The benefits of peer correction in the context of virtual English classes

Os benefícios da correção com os pares no contexto de aulas virtuais de inglês

Los beneficios de la corrección entre pares en el contexto de las clases virtuales de inglés

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RESUMO: Neste artigo, apresentamos um estudo em que investigamos os benefícios da correção com os pares no contexto de aulas virtuais de inglês. Dois alunos adolescentes de um curso de inglês chamado *Freeenglish* foram os participantes desta pesquisa qualitativa. Eles participaram de uma metodologia colaborativa de tarefas de correção de pares (ARAÚJO; FIGUEIREDO, 2018; DILLENBOURGH, 1999; DONATO, 1994) proposta por sua professora. Para isso, tiveram que corrigir o texto escrito uns dos outros e compartilhar feedbacks como parte de uma tarefa que foi aplicada durante suas aulas virtuais de inglês na plataforma *Google Meet*. Como fundamentação teórica, utilizamos a teoria sociocultural, a aprendizagem colaborativa de línguas e os estudos sobre correção com os pares. Os resultados mostram que a correção com os pares se mostrou eficaz em ambientes virtuais. Os alunos puderam utilizar diferentes recursos tecnológicos para trocar informações sobre seus textos (arquivos, salas de bate-papo na plataforma Google Meet, WhatsApp, celulares etc.), o que favoreceu a interação entre eles. Também demonstramos, por meio da análise de dados, que os estudantes forneceram informações muito adequadas uns aos outros durante a tarefa de correção para tornar os textos mais corretos. Além da correção relevante, os participantes também puderam desenvolver uma variedade de habilidades de comunicação, pois estavam muito engajados em falar sobre si mesmos.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: correção com os pares; tarefa escrita; colaboração.

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ABSTRACT: In this paper, we present a study in which we investigate the benefits of peer correction in the context of English virtual classes. Two teenage students from an English course named Freeenglish were the participants in this qualitative research. They participated in a collaborative methodology of peer correction tasks (ARAÚJO; FIGUEIREDO, 2018; DILLENBOURGH, 1999; DONATO, 1994) proposed by their teacher. To do so, the participants had to correct each other's written text and share feedback as part of a task during their English virtual classes on the Google Meet platform. As a theoretical foundation, we used the sociocultural theory, collaborative learning and teaching processes, and studies about peer correction. The results show that the peer correction methodology proved effective in virtual classroom environments. Students could use different technological resources to exchange information about their texts (files, chatrooms on the Google Meet platform, WhatsApp, mobile phones, etc.), which favored interaction between them. We also demonstrate, through data analysis, that students provided very suitable input to each other during the correction task to make the texts more correct. Besides the relevant correction, participants could also develop a variety of communication skills as they were very engaged in talking about themselves.
KEYWORDS: peer correction; written task; collaboration.

RESUMEN: En este artículo, presentamos un estudio cualitativo en el que investigamos los beneficios de la corrección entre pares en el contexto de clases virtuales de inglés. Los participantes de esta investigación fueron dos estudiantes adolescentes de un curso de inglés llamado Freeenglish. Los estudiantes participaron de un estudio de enfoque colaborativo de corrección de tareas entre pares (ARAÚJO; FIGUEIREDO, 2018; DILLENBOURGH, 1999; DONATO, 1994), propuesta por su docente. Para ello, los participantes debían corregir el texto escrito de los demás y compartir su retroalimentación como parte de una tarea que se aplicó durante sus clases virtuales de inglés en la plataforma Google Meet. Como base teórica, utilizamos la teoría sociocultural, el aprendizaje colaborativo de idiomas y los estudios sobre corrección entre pares. Los resultados muestran que la corrección entre pares demostró ser efectiva en ambientes de clase virtual. Los estudiantes pudieron utilizar diferentes recursos tecnológicos para intercambiar informaciones sobre sus textos (archivos, salas de chat en la plataforma Google Meet, WhatsApp, teléfonos móviles, etc.), lo que favoreció la interacción entre ellos. A través del análisis de datos, demostramos que, para que los textos adquieran mayor corrección, los estudiantes se proporcionaron entre sí informaciones muy adecuadas. Además de la corrección relevante, los participantes también pudieron desarrollar una variedad de habilidades de comunicación, ya que estaban muy involucrados en hablar sobre sí mismos.
PALABRAS CLAVE: corrección entre pares; tarea escrita; colaboración.

Introduction

Error correction has a vital role in a foreign language learning process as it is one of the essential elements that contribute to the effectiveness of language acquisition, and it should be regarded as a constructive and meaningful process (BARTRAM; WALTON, 1994; FIGUEIREDO, 1997; KAMBERI *et al.*, 2021). In order to turn correction into a productive and significant process, it is necessary to promote

opportunities for interaction and collaboration during correction tasks (ARAÚJO; FIGUEIREDO, 2018; BRUFFEE, 1999; DILLENBOURGH, 1999; DONATO, 1994; FIGUEIREDO, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2019).

According to Figueiredo (2002), when students work in groups, they have the opportunity to improve themselves more productively than under conditions in which learning is centered on the figure of the teacher because by working together, students can exchange not only information but also learning strategies.

Peer correction should be understood by the language teacher as an opportunity for the development of the learners' autonomy[4], as the methodology involves different learning strategies, interaction, collaboration and negotiation of meaning and form[5] of the target language.[6]

The present qualitative research (PAIVA, 2019) aims to analyze the benefits of peer correction in the context of English virtual classes as pair work activities promote interaction which leads to communication, negotiation and collaboration.

As theoretical foundation, we use the sociocultural theory (FIGUEIREDO, 2019; HALL, 2001; OLIVEIRA, 2001; VYGOTSKY, 1998), and studies on peer correction, as well as on collaborative learning (ARAÚJO; FIGUEIREDO, 2018; DILLENBOURGH, 1999; DONATO, 1994; HANJANI, 2019; LIU; HANSEN, 2002; FIGUEIREDO, 2012; SOUSA *et al.*, 2019; OLIVEIRA; LAGO, 2012; OXFORD,1997; SPEAR, 1988; SWAIN, 1995).

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[4] 'Autonomy' refers to the development of learners' ability to engage in the learning process in a reflective and critical way (SHIELD; WEININGER, 1999) and to gradually become responsible for their own learning (BENSON, 1997).

[5] To achieve their communicative goals, learners face certain linguistic-communicative difficulties that create opportunities to negotiate their messages. Negotiations are the efforts made by speakers to understand and be understood (PICA, 1994). When these efforts occur at the semantic level, they are called negotiation of meaning. Negotiations do not only occur at the semantic level, but provide the interlocutors with opportunities to question the form of the message, allowing them to negotiate at the grammatical, lexical and phonological levels (PICA, 1994). Such negotiations, in the literature of the area, are defined as negotiation of form.

[6] Target language = a foreign language which a person intends to learn (FIGUEIREDO, 1997). In the case of the present study, the target language is the English language.

Collaborative/Sociocultural perspectives and peer correction

Collaborative learning is an approach, broadly defined as "a *situation* in which *two or more* people *learn* or attempt to learn something *together*" (DILLENBOURG, 1999, p. 1, emphasis in the original). It might happen through face-to-face or computer-mediated interaction, aiming to promote the co-construction of knowledge. There is a substantial body of research on collaborative learning (BRUFFEE, 1999; CARSON; NELSON, 1994; FIGUEIREDO, 2006; FIGUEIREDO; SABOTA, 2002; KESSLER, 1992; OXFORD, 1997; SOUSA *et al.*, 2019; TINZMANN *et al.*, 1990, among others) due to the fact that interaction not only helps the less experienced student, but it also helps the more experienced student find out new ways of learning.

As some researchers show us (FIGUEIREDO, 2006; OXFORD, 1997; TINZMANN *et al.*, 1990), collaborative learning is grounded on the sociocultural theory proposed by Vygotsky (1979, 1981a, 1981b, 1993, 1998) and his collaborators. According to this theory, social interaction is a prerequisite to learning and cognitive development (LANTOLF, 2000).

As reported by Vygotsky (1981a), the child goes through three cognitive development stages:

a) object-regulation: the environment exerts its influence on the child;

b) other-regulation: the child is able to carry out specific tasks, but only with appropriate linguistically mediated assistance from a parent or older and more capable peer;

c) self-regulation: the child independently develops some strategies to perform a specific task.

For Lantolf and Appel (1994), the transition from other-regulation, or intermental activity, to self-regulation, or intramental activity, is favored by supporting

strategies, known as scaffolding,[7] and takes place in the zone of proximal development[8] where the child and the adult engage in an interaction.

Vygotsky specifies "more capable peers", but, as has become apparent from a range of studies about group work (LONG; PORTER, 1985; WELLS, 1999), it is not necessary for there to be a group member who is in all aspects more capable than the others. That is partly because most activities involve various tasks. Students who are experts in one task and therefore able to offer assistance to their peers may need support on another. But it can also happen that in tackling a difficult task as a group, the group as a whole, by working at the problem together, is able to come up with a solution that none could have achieved alone, although no member has expertise beyond their peers (SWAIN; LAPKIN, 1998). According to Wells (1999, p. 13), the zone of proximal development "constitutes a potential for learning that is created in the interaction between participants as they engage in a particular activity together." He states that the ZPD "applies potentially to all participants, and not simply to the less skillful or knowledgeable" (WELLS, 1999, p. 13).

Another benefit of collaborative learning is that it fosters L2/FL[9] acquisition by providing the students with opportunities for both input and output (EHRMAN; DÖRNYEI, 1998; LONG; PORTER, 1985). According to Swain (2000, p. 97), "language use and language learning can co-occur" through collaborative dialogue. Wiersema (2002, p. 1) also adds the fact that if the students learn to work together in the classroom, they will have the chance to become better citizens since it will be "easier for them to interact positively with people who think differently, not only on a local scale, but also world-wide."

Despite these benefits, some authors show us some possible drawbacks that might arise when students participate in collaborative activities. For example, student-student interaction involves an agreement, but it also involves disagreements (EHRMAN; DÖRNYEI, 1998; MATUSOV, 1996) or cognitive conflicts

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[7] The term *scaffolding* comes from the work of Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976) and is used as a metaphor to describe the assistance offered by a tutor, a parent or a peer to aid learning.

[8] The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is defined as "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers." (VYGOTSKY, 1998, p. 112).

[9] L2 = second language; FL = foreign language.

(PERRET-CLERMONT, 1980) because, through dialogue, students become active and are able to express their opinions and points-of-view. However, as Perret-Clermont (1980) states, peer interaction can induce cognitive conflict that, in turn, results in mental growth, accrediting the social factor a unique role as one of the factors that lead to cognitive development and learning.

Kinsella and Sherak (1998, p. 87) point out that some students' "reluctance and disorientation in this interactive learning format stem from their prior educational experiences". They are used to receiving information solely from the teacher. That can make students not so enthusiastic about learning with and from their peers since they might consider themselves as not able and confident to help one another.

Another aspect that might be a matter of some concern to teachers is that this kind of interaction – peer-peer dialogue – can favor the use of L1[10] in the L2/FL classroom (PRABHU, 1987). Nevertheless, some researchers (ANTÓN; DICAMILLA, 1999; BROOKS; DONATO, 1994; FIGUEIREDO, 2001; MELLO, 2002) have demonstrated that the use of L1 should not be considered a hindrance to L2/FL learning since it might function as scaffolding used by the students to learn the target language more easily.

By considering the essential role of interaction, opportunities should be provided by the teachers so that learners may develop socially mediated activities either with the teacher or with peers. One of the ways to promote collaborative learning is peer correction. Peer correction is a process in which students correct each other's written texts with a view to improving the texts, both in terms of form and content. Some researchers (EHRMAN; DÖRNYEI, 1998; FIGUEIREDO, 2005; LONG; PORTER, 1985; LIU; HANSEN, 2002; SPEAR, 1988, among others) show that, when working in groups, students have the opportunity to develop more productively than under teacher-centered conditions. By working together, they can co-construct knowledge.

Even in virtual learning environments, interaction and collaboration should take part in the language learning process as it is proved that, through social interaction and collaboration, students improve their social and affective skills as well

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[10] L1 = first or native language.

as their learning strategies and knowledge about the language in a constructive manner.

Considering collaborative learning approaches, Figueiredo (2018) states that, in a classroom where a collaborative perspective is adopted, students become active participants in the learning process. They have the opportunity to learn from their peers and teach them simultaneously.

Peer correction, however, has some restrictions, as observed by some authors (AMORES, 1997; MANGELSDORF, 1992; MCGROARTY; ZHU, 1997; MENDONÇA; JOHNSON, 1994). As Connor and Asenavage (1994) note, many students may not trust the comments from their peers and therefore may not use them while reviewing their texts. There may be a certain embarrassment or a certain inability of the students to comment on the colleague's work (CARSON; NELSON, 1994; NEWKIRK, 1984). Students may disagree about what is right and wrong in their writing. They may also prefer to have their texts corrected by the teacher rather than by their peers (DELLAGNELO; TOMITCH, 1999; ZHANG, 1995).

Peer correction can also involve situations in which one learner makes the other create new mistakes. According to Swain (1998), students working together not only learn from metalanguage to make correct decisions but also internalize incorrect decisions. However, the creation of errors must be seen as a natural circumstance of the learner's developmental process since the learner language is also formed by the oscillation of correct and incorrect hypotheses in relation to the target language (LANTOLF; ALJAAFREH, 1995; OHTA, 2000).

Despite these restrictions, tasks involving interaction and collaboration undoubtedly bring many benefits for students in their learning process. These tasks activate many strategies in relation to the students' cognitive skills and their social, emotional, psychological, interpersonal, and intrapersonal skills.

As Figueiredo (2001) states, peer correction tasks do not only serve to influence the writing of a particular text, but they also influence students' attitudes towards writing. By having access to other texts and the chance to correct their own as well as the texts written by their peers, students have the opportunity to internalize the criteria for successful writing.

In this study, we analyze the possible benefits of peer correction in the context of English virtual classes.

In the following section, we present the methodology used in this research.

Methodology

In this current research[11], we investigate the possible benefits of peer correction in the context of English virtual classes. The participants were two students (both aged 16 years old) from a group of eighteen teenage students who took classes in an English course named Freeenglish[12], in the first semester of 2021. They were all at the beginning level of English language development.

Students were engaged in a collaborative methodology of peer correction proposed by the teacher, who is the first author of this text. So, they had to correct each other's written text and share feedback as part of two sessions of 1 hour each, applied during two consecutive meetings in their English virtual classes on the Google Meet platform.

Before going through the peer correction task using their written texts, students had talked, in a previous class, about the topic of the written text, which is "sharing information about your routine during pandemic times".

In order to collect data for this qualitative case study (JOHNSON, 1992), the teacher created links for Google chat rooms in which students interacted virtually while performing the peer correction task. As students had to use Word electronic files, they shared the files through WhatsApp and/or e-mail with each other so that they could read and edit the documents they shared. Students also had to send the files through e-mail to the teacher every time they had to edit new information on their files or their peer's file. The pair of students who were the present study participants were selected at random, respecting their first and prompt availability to take part in the research.

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[11] The present research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Goiás (UFG), having as its registry number CAAE 3321200005083.
[12] Freeenglish is a project that counts on volunteer teachers and other collaborators in order to offer free English classes for students from public schools.

Thus, the present research counted on some technological tools as listed: the chat room links as an available resource of the Google Meet platform, as well as WhatsApp and email accounts for information sharing. Besides the recordings of the chat rooms on the Google Meet platform, the shared files containing the texts and text editions were used for analysis. The two participants were also interviewed by the teacher individually through a Google chat room. The interview was conducted in their mother tongue. The students were asked the following questions[13]:

1   *How was it to participate in this peer correction task? In your opinion, what were the positive and negative points? Why?*

2   *Was it ok for you to have your written text checked by your classmate (peer)? Why? Why not?*

3   *Was there any doubt about the topic or linguistic form at the moment of the correction? If so, how did you solve that?*

4   *Did you accept the correction marks suggested by your classmate? Why (not)?*

5   *Would you like to have the same task checked only by the teacher? Why (not)?*

6   *Would you like to take part in a peer correction task again? Why (not)?*

7   *Would you like to add anything else about your experience of correcting your colleague's text and having your text corrected by them?*

The analyzed data came from the recordings of the task performed in the Google Meet chat rooms. Through the recordings, it was possible to explore the interaction between the two students while performing the task and sharing information. The written texts and editions shared through email with the teacher were analyzed, and they also constituted data. Additionally, the chat room recordings containing information about the interview were also used as data.

All students were aware of the recordings, and the two participants of the present study chose nicknames for themselves in order to protect their identity.

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[13] The students' responses in the interview were translated into English.

It is relevant to mention that, to promote students' engagement in the peer correction task, previous steps were taken to make students familiar with the learning environment in which they would perform the proposed job.

The written task using peer correction was one of the main tasks in a mixed skills project proposed by the teacher. The peer correction task was applied during two classes (the third and fourth class, more specifically) as the first and the second classes were pre-steps for leading students to do the main task, as described in Table 1 below:

Table 1- Summary of the steps of the peer correction task

Written task – Peer correction / 4 classes	
Class	Procedure
First	Speaking session/Contextualization of the topic discussion: "sharing information about your routine during pandemic times".
Second	Writing session/Individual writing and editing: "sharing information about your routine during pandemic times".
Third	Peer correction task: Sharing text files, reading and checking peer's text. Writing down correction notes and pointing out mistakes.
Fourth	Peer correction task: Virtual interaction among students. Talking about the corrections made by peers. Solving the doubts about the checked items and adding information.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

During the first class, there was a speaking session. The students talked about the topic "sharing information about your routine during pandemic times", leading them to write a text about the same issue in the second class.

In the third class, the teacher elicited students' previous knowledge about the terms "peer" and "peer correction" and explained what they should do when correcting each other's text. Then, the teacher divided the class into pairs so that students would be able to develop the peer correction task. She also distributed the links for the chat rooms in which the students would be able to interact virtually and accomplish the task demands.

The teacher set some time during the same class so that students could read and check their peer's text. She did not give the students much guidance on how to conduct the peer correction task. She only mentioned that they should observe linguistic problems and problems related to the content of the text. The teacher told the students that they could point out mistakes by using a different color on the

electronic files to make it easier to identify them, or/and edit comments, or/and use another text edition resource from their preference.

After checking the peer's texts individually, all students had to share the texts back through e-mail or WhatsApp with their peers, as well as they had to share the checked files with the teacher through email. This procedure was done during the third class.

In the fourth class, the pairs of students interacted through the chat room to talk about the texts' corrections and solve possible doubts.

Data analysis

Peer correction has been a fruitful methodological approach for developing meaningful interactions during the language learning process in a virtual context.

Research on peer correction (AMORES, 1997; ARAÚJO; FIGUEIREDO, 2018; DILLENBOURGH, 1999; DONATO, 1994; FIGUEIREDO, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2019) has shown very positive effects in relation to the attitude of the learners who end up playing more active and autonomous roles as they engage in the correction process.

By observing the process, we could notice that not only did the students correct the mistakes, but they also talked about things in general, taking advantage of the opportunity to engage in a conversation in English.

Considering the peer correction task conversation sample below, we may notice that, at first, both students were involved in the conversation by sharing personal information. Then, one of the participants (Carol) started pointing out a mistake in her peer's text concerning the inappropriate use of the modal auxiliary verb "will", which was applied in the sentence instead of the present simple tense. As they were asked to write about their routines during pandemic times, the most appropriate verb form would be the present simple. Carol observed the mistake in Lucas's written text, but she did not correct it while reading it. Instead of doing that, she decided to use the interaction moment to point out the mistake through exemplification, not necessarily by exposing the names of the verb tenses.

[1]
Lucas: I saw your perfil… your profile… you like animes.
Carol: A lot. And you?
Lucas: Too. I draw animes.
Carol: You say: "I finish my online classes, have lunch and I will do my homework"…
Lucas: Yes, I do my homework.
Carol: But you say: "I have lunch and I will do my homework". It's "I have lunch and I do my homework".
Lucas: Ah… Yes…
Carol: Write: "I do my homework" […].

Additionally, we can observe that when Carol said, "You say I finish my online classes, have lunch and I will do my homework….", Lucas himself was able to correct the mistake by producing the correct form: "Yes, I do my homework". This fact corroborates some studies that show that, during peer correction sessions, the students might be more attentive to their written production and correct their own mistakes while talking to the peer (FIGUEIREDO, 2001, 2005; HANJANI, 2019).

Lucas comprehended the mistake he had made as he understood Carol's exemplification. Carol reinforced the need to check that specific mistake in the sentence by asking her peer to write the correct form: "Write: 'I do my homework'". Carol played the role of a mediator (FIGUEIREDO, 2019; HANJANI, 2019; VYGOTSKY, 1981a, 1998; WOOD; BRUNER; ROSS, 1976) as the most experienced learner in pointing out the mistake and in telling her peer what to do to correct the mistake.

During the interaction process, the students could learn pieces of vocabulary from the peer. For example, in excerpt 2, we can see that Lucas learned how to say 'concessionária' in English as Carol used the word 'dealership' during the interaction.

[2]
Lucas: Where do you work?
Carol: I work at SAGA. I did a job interview at Saga concessionária and passed. Saga dealership, the company.
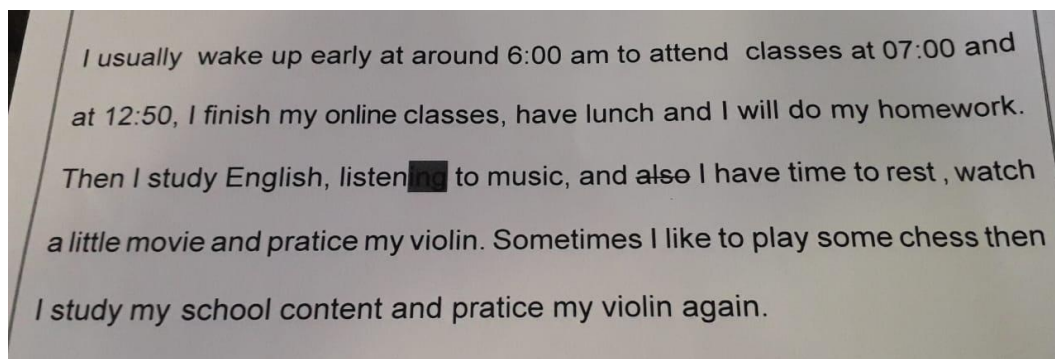Lucas: Saga leadership?
Carol: Saga company...Dealership ... concessionária [...].

In figure 1, we can observe that some mistakes were marked by the students, such as the verb form 'listening', which was corrected by the form 'listen'. However,

some mistakes were not perceived and, thus, not corrected, especially those related to spelling, as the word '*pratice'[14].
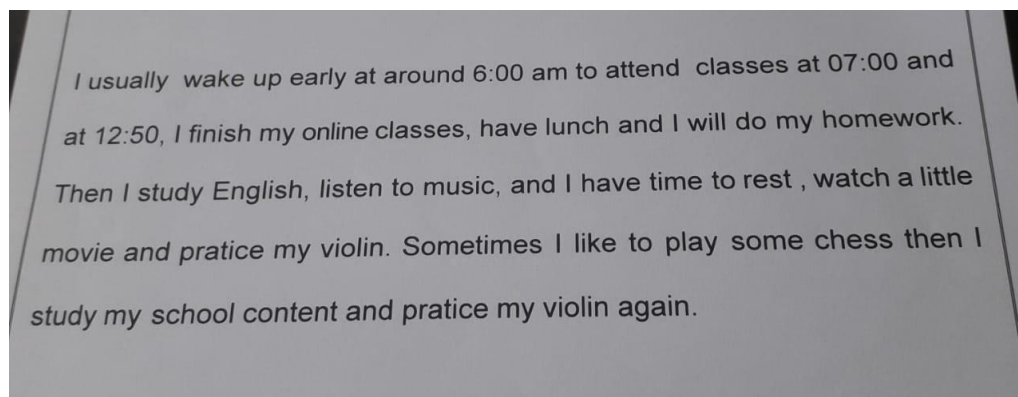
Figure 1 - Carol's text - First version

I usually wake up early at around 6:00 am to attend classes at 07:00 and at 12:50, I finish my online classes, have lunch and I will do my homework. Then I study English, listen~~ing~~ to music, and ~~also~~ I have time to rest , watch a little movie and pratice my violin. Sometimes I like to play some chess then I study my school content and pratice my violin again.

Source: Data from the research (2021)

Students accepted the peer's suggestions for correction and checked the mistakes pointed out during the interaction, as we may observe in the final text edition sample below. Considering the first edition, the mistakes refer to the wrong verb form "listening" and the unnecessary addition of the adverb "also," as previously described in Figure 1.

Figure 2 - Carol's text - Second version

I usually wake up early at around 6:00 am to attend classes at 07:00 and at 12:50, I finish my online classes, have lunch and I will do my homework. Then I study English, listen to music, and I have time to rest , watch a little movie and pratice my violin. Sometimes I like to play some chess then I study my school content and pratice my violin again.

Source: Data from the research (2021)

Through the answers provided by the students during the interview, it is possible to say that they were very motivated during the peer correction task as they were exposed to a specific methodology of correction for the first time, which led

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[14] In this case, the correct spelling is 'practice'.

them to a genuine involvement with the study. That happened primarily due to the fact that the new procedures promoted a lot of interaction among the students.

In addition, they seemed to be capable of recognizing the importance of collaboration in such tasks. They mentioned that the peer correction task allowed them to give assistance to their peers and receive help from them (ANTÓN; DICAMILLA, 1999; DILLENBOURGH, 1999; FIGUEIREDO, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2019; FIGUEIREDO; SABOTA, 2002; HALL, 2001; KESSLER, 1992; KINSELLA; SHERAK, 1998), as we can see in the excerpt below.

> [5]
> Carol: I really enjoyed participating in this peer correction task. For me, there were no negative points. I really enjoyed helping Lucas. I believe that both Lucas and I understand that we are learning... a great way to learn is to accept suggestions and corrections […].

Moreover, students recognized the strategic benefits of peer correction, and they defined the task as an effective approach that would contribute to their learning process, as we can see in the example below:

> [6]
> Teacher: Would you like to add anything else about this experience of peer correction?
> Lucas: I hope this experience becomes a new way of studying at Freeenglish.

Thus, after analyzing the data, it is relevant to mention that a critical point that was accentuated by the participants was that the peer correction task promoted opportunity for their interaction and learning development through collaboration (ARAÚJO; FIGUEIREDO, 2018; BRUFFEE, 1999). It was a mutual understanding for both participants that when they were checking each other's written text and exchanging feedback, they were fostering many possibilities in learning about the language. In addition, they could also develop their communicative and interpersonal skills (FIGUEIREDO, 2001, 2005), as they had the chance to get to know their classmates better.

> [7]
> Teacher: Would you like to have the same task checked only by the teacher?
> Lucas: I believe that both the teacher and the classmate are great options.

> Teacher: Would you like to participate in a peer correction task again? Why or why not?
> Lucas: Yes! It's a great way to expand your knowledge, and it's also a way to get to know your classmates better.

Finally, it's important to mention that through this practice, students could improve their sense of autonomy and collaborative awareness in a context that required more efforts from their part in terms of adaptation in relation to the new educational virtual environment as well as their integration and interaction modes.

According to Costa *et al.* (2022), the current context imposes various demands in relation to the adaptability to the use of new technologies and innovative practices in educational and formative processes by the entire educational community.

Final remarks

This study reinforces the idea that interaction and collaboration promote extensive benefits for language learning as students are led to develop different types of strategies in order to communicate with each other and solve their problems which can be linguistic or in relation to other topics in the context.

The use of peer correction in a written task could help students understand correction as a process in which they can share their knowledge about the language and even become more autonomous.

Not all mistakes were corrected during the peer correction session, especially spelling mistakes. Students attained themselves to correct mistakes related to using the target verb tense (in this case, Present Simple for describing routines). It probably happened because students are frequently asked to observe and be aware of the appropriate use of the verb forms for specific language functions and contexts during the process of learning a foreign language. That is an assumption that would require more investigation in future studies.

Although not all the mistakes were checked by the students, we should consider the peer correction process effective considering that most mistakes were checked by students (there were four mistakes in the first draft of the text, and the

students were able to correct 3 of them); students could interact with each other respectfully and collaboratively; they naturally engaged themselves in the conversation; they developed different types of learning strategies and communicative skills.

It is essential to reaffirm that correction has a vital role in the language learning process, and it should be improved as a methodology so that it may reach more effective, meaningful and constructive characteristics.

The analysis of the peer correction process in the context of English virtual classes proved to be consistent in terms of its benefits as it allowed the students to interact and collaborate with their peers as they did their best to mark the mistakes.

So, we should consider using peer correction tasks not only in onsite learning opportunities but also in virtual classes as they allow the students to lead a more significant and active role in their learning process.

The present study reinforces the need for the recognition of the new virtual reality and it brings some questions considering the educational practices, the new technologies and the innovative alternatives for adaptation to this new reality which demands from us, new knowledge, new practices, new perspectives, new researches and new analyzes.

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