computer mediated feedback and teacher feedback. Diab (2011) conducted a study, on 40 L2 university student in Lebanon, which investigated the differences in essay quality between a group using self-editing and another group practicing peer feedback. The results showed that the experimental group, the one that practiced peer feedback, showed significant improvements of their drafts regarding content and organization of ideas, which is included in global writing aspects, when compared to the control group, which focused on self-editing. Diab (2001) further showed that the two groups noticed the same amounts of errors in the texts and that the peer feedback group revised less of the errors than the self-editor group. The peer feedback group’s revisions, however, improved their drafts more than the self-editors’. This shows that there are positive effects of peer feedback, namely the improvement of writers’ drafts concerning global issues, which include composition skills, organization, and ideas, and that peer feedback will improve pupils’ writing more than self-editing. This would also be in line with the sociocultural theory, in that pupils’ are able to perform better with help than on their own. The fact that the peer feedback group implemented less feedback than the self-editing group can be attributed to the fact that pupils may distrust their peers’ ability to give valuable feedback, as suggested by Hyland and Hyland (2006). The issue of trust for peers’ ability to offer valid feedback will be discussed in greater depth later.

Wakabayashi (2013), however, had different results when comparing self-editing to providing peer feedback. Her study, conducted on 55 L2 university students in Japan,
Peer feedback showed that while both groups improved their writing, results were not statistically significant. It is important to note, however, that in Wakabayashi’s (2013) study, the pupils focusing on peer feedback only provided peer feedback and did not receive any on their own products, with the justification that the study focused on the effects of only providing of feedback, not implementation and negotiation of feedback. This procedure could remove important components of peer feedback, namely interaction with peers, which may have affected the results, an important component for learning according to sociocultural theory.

Thus, the sociocultural theory would predict that peer feedback would be superior to self-editing in matters of language development. It is difficult to make a complete judgement of this by contrasting only two studies, but Diab’s (2001) results are in accordance with the sociocultural theory and Wakabayashi’s (2013) findings can also be explained by the theory in question. It is therefore not unthinkable that peer-feedback, when retaining all of its component from providing feedback, to discussing it, to implementing it, is superior to self-editing concerning language development. However, both studies showed improvement in writing for pupils practicing peer feedback, which means that regardless of which method is superior, peer feedback contributed to language development.

Peer feedback could also be compared to computer generated feedback. Lai (2010), conducted a study on 22 L2 learners in Taiwan, and compared peer feedback with feedback from a computer program. The conclusion was that peer feedback was more beneficial for improving pupils’ writing. This is also in line with the sociocultural theory, since computer programs will not be able to provide the pupils with meaningful interaction, whereas other pupils might. Thus, in this instance peer feedback was better for language development than computer mediated feedback, probably due to the component of meaningful interaction.

Miao, Badger and Zhen (2006) studied the differences of peer feedback and teacher feedback. Their study was conducted at a Chinese university on 79 L2 students. They showed that both teacher and peer feedback were used by pupils to improve their writing, but that teacher feedback was more likely to be implemented and led to greater writing improvement. However, peer feedback still led to writing improvement, just not as great an improvement as teacher feedback, in that peer feedback led to slightly more successful revisions. The result that pupils use more teacher feedback than peer feedback is corroborated by Choi (2013) and Zhao (2010). Zhao (2010) conducted a
study on 18 English L2 learners in China, and emphasized that pupils used teacher feedback without understanding it, whereas pupils understood peer comments and suggestions and their value better. These conclusions were reached through an analysis of pupils’ use of feedback and interviews on pupils’ understanding of the feedback. Zhao (2010) theorized that the reason that pupils incorporated teacher feedback without understanding it was that the teacher would later grade them and that pupils understood peer feedback to be only suggestions that could be incorporated or discarded. These results mean that although pupils incorporated more teacher feedback into their second drafts, peer feedback might ultimately lead to more language improvement, because they would acquire more knowledge from their peers, in that they understood peer feedback better than teacher feedback. The problem here is two-fold, firstly, that pupils did not pay as much attention to their peers’ feedback and secondly, that they did not fully understand teacher feedback. The second issue, while interesting, is not within the scope of this essay, so focus will be on the first. The fact that pupils regarded peer feedback as suggestions that could be discarded at will, might be problematic in that they might be discarding perfectly valid feedback, as suggested by Hu and Lam (2010) who showed that most of the comments offered in peer feedback were valid. This issue could be addressed through training to formulate and incorporate peer feedback, after which peer feedback has been shown to be largely correct and relevant, while pupils also implemented more feedback (Rahimi, 2013; Min, 2006). The topic of training for peer feedback will be discussed in length later. The results that pupils understood peer feedback better than teacher feedback could be attributed to lengthier discussion and negotiation of meaning with their peers, which would mean greater scaffolding in their zone of proximal development, which in turn could lead to greater language development. However, teachers could also help pupils develop in their ZPD given time and their feedback should not be discarded, but a teacher’s attention is divided among a whole group of pupils, whereas every pupil will have time to focus on one or a few of their peers’ texts.

Thus, peer feedback appears to improve writing and language development more than self-editing due to meaningful interaction in the zone of proximal development. For the same reason, Lai’s (2010) findings indicated that peer feedback was to be preferred over computer feedback, although it is problematic to judge one to be superior to the other without further research. While teacher feedback led to greater implementation, it seemed as if pupils had more understanding for peer feedback. In
short, there is nothing to suggest that peer feedback would be detrimental to language development, or that self-editing or computer feedback should be favoured.

4.1.3 Evaluation of production and learner autonomy

Hyland and Hyland (2006) surveyed research pertaining to peer feedback and its effects on second language pupils’ writing. They concluded that peer feedback could help pupils’ realize how their texts are viewed by readers, improve their ability to evaluate their own work and increase learner autonomy. This is corroborated by Miao, Badger and Zhen (2006), who concluded that peer feedback could be linked to greater autonomy for the pupils. The importance of learner autonomy is emphasized in the curriculum for the upper secondary school, where pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and influence their own learning and also to improve their confidence in their ability to take initiative and responsibility (Skolverket, 2013).

Liu and Carless (2006) argued that peer feedback need not be connected to peer assessment, but that peer feedback could be a great tool for learners to understand grading criteria, through looking at each other’s productions in order to form an impression of the quality of writing. This is also showed by a document Skolverket (2011) which claimed that giving pupils a set of criteria and the opportunity to see different ways of solving a task would increase their understanding for what signified good quality production. Hyland and Hyland (2006) also claimed that by using peer feedback pupils would realize how their texts are perceived by others and thus be able to form an evaluation of their own work. However, while the claim that pupils improve their ability to evaluate their own work might be true, Suzuki (2009) presented evidence that pupils’ evaluations of their own revisions after peer feedback did not correlate well with the teacher’s evaluation of their revisions. This means that either the incongruence of the results are due to one part being wrong, or that even if peer feedback could help pupils improve their ability for self-evaluation, they are still far from as adept at it as the teacher.

Furthermore, according to Liu and Carless (2006) peer feedback can help develop critical thinking, in that the more involved a pupil is in a peer feedback process, the likelier they are to develop the necessary skills and be able to critically view their peers’
Peer feedback

work. This is covered by the syllabus for English 7, which states that pupils need to be able to approach different sources critically (Skolverket, 2014). Additionally, the curriculum for upper secondary school states that “[s]tudents should develop their ability to think critically, examine facts and relationships, and appreciate the consequences of different alternatives” (Skolverket, 2013, p. 5). Thus, since peer feedback as an activity can help develop critical thinking, it is supported by the curriculum for upper secondary school.

Thus, peer feedback can contribute to the development of important skills such as learner autonomy, evaluation of pupils’ own work and critical thinking. As shown, these skills are deemed important in a Swedish classroom, due to the fact that the curriculum for upper secondary school states that pupils need to learn them in school. Furthermore, these skills can possibly contribute to language development in that critically examining their own and others’ productions may lead pupils to notice new language features.

4.2 Issues with peer feedback

In order to evaluate the effects of peer feedback on language development, it is important to consider the issues with peer feedback as a pedagogical tool as well, due to the fact that issues with it can amount to difficulties using it effectively.

One issue with peer feedback is the fact that pupils tend to mistrust their peers’ ability to give useful comments (Diab, 2011; Hyland and Hyland, 2006; Hu and Lam, 2010). Hu and Lam (2010) showed that pupils had a preference for teacher feedback when compared to peer feedback, where they showed that this preference was due to the fact that pupils’ perceived the teacher to be more competent at giving feedback than their peers. This is also corroborated by Hyland and Hyland (2006). It is important to note that many pupils reported that they valued peer feedback as one form of feedback when complemented with teacher feedback (Hu and Lam, 2010). However, Hu and Lam’s (2010) study indicated that pupils’ perception of how their peers’ English proficiency might influence their feedback had no statistical significance on the actual peer feedback behaviour. Thus, pupils’ preferences regarding peer feedback had no influence on their willingness to offer and receive feedback from their peers. Furthermore, Hu and Lam (2010) showed that pupils’ suggestions in peer feedback
were mostly valid. This shows that even if pupils mistrust their peers’ ability to give useful feedback and they prefer teacher feedback, it does not significantly alter their behaviour in peer feedback sessions. Thus, even with an attitude of distrust towards peers’ competence, it seems as if pupils are prone to give relevant feedback and incorporate it in their writing. The issue of mistrust could also possibly be removed by correct training in peer feedback. If pupils were provided with a safe environment in which to show their productions and receive constructive feedback on it and given proper instruction on how to provide constructive comments that do not threaten face, they might come to view their peers as a valuable resource in writing. Furthermore, simply knowing that their peers are trained in giving good peer feedback might inspire trust in the provided peer feedback.

Another issue would be that pupils cannot give feedback to each other. Hyland and Hyland (2006) also indicated that pupils’ may not be able to give high-quality feedback to each other and that they may have problems detecting errors and see solutions. Hu and Lam (2010) would dispute this, considering that they showed that the majority of peer feedback offered was valid. This is corroborated by Rahimi (2013), who concluded that wrong or irrelevant peer feedback was rare, where 10% of the offered peer feedback for the untrained group concerning local issues at the end of the course were wrong and 4% of the offered feedback for the trained group regarding local issues. For global issues the untrained group offered 23% feedback that was wrong, whereas the trained group had 8% wrong feedback. Untrained pupils might have more difficulty commenting on their peers’ texts, which is why training for peer feedback might be an important part of the peer feedback process in order to facilitate language improvement. Therefore, it seems as if Hyland and Hyland’s (2006) concern that pupils are unable to give feedback to each other is not entirely justified. Hu and Lam (2010) suggested that most of the feedback was valid, and Rahimi (2013) showed that for both untrained and trained pupils errors were rare regarding local issues, but that there was a difference between trained and untrained pupils regarding global. This means that training pupils to give peer feedback may alleviate these issues.

Furthermore, pupils may not be able to reliably assess their own revisions. Suzuki (2009) investigated, on 24 L2 learners in Japan, how compatible the revisions pupils made after self-revision and peer feedback were with the teacher’s evaluation. Results indicated that the reliability of the pupils’ assessment of their revisions after peer feedback in comparison with the teacher’s assessment was 0.52. This does not
necessarily mean that pupils cannot revise and improve their production after peer feedback only that their evaluation of their revision is not in line with the teacher’s assessment. This might have had implications for the usefulness of peer feedback, if there had not been an overwhelming support presented earlier for its effect on writing improvement and the fact that pupils are able to provide each other with relevant feedback. Furthermore, these findings do not suggest that peer feedback is not useful, only that pupils may be unable to connect their revisions to criteria. Lastly, these results may not be generalizable to Sweden considering that the sample group was small and the study conducted in Japan.

Thus, while there are some problems with peer feedback, mostly regarding attitudes towards it and a lack of knowledge of how to do it, it seems as if those problems could be circumvented by properly training the pupils to provide and use peer feedback.

4.3 Training for peer feedback

Training for peer feedback could take many different forms. Min (2006) used guidance sheets, in-class instructions and one-on-one pupil conferences to train the pupils in peer feedback. The in class instruction consisted of a guidance sheet and an example essay. The pupils were trained to give comments according to a four-step guide: “clarifying writer’s intention, identifying the source of the problems, explaining the nature of the problems, and making specific suggestions” (Min, 2005, p.296), and the instructor gave examples of questions and phrases relevant to each category (Min, 2006). Furthermore, the researcher informed her pupils that they would be graded on their peer comments as well as their writing, and pupils were not allowed to disregard their fellow pupils’ comments without providing a reason for doing so. The individual conference with pupils provided feedback on their feedback and the teacher provided reasons for why certain feedback worked well and what could be improved in their feedback. Liou and Peng (2009) used a similar method, providing instructions on good peer feedback based on Min’s (2005) guidelines, then giving the pupils sample essays, one original and one revised version of the same essay, and then giving examples of good peer feedback and relevant comments.
A safe environment is important for peer feedback. Liu and Carless (2006) suggested that it is imperative to create a safe environment for peer feedback, since otherwise the fear of losing face and being embarrassed in front of their peers may inhibit pupils. They concluded that such a climate is a prerequisite for successful peer feedback. Training for feedback could certainly be a tool for creating a safe environment in which to provide feedback. If pupils are trained in giving and receiving peer feedback and given instructions on how to phrase feedback so as to not embarrass or hurt their peers, it would contribute to a safe learning environment where pupils need not fear embarrassment. This should serve to decrease pupils’ inhibitions and encourage them to share their work in a safe collaborative learning environment, which, if including meaningful negotiation, could facilitate language learning as per the sociocultural theory.

Training for peer feedback can result in increased implementation and higher quality revisions. Min’s (2006) research, on 18 L2 learners in Taiwan, indicated that after pupils were trained in peer feedback, they incorporated more peer comments into their final product and that the revisions were of a higher quality after training. Most revisions after training related to global concerns, which improved the quality of the writing. Min (2005) also showed, using 18 L2 learners in Taiwan, that pupils benefited from training in other areas, including improving confidence and language acquisition. Their comments to their peers also improved in both quantity and quality in that they were more relevant and specific after training. Improving pupils’ confidence is in line with the curriculum for the upper secondary school, which states that it is the responsibility of the school that all students can feel confident in their own abilities (Skolverket, 2013).

Training for peer feedback may also have effects on pupils’ implementation of the feedback. Liou and Peng (2009) concluded, through a study on 13 L2 learners in an Asian university, that with the use of computer mediated peer feedback, pupils improved their peer comments and improved their revisions with training in peer feedback, even though they still only implemented approximately half the comments given to them. Even with the low implementation rate, the suggestions that were implemented led to improvements of the written text. This is interesting when compared to Min’s (2006) study, where implementation rates were much higher for trained pupils, at 77% percent. There is a notable difference between the two studies, in that Min’s pupils were both graded on the comments they provided to their peers and were required
to offer a reason for not revising according to peer feedback. Liou and Peng (2009) had no such requirements. This could indicate that giving pupils some extra incentive to consider their peers’ feedback seriously might have positive effects on implementation. Another thing to note, however, is that while Liou and Peng’s (2009) implementation of comments were lower than Min’s (2006) for trained pupils, the percentages of implemented comments that improved the quality of the text was slightly higher, 85% versus Min’s 72%. This might be a slight backlash from Min’s (2006) strict requirements regarding peer feedback, where pupils might disagree with peer feedback but being unable to articulate why, which led to them implementing feedback that did not improve on their writing. Since the differences of the percentages for implemented feedback were significantly larger than the differences between implemented feedback that led to improvement, there could be a reason to consider Min’s (2006) approach to peer feedback. In a Swedish upper secondary L2 context, that would mean requiring pupils to justify exclusion of peer comments, since the knowledge requirement in the syllabus does not allow for grading improvement on other pupils’ productions, only improvements to their own (Skolverket, 2014).

Rahimi (2013) investigated whether training pupils in peer feedback would affect the quality of their feedback. The study was conducted in Iran on 56 L2 learners. The results were that trained pupils changed from focusing almost exclusively on local aspects to commenting on global aspects more. Furthermore, the trained group wrote paragraphs of higher quality and their writing and drafts improved more when compared to the untrained group. Even the untrained group increased implementation of their peers’ comments by the end of the study, although the trained group did more, especially concerning global issues. These results corroborate Min’s (2006) findings, despite the fact that Rahimi questioned the validity of her study, due to the fact that Min neglected to use a control group for her study. Rahimi claimed that the Min’s (2006) findings of improvements could not be attributed solely to peer feedback, since the same group of pupils provided the comparison between untrained and trained pupils. However, since he used a control group and arrived at largely the same results, it can be assumed that improvement can be attributed to peer feedback. Rahimi (2013) further theorized that the reason that the trained group improved their writing more was due to the fact that they focused on both global and local issues and that writing quality relates to both. Choi’s (2013), however, found that peer feedback could lead to improvements on local aspects for untrained pupils, while global aspects were unaffected by peer
feedback for untrained pupils. This means that training pupils in peer feedback can shift the pupils’ focus for comments from purely local issues into considering idea development, organization, and other global aspects as well, which will improve writing more than if only local aspects were considered. Rahimi (2013) further investigated whether the improvement could be attributed to peer feedback by categorizing peer comments and looking at irrelevant and wrong comments. He concluded that the numbers of such comments were insignificant and that the improvement in writing could be attributed to peer feedback. The fact that trained pupils’ feedback to each other was mostly correct and relevant suggests trained pupils can be an invaluable resource to each other in the classroom, regarding writing improvement and language development. This would also be in line with the sociocultural theory, which states that learners will improve in their zone of proximal development with the help of another person (Vygotsky, 1978). Hirose (2012) hypothesized that training might be required for pupils to become effective at giving peer feedback to each other and Diab (2011) concluded that training in both peer feedback and self-editing improved pupils’ writing when compared with untrained pupils. This seems to be the case. Training pupils to provide and use peer feedback had positive effects on their writing, from incorporating more peer feedback into their product to providing more relevant and specific feedback to their peers and resulting in higher quality revisions. There was also a shift of focus from local aspects of writing to more global concerns which improved the quality of writing as well. In addition, training for peer feedback improved pupils’ confidence and their language skills. Thus, it seems as if training for peer feedback will improve a tool that can be quite useful in the classroom and that trained peer feedback contributes to pupils’ writing development and assuming the relevance of the sociocultural theory, trained peer feedback will contribute to pupils’ language development. Specifically, through guided training, L2 writers can improve the feedback they provide each other and therefore improve the scaffolding in the zone of proximal development, which in turn should lead to language development.

4.4 Language development and peer feedback
Since the connection of language development and peer feedback is an integral part of the research question, regarding whether peer feedback could contribute to language development for English L2 learners in a Swedish context, a summary of previous conclusions and their connections to language development is presented here.

After investigating the effects of peer feedback, its problems and training for peer feedback it seems evident that peer feedback can contribute positively to pupils’ language development. First of all, according to the sociocultural theory language development should occur when a learner engages in meaningful discussion within their zone of proximal development. We have seen that peer feedback can provide such an opportunity, where pupils can scaffold each other, since their strengths and weaknesses differ. Therefore peer feedback should lead to language development as long as peer feedback includes an element of meaningful discussion. Secondly, peer feedback can be connected to language development in that it will improve both local and global aspects of their writing, in that they will improve grammar, spelling and language skills, while at the same time helping pupils to develop a grasp of the importance of content, ideas and organization of a text. Lastly, training pupils to give and use peer feedback will further improve their writing and improve their feedback to each other, while balancing local and global writing aspects more evenly. Thus, training will increase the general benefits of peer feedback on language development.
5. Summary and conclusions

The syllabus for English 5-7 supported peer feedback, which was defined as an activity where the learners are engaged in an actively collaborative task where they give and receive feedback and supportive, constructive and non-evaluative comments from a person in a similar situation as the learner. Through the use of the research synthesis as a method, peer feedback as a tool for language development in a Swedish context has been investigated, where language development was connected to sociocultural theory and improvement of specific linguistic features.

The results indicated that peer feedback could improve pupils’ writing, that it could contribute to learner autonomy and critical thinking, that some of the issues with peer feedback could be diminished by training for peer feedback, and that training for peer feedback further improved the benefits of peer feedback for writing improvement. To conclude, the effects of peer feedback could be linked to sociocultural theory and language development and since peer feedback contributed to critical thinking and learner autonomy, peer feedback could be seen as supported by the curriculum for upper secondary school.

Sociocultural theory predicts that peer feedback should lead to language development, if including a component of meaningful discussion in the zone of proximal development, and the results indicated that sociocultural theory could explain some of the improvements after using peer feedback. Furthermore, it is clear that peer feedback contributes to writing improvements, both concerning local and global aspects of writing, which indicates that pupils also have improved certain linguistic features, among other things. It can further be concluded that peer feedback is a tool that can be endorsed by the Swedish system, in that the syllabus for English 5-7 includes a paragraph that pupils should be able to improve their own and other’s productions (Skolverket, 2014). Furthermore, since peer feedback seems to be able to positively contribute to learner autonomy and critical thinking among pupils, the activity is supported by the curriculum for upper secondary school which indicates that these skills
are important and that the school should help pupils develop them (Skolverket, 2013). Thus, peer feedback can lead to language development and it is supported by the documents that outline English as a second language in a Swedish context.

However, while the results are positive concerning peer feedback and its role in an English L2 classroom in Sweden, there are a few problematic instances regarding the generalization of the results. Since most studies were conducted on a small scale and with Asian learners, it is unclear whether these results can be generalized to a Swedish upper secondary context. More research is required until a definitive answer can be given about whether peer feedback is suitable for language development in Sweden.

5.3 Limitations

This research synthesis has a couple of limitations. Despite striving to avoid biases, this paper may include a publication bias. Studies that do not report statistically significant results are unlikely to be published, which means that published materials may exhibit a bias in favour of studies with statistically significant results. One solution to this problem is to include unpublished studies, although this comes with the risk of relying on sources that are partial and biased (Ortega, 2010). Norris and Ortega (2006) further suggested that research synthesis that relied solely on published studies should acknowledge the possibility for a publication bias. Since this paper has relied exclusively on published material there is a very real risk that a publication bias is present.

The studies used in this research synthesis also present a slight problem in that most of them were conducted on a very small scale of only twenty to forty participants. Only six of the studies presented had more than 50 participants. This has implications for the generalizability of the studies, since the sample sizes for most of them are rather small it is not certain whether the samples are representative of the population as whole. This further means that since this research synthesis is based on their primary research, it is not certain that the results here are generalizable to the larger population, either.

It might also be slightly problematic to generalize the results to an upper secondary context in Sweden, considering that all the presented studies were conducted on learners of English as a second language at university level. This means that there is a bit of an
age gap, not considerably large, but it is still there, along with a generally different structure of study at university. Furthermore, all studies with the exception of three of the studies presented in this research synthesis were conducted in Asian countries or with learners with an Asian first language. The differences in culture between Sweden and Asia, might mean that implementing peer feedback in Sweden could be considerably easier, or more difficult and that pupils might give different sorts of feedback and have different attitude towards peer feedback in general. Therefore, it would be reasonable to be cautious when applying the findings of this research synthesis to a Swedish context.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

Due to previously discussed limitations, there would be a reason to conduct investigations into peer feedback in a Swedish context, in order to determine the usefulness of peer feedback in Sweden. These investigations could be focused on training for peer feedback in Sweden or an investigation of implementation of feedback. Large scale studies on peer feedback are also lacking, which means that a large scale study on peer feedback in a Swedish context would do much to give a definite answer about the usefulness of peer feedback for language development in Sweden.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate Min’s (2006) approach with grading pupils and requiring them to justify exclusion of peer feedback, to see if this approach would work in Sweden, if it increased pupils’ writing anxiety or if it improved their feedback to each other. Furthermore, information is lacking regarding how much of a burden peer feedback, with or without grading the feedback, would be for the teacher and if there are any methods available to ease the teacher’s burden if peer feedback added to it.
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