CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In chapter I, a broad introduction to the research, its rationale, objectives and significances have been given. In order to have better understanding of this study, the underlying theoretical frameworks of peer feedback pedagogy which affect the implementation of the study as well as the key constructs of the research are reviewed. Consequently, the theory of social constructivism, process-based approach, the role of feedback and the importance of peer feedback in writing instruction, the development of peer feedback to the electronic mode, the effects of different types of peer feedback on writing achievement, levels of general English proficiency, attitude theory, students' attitudes towards different types of peer feedback, and the role of culture in language learning are the main issues of discussion.

2.1 Theory of Social Constructivism

According to Vygotsky's Social Constructivism, it is believed that cognitive functions originate in, and must be explained as products of social interactions. Learning is facilitated by parents, peers, teachers, and others around them in the community. Students learn cooperatively and collaboratively from each other in a group, so knowledge is not simply constructed but co-constructed. In other words, learners are actively involved in the learning process, and acquisition is facilitated when opportunities for learners to interact are maximized. Zone of proximal development embodies the learners' readiness to learn. It is the distance between the learners' actual development level and the level of learning under guidance from more capable people which external and internal scaffolding are central to the learning process.

In the social constructivist classroom, students are the center of teaching and learning. They play a role as active participants in collaborative small groups, emphasis on process, learning skills, self-inquirer, social and communication skills and self directed learning. Therefore, teaching is not giving lecture and rote learning anymore (Lemberger, 2000), teachers have to teach students how to learn, how to think critically,

analytically and creatively and how to apply knowledge and become life long learners, so teacher's role is a facilitator or a coach, not an authorized leader.

Social Constructivism has also been applied extensively in the area of ESL/EFL writing instruction. One of the fundamental teaching approaches which derived from the theory of social constructivism is the process-based approach in which peer feedback pedagogy and in group collaborative writing instruction has a significant role to play in the revision stage. In this perspective, writing is viewed as a learning activity in which writers learn best through interacting with their peer reviewers. Peer feedback provides opportunities for literacy learning because reviewers and writers vary in their strengths, preferred modes of expression, and levels of competence. Partners with differing skills and competencies can provide each other with the skilled assistance needed to extend the others' writing competence. Therefore, providing feedback is one way of external scaffoldings that enhances their writing ability. However, to better understand the role of peer feedback in the writing process, the review of process based approach should be portrayed first. It will be described in the next part.

2.2 The Process-Based Approach to Teaching Writing

In the early 1980s many teachers were introduced to powerful new ideas about the best approach of teaching writing. The philosophy at the heart of the process writing movement was simple, but the implications for practice were profound (Wood, 2000). Conventionally, the focus of teaching writing has been on writing products rather than on the process. In other words, it focuses on what students write rather than how they write. Practically, teaching writing with a focus on product can be time consuming for teachers. Moreover, students often find writing to be a boring activity since it does not provide much chance for students to systematically and critically evaluate their own progress. As a consequence, many students become dependent on teacher evaluation, and their sense of responsibility for their own learning is weak.

From the process-based approach's perspective, writing is viewed as thinking and discovering. It is the result of employing strategies to manage the composing process. It involves a number of activities: setting goals, generating ideas, organizing information, selecting appropriate language, making draft, reading, reviewing, revising and editing (Hedge, 2000). Accordingly, it could be said that this approach focuses on the writers

because it allows the writers time and opportunity to select topics, generate ideas, write drafts, revise and provide feedback (Raimes, 1991). In addition, Brown (2001) added that the process of writing requires an entirely different set of competencies and is fundamentally different from speaking. It is a complex process which is neither easy nor spontaneous for many second language writers to acquire.

During the writing process, students basically engage in pre-writing, planning, drafting, and post-writing activities. As the writing process is recursive in nature, they do not necessarily engage in these activities in chronological order. The following describes each stage of writing process in detail.

1. Pre-writing

Pre-writing is pertaining to engaging students in the writing process and helps them discover what is important or true for them about any subject at a particular time. Unfortunately, no one has discovered a perfect system for teaching writing process. However, it is believed that if students are to become capable writers they must develop pre-drafting skills. Experienced writers have their own methods, but inexperienced writers need motivation to write and assistance in uncovering concepts, experience, and ideas about which to write (Reid, 1993). During the pre-writing phase, students need a direction--a topic or something to discuss in writing. Topics can come from teachers but students also need to develop the skill of using their own insights and experiences (and those of others) as writing materials. There are many techniques applied in this stage in order to gather ideas, such as brainstorming, focused free writing, searching in journal or the internet, and talking with or interviewing people who know something about the topic and the like. During the pre-drafting stage, students need to establish their purpose, audience, and writing form. If they can appropriately make balance of experiences with the previous purposes, audiences and forms, students can become competent in a range of writing tasks. As a result, it is necessary for teachers to identify and define the appropriate learning objectives, address the elements of effective communication (subject, purpose, audience, and form), and establish guidelines or criteria to evaluate the outcome of the students' work when they assigned the writing assignments (Harris and Moseley, 2000).

2. Planning: Organizing and Developing Ideas

Writers not only need to think about what they are going to say but also about how they are going to say it. Pre-composing plans help students approach the blank page. During the pre-writing phase, students should also give some attention to how they might organize and develop their thoughts (Olson, 1992). Although these plans will be tentative, they are useful for getting started. Students need to organize their ideas in logical sequences. Several ways of developing and organizing ideas are possible depending on purpose and form. Some different ways of development and organization are chronological arrangement of ideas, inductive and deductive. Alternatively, students could consider constructing a map, a chart, an outline, a visual organizer, or a ladder diagram to organize their main ideas and supporting details.

3. Drafting

During this phase, writers produce a first draft. Students should focus their attention on the development of meaning and the flow of thought in their writing. The mechanics are secondary to the flow of ideas. At this point, it is suggested that students should try to say what they mean quickly. Additional drafts that further shape, organize, and clarify the work can be written. As students mentally step back from their works, they can develop more objectivity and give more consideration to the readers. They should be encouraged to share drafts to confirm or adjust the direction of their writing. Drafting is rarely completed in one sitting, so students usually need to let the work sit for a bit and then write a series of successive drafts if they wish to produce polished compositions. Discussing drafts with others (including peers and teacher) can help move each of their drafts closer to the final version. The drafting needs of students, however, will vary. The activities in this stage may alternatively include writing rough drafts, conferring with peers and the teacher, revising for meaning at the idea level, proofreading, and editing for mechanical and conventional accuracy.

4. Post-writing

This writing stage involves three main activities which are revising, editing, and proofreading. Drafts reflect the struggle to get words down on paper, so they are usually

rough and incomplete. Revising brings a work to completion. It is a complex process of deciding what should be changed, deleted, added, or retained. Revising is the general post-writing procedure which involves editing (revising for ideas and form) and proofreading (revising for sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). Teachers should give students the language to discuss, editing and proofreading as well as the strategies to reshape and polish their writing. Revising strategies require time and practice; therefore, they are best introduced a few at a time. Different strategies may be required for different kinds of writing. Proofreading involves reading for conventions rather than content. Proofreading and editing are not mutually exclusive. During the editing process, some proofreading may occur and during proofreading, further editing may occur. Proofreading is the process of checking a draft to make sure that the writing conventions (paragraph structure, sentence structure, word choice, usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation and appearance) are correct and appropriate. Finally, assessing or evaluating is the final step of the writing process, and this part will be discussed later in this paper. Although this movement is not without its critics, process writing has proven to be one of the most enduring innovations in education introduced in recent decades.

It is noted that the process-based approach consists of about 4 or 5 steps in accordance with different teachers and practitioners' viewpoints. However, it is recommended that to employ a process oriented approach effectively, writers should spend 85% of their time in the pre-writing step, 1 % on writing and 14% on rewriting (Murry, 1972 stated in Chaisuriya, 2003).

Interestingly enough, Richard (1990 cited in FSN Writing Clinic- RPO Vienna Training Center) tried to distinguish skilled writers from unskilled writers by the differences of their writing process behaviors from the pre-writing stage to the post writing stage which are summarized in the following table.

Table 2.1: Writing process behaviors of skilled and unskilled writers

Writing process behaviors	Skilled writers	Unskilled writers
Pre-writing behaviors	1. Spend more time thinking about the task and planning how they will approach it. 2. Take time planning how the information is gathered and organized.	1. Spend little time for planning 2. May start off confused about the task 3. Have few planning and organizing strategies available.
Drafting and writing behaviors	1. Use information and ideas derived from rehearsing to trigger writing. 2. Take time to let idea develop. 3. Get ideas onto paper quickly and fluently. 4. Have sufficient language resources available (e.g., grammar, vocabulary) to enable them to concentrate on meaning rather than form. 5. Do most of their writing at the sentence level of paragraph level. 6. Know how to use reviewing to solve composing problems.	1. Begin the task immediately. 2. Refer to the task or topic to trigger writing. 3. Have limited language resources available and therefore quickly become concerned with language matters. 4. Spend little time reviewing what they have produced. 5. Review only short segments of text. 6. Don't use reviewing to rehearse data.

Writing process behaviors	Skilled writers	Unskilled writers
	7. Use reviewing to trigger planning.	7. Do not have access to rehearsing data.
	8. Refer back to rehearsing data, maintain focus, and trigger further writing.	8. Concerned primarily with vocabulary choice and sentence formation.
	9. Are primarily concerned with higher levels of meaning.	
Revising behaviors	1. Make fewer formal changes at the surface level.	1. Make many formal changes at the surface level.
	2. Use revision successfully to clarify meanings.	2. Revision does not always clarify meaning
	3. Make effective revisions that change the direction and focus of the text.	3. Do not make major revisions in the direction or focus of the text.
	4. Revise at all levels (lexical, sentence discourse).	4. Revise primarily at the lexical and the sentence level.
	5. Add, delete, substitute, and reorder when revising.	5. Do not make effective use of additions, deletions, substitutions, and recordings.
	6. Review and revise throughout the composing process.	6. Make most revisions only during writing the first draft.
	7. Often pause for reviewing and revising during rewriting the first draft.	7. Do not pause for reviewing while copying the first draft.

Writing process behaviors	Skilled writers	Unskilled writers
	8. Revising does not interfere with the progress, direction, and control of the writing process.	8. Revising interferes with the composing process.
	9. Are not bothered by temporary confusions arising during the revision process.	9. Bothered by the confusion associated with revising, thus reducing the desire to revise.
	10. Use the revision process to generate new content and trigger need for further revision.	10. Use revision process primarily to correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary.

Major steps of the writing process – pre-writing, planning, drafting and post-writing are described and the learning activities involved in each step as well as the behaviors of skilled and unskilled writers are also briefly mentioned in this part. Next, the significant role of feedback in writing instruction, and the importance of peer feedback which were employed in this research are explored.

2.3 The Role of Feedback in Writing Instruction

Feedback is a fundamental element of a process approach to writing. It can be defined as input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information of the writers for revision (Keh, 1996). In other words, it is comments, questions and suggestions a reader gives a writer to produce reader –based prose as opposed to writer-based prose. Through feedback, the writer learns where he or she has misled or confused the reader by not supplying enough information, illogical organization, lack of development idea, and inappropriate word choice or tense. During feedback, learners are invited to identify the merits and shortcomings of their writing performance, understand the reasons for these shortcomings and discuss possible improvements.

Generally, feedback can be divided in many aspects in accordance with who generates the feedback, what the focus of feedback is (comment or correction), and how feedback is given. Language teachers have experimented with numerous strategies in providing feedback to their students' writing; however, the conclusive results regarding what is the most effective and appropriate way to give feedback is not achieved yet.

Previous research on writing feedback has shown that ESL/EFL teachers tend to focus on accuracy and correctness of surface-level features including grammar, vocabulary and writing mechanics rather than text-level features such as organization, contents, cohesion, coherence, signposting and clarity of meaning (Tuzi, 2004). In addition, Truscott (1996) asserted that reliance much on error correction as the primary feedback type can induce the students' negative attitudes toward writing and inattention to the feedback, and error still persisted even though they received the corrective feedback from the teachers. Moreover, excessive attention to student errors turned writing teachers into grammar teachers, distracting them from other more important concerns in writing instruction (Zamel, 1982, 1985), and it may not produce a long lasting improvement in student writing while peer correction does focus students' attention on errors and result in greater control of the written language (Cohen, 1975 stated in Leki, 1991). However, we cannot deny the fact that many ESL/ EFL teachers are still slaving over student writing by rendering error correction which is not only exhausting for teachers but also frustrating for students (Reid, 1998; Ferris, 2002). Accordingly, it seems to be clear that the students are much more dependent on the teachers instead of themselves. In fact, it is advisable that students should take responsibility in their learning, and become autonomous learners who can correct and evaluate their work independently. To encourage such awareness in the writing courses, the students should have a role to play in providing feedback to their peers' work rather than solitarily receive feedback from teachers. Teachers should give innovative solution; for example, there should be group consultations, peer consultations and peer and self assessment (Todd, 2003). To better understand the pedagogy of peer feedback in writing instruction more clearly, the subject matter will be discussed in the subsequent part.

2.3.1 The Importance of Peer Feedback in Writing Instruction

Due to the paradigm shift to student-centered approach nowadays, the idea of students receiving feedback on their writing from their peer which was developed from L1 process has become an important alternative to teacher feedback, and has been widely used in first (L1), second (L2) and foreign language writing instructions (Mcgroarty and Zhu,1997; Hyland, 2003).

Peer feedback is referred to by many names, for example, peer response, peer editing, peer critiquing, and peer evaluation (Keh, 1996). Each name has a focus on the feedback differently, for example, peer response may be in the process with a focus on content, and peer editing nearing the final states of draft, with a focus on grammar.

In fact, students appear to have different expectations from teacher and student feedback. They seem to expect teachers to focus on grammatical correction (Radecki& Swales, 1988; Liki 1991), while they may expect peers to comment on the content of their writing (Radecki & Swales, 1988). Students may not expect their classmates to find grammatical mistakes because of the lack of linguistic skills, which seems to be related to difficulties in providing feedback.

However, in my study, the students had to give feedback both in content and form in accordance with the provided guidelines. Generally, the guidelines can be more or less specific and they may focus on contents and/or language structures depending on students' levels of proficiency, their experience of peer reviewing, the stage in the writing process and the particular features that the course aims to stress (Hyland, 2003). Since both fluency and accuracy are equally focused in the Writing I course, the students in the present study have to engage in peer correction as well. As Fathman and Whalley (1990) asserted, the texts improve most when students receive feedback on both content and form.

But the question is how they engage in error correction since they may lack sufficient knowledge in language structures. Theoretically, to make peer feedback more effective, the students should be assigned to give feedback in specific types of errors which is emphasized in the lesson objectives rather than looking for errors in general (Bruton and Samuda, 1980 cited in Jacobs, 1989, Keh, 1996). The value of helping students to engage in peer error correction is to improve the accuracy of their texts through selective and systematic error correction, and the role of in-class grammar

instruction (Ferris, 2001).It is important for error feedback to be used together with grammar instruction and strategy training so that students will learn to edit their own writing independently (Ferris and Helt, 2000).

As a result, in this part, the students have to work on editing of the specific grammatical points pertaining to the unit they are explicitly taught and practice in class. Then, they have to point out where the errors are, and make suggestions for the correction if they are able to. Thus, in this part the grammatical aspects are different. To reach the students' mutual understanding and to get their familiarity with the editing checklist, it is explained and discussed as well as practiced in the class before using it by themselves.

The students can work in pairs or small groups to provide feedback on one another's writing. However, the previous research showed that the students receiving feedback from multiple peers showed significant improvement over their receiving feedback from a single peer (Cho, 2004). Moreover, maintaining the same groups allow students to get to know their classmates better to be more confident around each other and perhaps be more invested on the success of their peers on the group. Nelson and Murphy (1992) accentuated that when students became familiar with their peers in the cooperative manner, they tend to use their peers' advice when rewriting their papers.

Besides, based on the Vygotsky's theory, paring students with different writing proficiency would be able to facilitate growth in ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) in a subgroup and provide more favorable results rather than a subgroup consisting entirely of learners with the similar proficiency level (Okamura, 2004). Feedback from more advanced peers can provide scaffolding and can reduce problems associated with peer feedback such as lack of credibility of the peer evaluator and reluctance to be critical in the writing process. Moreover, Cho (2004) stated that multiple sources of feedback could improve the effectiveness of feedback. There are several important benefits of multiple peer reviewers. First, writers can improve the audience conception by having multiple peer feedback. Second, multiple reviews could reduce blind spots and omissions of any given individual review because more reviews mean that more errors are caught. Third, it could reduce the negative impact of incorrect feedback. Fourth, multiple reviewers may be in agreement on some specific problems, and this multiplicity of comments on given problems may be especially persuasive or salient to students when

they are revising their paper. However, forming the groups by making a balance of the group members' writing proficiency level is also necessary.

In peer response groups, students share their drafts with each other as the drafts are developed in order to get guidance and feedback on their writing. The student would use these comments and suggestions from their peer to write the next draft. They may be free exchanges of reaction to a given student's writing or they may work with the peer-review guidelines. It is assumed or hoped that the guidance or feedback will result in improved compositions.

Importantly enough, besides the outstanding advantages of using peer review that reduce teachers' time and feedback workload, and free them for more helpful instruction, several benefits of peer feedback for students both cognitive and affective aspects are distinguishably mentioned in many studies, and its advantages cannot be found in teacher corrective feedback.

The distinguishing benefits of using peer review are that not only writers but also readers can achieve the benefits from peer feedback during their writing process. First, it encourages active learner participation, authentic communicative context, alternative and authentic audiences (Hyland, 2003). Second, it helps develop students' critical and analysis skills and increase their ability to analyze their own drafts critically and this leads to learner independence (Keh, 1996; Celce-Murcia, 2001). Third, students can learn the language of, and uses for; responding to texts from receiving peer feedback so students would see similar problems and weaknesses in their own writing as well as use innovative and creative ideas to which they are exposed (Mangelsdorf, 1992; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994). Fourth, it also offers nonjudgmental environment and reduces apprehension about writing (Hyland, 2003), and the writers with different ability seemed to learn from one another. The reticent students also reveal more class group participation while in the peer community (Thongrin, 2001).

Additionally, while they are engaging in peer response tasks, they gained more spontaneous thinking and responding skills and more language awareness while writing. These benefits seemed to result from reading-writing connections, where the students said that they learned about style, organization, structural patterns and word choices from reading peers' essays and responses and from responding to peers' essays. When they begin to see this improvement, their belief in the efficacy of this technique will also increase. Such

benefits also came from collaborative learning, where less competent writers learned from the more competent peers, and vice versa.

What is interesting is that no matter whether the students incorporated a high percentage or relatively low percentage of peer comments, they say peer comments having certain roles to play. First, it enhances a sense of audience because of the increasing awareness through reading peers' writings and giving peer feedback. Second, the students express inability to spot their own weaknesses in their writing, and peer comments helped them notice the problems. Third is encouraging collaborative learning because they had opportunities to clarify their intended meaning to the reader and to negotiate a way to convey the intended meaning more effectively. And fourth is fostering ownership of the text because they become less reliant on the teacher and more confident in themselves as writers (Tsui and Ng, 2000). The above four roles are roles that teacher comments may not be able to fulfill. Comments as detailed and text specific as such may not be provided by the teacher who teaches a large class and has to correct all the students' papers.

In investigating the impact of peer feedback compared to teacher feedback, Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1992) found that the final drafts of those essays receiving only peer feedback resulted in higher overall scores than those receiving only teacher feedback. Likewise, Chaudron (1984) found that, while the scores on all the revised essays, which students wrote after receiving peer review feedback, were on average higher (though not significantly so); however there was not a significant difference between the amount of improvement resulting from peer feedback and that resulting from teacher feedback. The researchers established that written teacher feedback alone resulted in more changes on the grammatical level, while oral peer feedback alone resulted in more changes in content, organization, and vocabulary.

Interestingly, Connor and Asenavage (1994) examined the impact of peer response and teacher response on the revisions of university freshman ESL students as they wrote and revised an essay. The revised drafts were analyzed to determine which revisions were made as a result of the teacher feedback, group peer response, or another outside source. The researchers then categorized the revisions by type, using Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy to determine the types of revisions influenced by the feedback sources. Surprisingly, the study revealed that most revisions did not result from the

suggestions given by either peers or teachers, but from some other sources. However, Connor and Asenavage's (1994) study did not examine how many of the teacher and peer comments influenced changes, nor did they determine whether the third drafts improved in quality over the initial drafts as a result of the feedback and revision process.

More specifically, Thongrin (1997) studied the effects of peer-correction in combination with self-correction and teacher-correction on writing achievement as well as the students' attitudes toward the major two techniques in the Thai context. The results illustrated that there was no statistically significant difference between students who practiced writing through both methods. However, in a qualitative analysis, besides the traditional way of correction, the students had very favorable attitudes toward peer correction while such attitudes toward self-correction were less positive. However, a group of studies was unable to ascertain the superiority of either the peers' or teacher's feedback in L2 writing instruction.

Despite the fact that numerous beneficial effects on peer response has accrued and there is no significant difference on the students' writing improvement and achievement result from the two different feedback sources, one major criticism has been leveled at students' inability to provide concrete and useful feedback. A number of researchers (Leki, 1990; Lockhart and Ng, 1993; Mendonca and Johnson, 1994; Chou, 1998; Tsui and Ng, 2000) noted that students tended to give rubber stamp advice when reviewing peers' essays. Some attributed this to students' lack of knowledge and skills needed for peer review and called for teachers' intervention (Flynn, 1982; George, 1984 ;Wiener, 1986). This is due to the fact that students may not feel their peers, who are also still themselves learning the language, are qualified to critique their work and may distrust their recommendations (Mangelsdorf, 1992). This can be answered why most of the peers' comments are disregarded during writers' revision (TzuMin, 2004).

To solve these problems, the peer feedback literatures suggest that peer response practices are most effective if they are modeled, taught, and controlled (Hyland, 2003). In other words, the students should be trained how to generate more specific comments and suggestions to their peers' work effectively as many researchers (Mittan, 1989; Stanley, 1992; Nelson and Murphy, 1993, Berg, 1999; Hui -TzuMin, 2005) suggested. Evidently, the success of peer feedback training is guaranteed by the positive effects on students' cumulative writing development, and students' ability to provide significantly more and

significantly better comment on each other's writing (Zhu and Mcgroarty, 1997). As a result, peer feedback training should unavoidably be undertaken before implementing peer feedback technique in a writing course.

However, peer feedback will be less helpful if the students do not incorporate peer comments and suggestions. To encourage the revision process and reinforce the use of peer feedback, the students' writing process plays a vital role in the course evaluation. Final drafts of student responses are evaluated in comparison with their initial responses to determine the depth of revision and the student's ability to incorporate peer feedback into the revision process in a meaningful and substantive way. As a result, portfolios are used to examine the students' writing progress over time as it can encourage students to take responsibility for their own writing, and it can accommodate and support extensive revision (Hamp-Lyons, 1991).

Importantly enough, another main criticism on successful application of peer feedback in L2 writing instruction is in terms of culture. It is a very real potential for peer review to become a disastrous and unproductive experience which can discourage teachers from using the peer feedback pedagogy in the classroom, especially in the L2 context. Students from different cultural backgrounds often have varying expectations for small-group work and for the role of the teacher. If students are defensive, uncooperative and distrustful of each other or primarily trying to avoid conflict, little productive work will occur in the classroom (Carson& Nelson, 1996). As Carson and Nelson's study (1996) suggests the kinds of behaviors that Chinese students would normally exhibit in groups are different from the behaviors that are frequently desired in writing groups. Although the students in this study perceived the goal of writing group, such as criticizing each other's drafts, they were reluctant to do so. It seems that making negative comments on a peer's draft leads to division, not cohesion, in a group. They were, for the most part, more concerned with the group's social dimension than with providing their peers with suggestions to improve their essays. Conversely, Mangelsdorf & Schlumberger (1992) found that most students adopted a prescriptive rather than collaborative perspective when they responded to their peers, so the result can be confirmed why it was necessary for teachers to train students in successful peer review techniques and also to construct opportunities for effective peer interactions.

Although the merit of traditional peer feedback pedagogy in ESL/EFL writing instruction is still inconclusive, the attempts to develop peer response through electronic mediums as computer-mediated communications both synchronous and asynchronous have emerged in accordance with the development and spread of the personal computer and the Internet which have brought the most significant changes in the technology of writing. Next is to review the literature on the use of peer response in ESL/EFL writing classrooms in traditional (e.g. paper-pencil and face-to-face) modes versus computer based (e.g., synchronous and asynchronous computer-mediated communication) modes.

2.4 The Development of Peer Feedback: From Traditional Mode to Electronic Mode

In the past few years, the mode of peer response has shifted from a traditional pen-and-paper and/or face-to face format to the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) mode for comment and discussion. In both L1 and L2 writing classrooms, teachers and researchers have begun investigating the efficacy of technology on writing instruction, with a special emphasis on the use of CMC mode versus traditional mode for peer response activities.

CMC covers a wide range of technologies of writing. These include various forms of synchronous or real-time communication, such as that which takes place in instant messaging, on MOOs, or via Internet relay chat, and asynchronous communication, such as that which takes place via e-mail or on web-based bulletin boards; and it becomes most popular in the writing classroom. Through CMC a wide range of communication channels are possible and presented in the following table:

Table 2.2 Types of Computer Mediated Communication (Cunningham, 2000)

Type	Brief Description
Electronic mail	Electronic communication (written or voice) between individuals.
List Servers	Applications which will distribute messages to all subscribers on a list. Includes facilities for subscribing, un-subscribing and moderation of postings.
Computer Conferencing	Software which manages conferencing on computer networks such as MOOs and Internet relay chat.
Bulletin Boards	An electronic space for notices for particular interest groups.

With regards to applying CMC as an alternative means to give feedback in writing instructions, Tuzi (2004) summarized the differences among oral feedback, written feedback, and electronic feedback in a number of areas as illustrated in the following table.

Table 2.3: General differences among oral, written and electronic feedback (Tuzi, 2004)

Criteria	Oral feedback	Written feedback	E-feedback
1. Distance	Face-to-face/less distance	Face-to-face/distance	More distance
2. Mode of communication	Oral	Written	Written
3. Time	Time dependence	Time dependence	Time independence
4. Pressure to respond	Pressure to immediate respond	Pressure to respond by next class	No pressure to immediate respond
5. Place	Place dependence	Place dependence	Place independence
6. Components of communicaiton	Nonverbal components	No nonverbal components	No nonverbal components
7. Personal distance	Less personal distance/ more intrusive	More or less personal distance depends on the situation	More personal distance
8. Cultural barrier modes	Oral/ cultural barriers	Written /cultural barriers	Written/ less cultural barriers
9. Involvement	Greater sense of involvement	Greater sense of Involvement	Greater sense of anonymity
10. Frequency of meaning negotiation	More negotiation of meaning	Less Negotiation of meaning	More negotiation of meaning
11. Delivery effort	Less delivery effort depending on L1 or L2	Greater delivery effort	Less delivery effort
12. Other facilities	Not available	No cut & paste	Cut & paste

In typical oral feedback, writers and responders communicate and negotiate verbally and nonverbally in real time as well as employ the printed text which they can view, refer to, and mark up. In written feedback, responders read and then write responses on paper. Students may be required to write responses in class or by the next class. After the responses are written, they are often given to the writer during a peer group session in which negotiation and interaction often take place. In the electronic environment, the feedback may be given at anyplace not only in the language classroom, and they have no pressure in responding because they have an opportunity to elaborate their thoughts, reflect on their ideas, rehearse their responses, and respond at their own pace before writing. However, they may not be able to participate in the communication activities used in traditional oral feedback because the nonverbal elements are missing, or there is a time delay involved in the dialog, or the added writing filter in e-feedback makes encoding and deciphering messages more difficult.

Moreover, MacLeod (1999) highlighted that one important characteristic of responding through e-feedback is to help the students be more honest in responding and feel more comfortable stating their true thoughts because the reviewers could criticize peer writers without having to face the writers, and/or they can respond to their peers' writing anonymously. In contrast, Tuzi (2004) commented that the greater sense of anonymity may discourage a sense of community in some students, which can also inhibit scaffolding.

A number of studies have investigated what the impact of this new type of feedback has on writing instruction and the writing process. It was reported that there is no domination in a CMC environment when the students exchange feedback on their peers' paper. Instead, the quality and efficiency of peer suggestions for revision increased in the electronic mode of communication (Sullivan and Pratt, 1996). Plamquist (1993) stated that the benefits of electronic response are a reduction in paperwork problems like lost or forgotten papers. Students can submit and retrieve their work and reviewers can respond online. Thus, students will no longer lose or forget their works. Teachers will not need to carry or possibly lose bundles of papers. DiGiovanni and Nagaswami (2001) indicated that e-feedback provides a better means of monitoring conversations of students, encourages the students to stay on task, offers guidance to writers who needed

it, increases student–student interaction, and promotes learner autonomy due to no restriction on time, place and pressure. It is also essential for collaborative learning (peer review, critique and discussion). This leads to a qualitatively higher level of writing skills through the enhancement of critical reading skills which results in a greater volume of written output and improvement in fluency (Bump, 1990; Paramskas, 1993) and increases the participation pattern of shy, low-motivated and unsuccessful language learners in electronic discussions who are less willing to participate in teacher-led discussions (Beauvois, 1992).

Regarding the teacher's role in the CMC environment, it seems that the role of the teacher as an authoritative source of knowledge and expertise is transformed to that of a mere participant engaged in equal learning partnership with the learners in an electronic discussion (Kern, 1995; Warschauer, 1997). The shift in the teacher's role affords more control, responsibility and initiative on the part of the learners in the electronic environment providing a wider opportunity for learners to be engaged in self-generated and meaningful communication activities involving a wider range of functions and meanings. Kern (1995) concluded that electronic discussions resulted in a radical change in the proportion of student versus teacher language production where students had more turns and produced more words and sentences in the computer-mediated discussion than in the oral discussion.

According to the remarkable benefits of technology integrated writing instruction claimed by aforementioned studies, these can explain why the mode of peer feedback has increasingly shifted to the use of CMC modes for comments and discussion. Consequently, the effect of CMC modes versus traditional modes for peer response activities on the students' writing achievements is praiseworthy findings that may yield insights both theoretically and practically in the field especially in the EFL context.

Although both asynchronous and synchronous modes of communication are valuable tools for discussion, reflection, and negotiation, it is noted that only asynchronous mode in particular web board and e-mail peer feedback is operated in the study because the students are familiar most with these two types of computer technology. Besides, many scholars have suggested an asynchronous mode may be better for commenting tasks since it encourages more reflective comments and deeper processing of peers' text and gives students more time and space to comment rather than

responding on a synchronous mode of CMC (Thompson, 1993; Hewett, 2000; Bloch &; Honeycutt, 2001; Brutt-Griffler, 2001; Liu & Sadler, 2003). In order to provide the clear pictures of the peer feedback types studied in the present study, previous research and literature pertaining to the effects of paper-pencil peer feedback, e-mail peer feedback and web board peer feedback on the students' writing are the main discussion in the following part.

2.4.1 Research on the Effect of Paper-Pencil Peer Feedback on Writing

Generally speaking, providing oral feedback is easier for ESL learners than for most EFL writers who are not used to orally expressing their ideas in a foreign language, especially under time pressure in a classroom. As a result, to provide the students opportunities to generate ideas and give feedback to their peers more effectively and appropriately in EFL teaching and learning context, paper-pencil peer feedback is used in the study instead of face-to-face group conference. This claim is confirmed by Bartels (2003)'s comparison study on the merits of written peer feedback to oral peer feedbck. He stated that the advantages of written peer feedback outweighs the merits of oral peer feedback because the written peer feedback can create an intended audience for student writers, provide a context for negotiation of meaning, allow teachers to monitor the peer response process, give students material to review and offer practice for future teachers.

The number of research on the peer feedback study conducted in the Thai context was limited; most available research focused on the comparison of traditional peer feedback with teacher feedback strategy in the writing course. For example, one exploratory study conducted by Chinnawongs (2001) investigating how useful Thai students find peer comment (on paper-pencil mode), self-evaluation and teacher reformulation in helping them improve their writing, she found that although peer comment was the lowest ranking as the useful corrective strategy, the mean of peer evaluation was considered very high since many students commented that all the comments given by peers were useful for their writing at both surface and text levels, and such feedback might not be provided by the teacher who teaches a large class and has to correct all the students' papers. The use of peer feedback (paper-pencil) and teacher – student conference were also compared by Padgate (2001). The study was conducted with 108 Thai adult learners in an English writing class. The results revealed (1) both

feedback strategies were highly valued by the majority of the students, (2) they had the same expectation to receive most feedback in ideas, followed by grammar, organization, clarity and style respectively from peer feedback and teacher-student conference, and (3) problems of the use of peer feedback such as lacking self-confidence, untruthful feedback caused by the feeling of kreng jai (Thai's cultural trait), and validity of peer response existed. The researcher suggested that objectives and virtues of classroom activities need to be clear so the students will know what they are doing and what they should do. Confirmation on the positive impact of peer feedback was attained by Thongrin (2000)'s study experimented with Thai college students with mixed language ability finding that there was no statistically significant difference between writing achievement of the students who were in the peer feedback group and the teacher feedback group, and they preferred writing instruction with a combination of teacher, peer and self correction techniques. It could be concluded that peer feedback strategy seemed to be well received by Thai students, but further studies on the subject matter are needed for providing more valid evidence.

As computers are widely used in writing classes worldwide, numerous researchers were motivated to put an effort to investigate how computers help students improve their writing skills. As a result many comparison studies on the impact of writing on papers and the computers on the students' writing process were conducted. Goldberg, Russell, and Cook (2003)'s meta- analysis study showed that students who wrote with word processors tended to produce longer passages, were likely to produce higher quality passages, and seemed to make more changes to their writing between drafts than students who wrote with paper-and-pencil. Baker and Kinzer (1998 cited in Goldberg, Russell, and Cook, 2003) compared the writing process on computers versus on paper. The results showed that when students wrote on paper, the writing process was more linear from brainstorming, outlining their ideas, writing a draft, then revising the draft, producing a second draft, and then proofreading the draft before producing the final version while the writing process was more integrated when students wrote on computers because the revision tended to begin earlier in the writing process rather than waiting until an entire draft of text was produced. Some research studies also revealed that computers seemed to motivate students, especially reluctant writers. Yackanicz's (2000) found that these students were more willing to engage and sustain in writing activities

when they used the computer as they wrote more often, for longer periods of time, and produced more writing when they used a computer instead of paper-and-pencil.

When comparing with the computer networked, not all studies report positive effects of computer technology on students' writing. Previous studies on the effect of asynchronous peer response for L2 classroom revealed that comments in the traditional pen-and-paper mode were more general in nature while the comments generated via the asynchronous mode with the software program CommonSpace were more detailed and focused much on editing and grammatical issues due to the software constraints (Bloch & Brutt- Griffler, 2001 cited in Hassen, 2005). However, the comments given via asynchronous mode might be easier to find, read, and use due to highlighting and tracking features of software programs. Negative evidence was also found by the study of Braine (2001). The study aimed at investigating whether context- LANs or traditional writing classes facilitated better writing and more improvement in writing. The results revealed that Cantonese-speaking EFL undergraduates writing in the two contexts produced higher quality final drafts in traditional classes, even though first drafts in LAN classes were rated higher on a six-point scoring guide. The researcher identified the overwhelming quantity and disjointed nature of writing in LAN discussions as obstacles to improving EFL students' writing.

Based on the literature reviewed above, although considerable research found that the writing process could be much facilitated when the students wrote on the computers, no conclusive evidence shows the use of computer technology integrated with peer feedback has any advantages over the traditional paper-pencil mode in terms of the students' writing achievement. Importantly enough, further research on the subject matter, especially the research conducted in the Thai context, is in demand for providing an absolute conclusion whether the students would benefit more from electronic peer feedback.

2.4.2 Research on the Effect of Electronic Mail Peer Feedback on Writing

Similar to computer-assisted classroom discussion, e-mail has been a tool in both first-language and second language education. It is widely used both for communication between teachers and students, for student-student discussion in the peer response groups, as well as for long-distance exchanges between students in different locations.

In first-language studies, Hartman et al. (1991) found (1) that teachers who used e-mails substantially increased their communication with students overtime compared to teachers who used traditional modes (face-to-face, paper, and phone); (2) that teachers using e-mail interacted substantially with lower-performing students compared to teachers using traditional modes who interacted overwhelmingly with higher performing students; (3) that students in computer networked sections communicated more with each other than did students in non-networked sections; (4) that students with lower SAT verbal scores made use of e-mail most frequently; and (5) that writing anxiety limited participation less in e-mail than it did in traditional modes.

In addition, Mabrito (1991; 1992) found that (1) high-apprehensive writers contributed more equally to e-mail discussions than they did to face-to-face discussions, (2) made more text-specific comments in e-mail discussions than in face-to-face discussions, (3) offered more ideas for revision during e-mail discussions than in face-to-face discussions , (4) were influenced more by group comments received during e-mail discussions than during face-to-face discussions, and (5) produced better papers after e-mail discussions than after face to-face discussions.

In second language learning, Wang (1993) compared the discourse of ESL students' dialogue journals written in both e-mail and traditional paper format. She found that the students using e-mail journals wrote greater amounts of text, asked more questions, and used different language functions more frequently than did students writing on paper. Besides, the e-mail communication gave a good chance for practicing language in open-ended linguistic situations. As Tella (1992) found that there is a shift from form to content, and a free flow of ideas, expressions, idioms, and vocabulary in the e-mail communication. The study conducted by Elkholy (2002) also supported that e-mail is as effective as other activities designed to improve students' L2 writing proficiency and they perceived a benefit from using email to facilitate language learning.

Moreover, the results supported what Crank (2002) found in his study that e-mail peer response helps students become better responders by promoting a written exchange, using writing to express their thoughts, and giving them time and distance to think about their reactions. It also creates an integrated writing community in which peer response is a natural extension of writing. The findings corroborate Tannacito (1997)'s qualitative study examining how electronic communication affects the social construction of meaning in the

writing of students in electronic peer response groups, the students could revise closely to the given advice and both quantity and quantity of comments , and revisions were improved. The conclusion from this study was that electronic peer-response groups promote the students' writing process and improve their written products, but it should be used with caution.

In a similar vein, Braine (1997) compared the effects of networked computers and traditional lecture class on ESL college students' writing in order to examine which setting promoted better writing, more improvement in writing, and more peer and teacher feedback. Only the medium of response was different. The results suggested that the writing quality in the networked setting was superior to that in the traditional setting. Peer and teacher feedback also occurred more in the networked classes than the traditional ones. However, improvement on writing in the traditional setting was greater than the networked one. Braine concludes that networked computers provide not only the supportive, anxiety-free environments required in successful language learning, but also many opportunities to practice language in the actual communicative settings. In addition, such networks may considerably lessen a boring and exhausting burden of correcting students' paper.

Although e-mail provides considerable advantages to writing instruction, some contradictory results are also found. Gonzalez and Perez (2001 cited in Abdullah, 2003)'s study revealed that L2 learners using e-mail for dialogue journals generated more language than those who used paper-pencil mode while the findings did not corroborate with his second study and Kupelian (2001)'s study which showed that the e-mail group did not significantly outperformed the paper-pencil group in length of text, grammatical accuracy, or vocabulary. As a result, the questions about the benefits of electronic mail writing in terms of writing development were raised.

Bresenbach-Lucas & Wiesenforth's study (2001) attempted to investigate if electronic mail writing improves academic writing abilities. The researchers compared non-native students' responses to writing prompts using e-mail and word processing, focusing on differences in the use of cohesive features, length of text produced in each medium, and differences in text-initial contextualization. The results showed that e-mail texts were shorter and their text–initial contextualization was less prominent. The results are consistent with the study of Stroble (1988) examining the similarities and differences in the response that students received from peer response group via face-to-face and e-mail sessions. Results showed that the number of comments students received were equal, and

they had positive comments addressing specific and substantive features of their writing, but the students in face-to-face response received a greater number of these positive comments than those in the e-mail sessions. Moreover, it was found that the mode of communication had no general effect on the writers' reasons for revision while the students asserted that they preferred face-to-face rather than e-mail modes of communication. Lastly, the results revealed that students' final compositions in both modes were of comparable in terms of quality. The researcher concluded that electronic mail sessions may function best as a complement to rather than a substitute for traditional sessions.

In the Thai context, Thongrin (2002)'s qualitative study exploring what went on when e-mail peer response was first implemented with nine Thai undergraduates studying argumentative writing throughout a semester. Results showed that (1) the students put more emphasis on giving positive compliments and opinions most in an interpretive manner. Most of their comments were text-oriented, including ideas for writing, style. organization, language, persuasiveness and reader awareness, (2) Thai cultural concept—*kreng Jai,* influenced their positive compliment-embedded response pattern and caused some students to consider peer feedback as useless and unreliable, and (3) the students had both favorable and unfavorable attitudes toward the innovative use of e-mail peer responses to writing. The researcher suggested that whether the innovation lent the EFL students either opportunities for democratic and self-reliant learning or frustrations and resistances depended mostly on how teachers put the innovation to use and manipulated it with cultural accommodation, techno access, and power structures.

Based on the literature reviewed, it could be said that e-mail can be an effective tool for improving students' writing confirmed by numerous positive results found in many studies both quantitatively and qualitatively, most of them hardly take socio-cultural factors into account or might unconsciously neglect how much impact of the factor can influence the quality of the peer feedback communication when using electronic medium. As a result, further research studies especially in the Thai context are needed before the conclusion can be drawn that students can gain ultimate benefits in their writing if the e-mail is used in the peer feedback process.

2.4.3 Research on the Effect of Web Board Peer Feedback on Writing

Although using e-mail in peer feedback thrives in the area of writing instruction, some difficulties cannot be successfully eradicated especially in most EFL context. Culture seems to be a significant problem in responding to peer writing and feedback. According to Thongrin (2002), some Thai culture contexts such as *kreng jai*, which refers to face preservation and/or harmony maintenance, influence students' positive compliment-embedded response pattern. These cultural heritages also caused some students to consider peer feedback as useless, whereas others revealed their preferences for collective voices of peers' and integrated them into regular class writing. The results conform to Carson and Nelson's study in 1996. They stated that the kinds of behaviors that Chinese students would normally exhibit in groups are different from the behaviors that are frequently desired in writing groups. Although the students in this study perceived the goal of writing groups as criticizing each other's drafts, the Chinese students were reluctant to do so as they felt making negative comments on a peer's draft might lead to division in a group. They were more concerned with the group's social dimension than with providing their peers with suggestions to improve their essays. Therefore, in order to solve this problem, the characteristics of web board are considered as a potential tool to fill the gap.

Although e-mails and web boards are under the same category of asynchronous mode of Computer Mediated Communication, they have some different characteristics in terms of the degree to which participants' identities are revealed to one another. Whereas some CMC technologies afford completely anonymous communication where participants' identities are totally concealed, other CMC technologies support communication where participants are more aware of each other's identities. E-mail offers less support for anonymity than web board discussion because even though one can claim to be a different person, it is relatively easy to trace e-mail addresses. In contrast, most web board users create pseudonym log-on names for their online identity.

Web board is a web application which is provided for discussion, someone posts a message which is visible to everyone, visitors read it and then have the option to post a reply which will also be visible to everyone in the same group; thus, a discussion can build up without all users having to be online at the same time and allow visitors to post anonymously.

The degree of anonymity has been shown to have a significant impact on the nature of communication. Anonymity has been found to create a certain distance between participants that may contribute to an atmosphere of critical receptivity (Kern, 1998). Indeed, in the vast anonymity of cyberspace there is little pressure of the sort imposed on an individual by another's physical presence. This would help the students be more honest in responding because the reviewers could criticize peer writers without having to face the writers, and it can allow students to respond anonymously. So, the reviewers felt more comfortable stating their true thoughts (MacLeod, 1999), and this probably influences their writing ability in the end. This is significant in terms of current second language acquisition theory that views affective factors as key to the learning process.

The anonymity of CMC has also been claimed to result in decreasing inhibition, leading to self disclosure on the one hand and increased expressions of hostility on the other (Kiesler et al., 1984; Kim & Raja, 1991, cited in Herring, 1996). However, as Zhao (1998) points out, anonymity can be a "double-edged sword". In his study, anonymity encouraged participants to be more critical during peer reviews, yet it led them to work less. Similarly, anonymity encouraged learners to focus more on fellow students' journals while engaged in peer editing sessions, but yielded less helpful and lower quality reviews than reviews in the "identifiable" condition.

Some research studies compared the effects of web board with traditional mode on the students' writing. Tuzi (2004) studied the impact of web board peer feedback specially designed for writing and responding on the revision of L2 writers focusing on how the students responded to their peers and what kind of revisions they made as a result of the feedback they received. Results showed that web board could help L2 writers improve their writing abilities by resulting in more revisions on sentence and paragraph level than feedback from the writing center and oral feedback. The changes the L2 writers made encompassed two areas; changing existing test to clarify meaning and adding new information. Hewett's (2000) study is consistent with Tuzi's and Meyer's (2003). She indicated that the type of interaction had a different impact on revision as the oral peer feedback might encompass abstract and global idea development while web board peer feedback focused on more concrete writing issues.

However, there are some studies that reported mixed results. For example, Braine (1997) offered a more critical view of e-feedback based on his comparison of local-area-

network (LAN)-based writing versus traditional writing. The researcher concluded that LAN-based writing is no more advantageous than traditional writing. His reason for this conclusion was derived from his research conducted in the LAN-based writing system. The project used a bulletin board system on which students posted comments. He stated that it was cumbersome for students to traverse through the list of comments for those that were directed to them. Thus, the response system was seen more as an obstacle to writing rather than a benefit in his point of view.

Spiliotopoulos (2003) studied the potential benefits of students' online interaction in electronic bulletin boards to their academic writing skills. Although the author anticipated that online interaction would facilitate improvements in student confidence, motivation, identity awareness, cross-cultural understanding, and peer relations, the two groups showed no significant differences in the quantitative assessment of English usage or in writing assessments. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used to gather data in order to evaluate writing progress over time. Although the quantitative results did not reveal any significant findings, the qualitative results suggested that on-line interaction assisted students in improving their writing skills and developing their cross-cultural and interpersonal communication skills. The findings of this research project suggested that interactive writing using an electronic bulletin board allows ESL students the possibility of becoming multiliterate, thereby enabling them to integrate into and contribute to the academic community more effectively. The study of Kamhi-Stein (2000) also confirmed an increase in student contribution in the web board discussions.

There has been surprisingly little research and literature available that really investigated the different types of asynchronous mode. Todd (2003) focused on the comparisons of different types of asynchronous CMC, web board discussion and e-mail discussion lists with Thai college student, at the discourse level in terms of length of contributions, syntactic complexity of contributions, and discourse and interaction patterns. Results showed that the e-mail discussion lists elicited much lengthier contributions from students than the web board while there was no noticeable difference in syntactic complexity. Both had little student-student interaction.

Based on the literature and prior studies, the consensus on the efficacy of types of peer feedback has not yet been reached. The number of peer feedback studies undertaken in the EFL content is small, and even fewer are studies conducted in Thai context with a

great range of English proficiency students who are not familiar with student centered approach. It is inconclusive that one type of peer feedback is better than others. Moreover, *it is important to note that so far no previous research has shed any light on the effects of these three types of peer feedback (paper-pencil, e-mail, and web board) on the student's writing achievement before, so it can be hypothesized that there is no significant difference of writing achievement of students receiving different types of peer feedback.*

In brief, based on the literature previously reviewed, the common features and the differences of the three types of peer feedback mainly proposed in the research can be summarized as the following table.

Table 2.4: Common features and differences among the three types of peer feedback (adapted from Baron, 1984 cited in Robinson 1993; Tuzi, 2004)

Criteria	Paper-pencil peer feedback	E-mail peer feedback	Web board peer feedback
1. Type of communication	1. One way written communication	1. Two way written communication	1. Two way written communication
2. In-class activity	2. The writers write an essay on the paper in the class time and copy their work to other friends and the teacher at the end of the class.	2. The writers write an essay by using computers in the class time and send it to other friends and the teacher at the end of the class.	2. The writers write an essay by using computers in the class time and post it on the web board at the end of the class.
3. Mode of written form	3. Handwritten feedback form on the student paper itself by using peer feedback guidelines,	3. Typewritten feedback form by using peer feedback guidelines, and this	3. Typewritten feedback form by using peer feedback guidelines, and this

Criteria	Paper-pencil peer feedback	E-mail peer feedback	Web board peer feedback
	and this happens out of class time.	happens out of class time.	happens out of class time.
4. Out of class time activity	4.1. The readers have to sign their names on the paper and hand in their feedback to the essay's owner by themselves.	4.1. The readers have to send their feedback to their friends and the teacher via e-mail before the due date.	4.1. The readers have to post their feedback on the web board before the due date.
	4.2 The writers read the feedback but could not ask for clarifications and explanations because of no face-to-face session provided in the class.	4.2 The writers read the feedback and could ask the readers for clarifications and explanations.	4.2 The writers read the feedback and could ask the readers for clarifications and explanations.
	4.3. The students have to revise their first draft and produce a second draft to the teacher by themselves in the class.	4.3 The students have to revise their first draft and produce a second draft to the teacher via e-mail.	4.3 The students have to revise their first draft and produce a second draft to the teacher by posting it on the web board.
5. Other facilities	5.1 Not available.	5.1 The writing process is greatly facilitated by computer functions that allow students	5.1 The writing process is greatly facilitated by computer functions that allow students

Criteria	Paper-pencil peer feedback	E-mail peer feedback	Web board peer feedback
		to compose, revise and edit their writing such as cut and paste.	to compose, revise and edit their writing such as cut and paste.
	5.2 Not available.	5.2 Possibilities to create unlimited messages.	5.2 Possibilities to create unlimited messages.
	5.3 The students keep their writing on their own.	5.3 No central repository of messages for discussion lists, but the readers can replay to messages.	5.3 All students writing samples are kept in one place and can be read from a computer connected to the Internet at anytime.
6. Place and time	6.1 Place and time dependence.	6.1 Place and time independence.	6.1 Place and time independence.
	6.2 Not available.	6.2 Unlimited participation online.	6.2 Unlimited participation online.
7. Delivery effort	7. More delivery effort.	7. Less delivery effort.	7. Less delivery effort.
8. Immediate response	8. No pressure to immediate respond.	8. No pressure to immediate respond.	8. No pressure to immediate respond.
9. Sense of anonymity	9. No sense of anonymity support.	9. Less support of anonymity.	9. Greater sense of anonymity support.

Criteria	Paper-pencil peer feedback	E-mail peer feedback	Web board peer feedback
10. Nonverbal components	10. No nonverbal components.	10. No nonverbal components.	10. No nonverbal components.
11. Level of cultural barriers	11. Greater cultural Barriers.	11. Greater cultural barriers but less than paper-pencil group (Thongrin, 2001).	11. Less cultural barriers.
12. Mode of communication	12. Traditional paper-pencil written mode	12. Asynchronous (delayed response time frame) computer mediated communication	12. Asynchronous (delayed response time frame) computer mediated communication
13. Level of interaction	13. It depends on the students and teachers.	13. Increase interaction and negotiation of meaning.	13. Increase interaction and negotiation of meaning.
14. Communication environment	14. More threatening Environment	14. Less threatening, more supportive, anxiety free, and motivating environment.	14. Greater supportive, anxiety free, and motivating environment.
15. Face-to-face cues	15. It depends on the students.	15. Lack of face to face cues.	15. Lack of face to face cues.
16. Message permanence	16. Not available	16. Less feeling of the message permanence because the e-mail program removes	16. Greater feeling of the message permanence since the message is immediately

Criteria	Paper-pencil peer feedback	E-mail peer feedback	Web board peer feedback
		the message from the writer's computer screen.	visible on the web board.

Besides the mode or channel of communication, there are a number of specific characteristics as well as their specifically expected benefits belonging to each type of peer feedback mentioned in previous literature and studies that are shown in Table 2.4. However, it seems that the differences of the three types of peer feedback are not clear cut but in a continuum. This is because e-mail peer feedback and web board peer feedback belong to the same category of asynchronous computer mediated communication.

But the major differences of these three types of peer feedback that attract the researcher' interest would be the following features. First, the degree of anonymity (item 9), which results in the degree of cultural barriers (item 11), has been shown to have a significant impact on the nature of communication. Anonymity has been found to create a certain distance between participants that may contribute to an atmosphere of critical receptivity (Kern, 1998). This can eradicate some degree of cultural barriers. Indeed, in the vast anonymity of cyberspace, there is little pressure of the sort imposed on an individual by another's physical presence. This would help make the students more honest in responding because reviewers could criticize peer writers without having to face the writers, and it can allow students to respond anonymously. So, the reviewers feel more comfortable stating their true thoughts (MacLeod, 1999), and this probably influences their writing ability in the end. It is noted that in this study web board supports completely anonymous communication.

The second different feature is the benefits of integrating peer feedback with technology (especially in item 5). The writing process is greatly facilitated by computer functions that allow students to compose, peer edit, and easily revise their writing. This would not be applicable in paper-pencil peer feedback. Moreover, this feature yields positive results in a greater volume of written output, unlimited space for comments,

more revisions, and an improvement in fluency (Bump, 1990; Paramskas, 1993) which is not typically evident in traditional oral feedback or in traditional written feedback.

Third, the three types of peer feedback are different in terms of interaction. The writers read the feedback and could ask readers for clarifications and explanations in the web board and e-mail peer feedback, so both are considered as two way communication that increases interaction, negotiation of meaning and unlimited participation online (items 13).

Another feature that would differentiate the three types of peer feedback is the permanence of the message (item 16). On the web board the message is immediately visible on the website and thus may encourage a feeling of permanence about the message from the writers. Moreover, this can yield the potential feelings of publicness about posted message than e-mail peer feedback, but this feature cannot be found in paper-pencil peer feedback.

So far, research into online small group discussions is still in scarcity. Further studies would need to be done in order to confirm the equalization impact of the two modes of communication (Warschauer, 2004). In particular, little research has studied the incorporation of web board and peer feedback in the EFL writing instruction. Due to the great benefits of writing with innovation, it is promising that adopting technology in peer feedback process can enhance students' writing ability. As a result, the issue inspires the researcher to investigate and compare the effects of three types of peer feedback – paper-pencil peer feedback, e-mail peer feedback and web board peer feedback on a student's writing achievement in the writing instruction. However, it could not be denied that literature on the issues is still inconclusive; it cannot confirm which method probably provides more significantly positive results. Consequently, the first hypothesis was set as *the mean scores of the writing achievement test of students receiving different types of peer feedback are not significantly different at 0.05 level.*

Another potential independent variable that may have a major impact on students' writing achievement in their learning, and has a role to play in this research is levels of writing proficiency. Generally speaking, a student' L2 proficiency is the only factor that differentiates good writers from poor writers (Pennington and So, 1993), and may unavoidably affect the student's writing performance (Obrom, 1996; Sasaki and Hirose,

1996; Wongtip, 1998). More in-depth previous literature and previous studies on the issue will be discussed in the subsequent part.

2.5 Levels of General English Proficiency and Writing Ability

According to Hyland (2003), all writers are different, and we should be cautious about jumping to conclusions about students. Learners have their own personalities, and there are numerous individual variables that intervene to influence their acquisition of L2 writing skills. Thus, one of the learner variables that should be taken into consideration in language teaching is students' proficiency level (Brown, 2001).

Students' progress in writing is often assumed to be simply part of the overall increase in their language proficiency, whilst it is clear that students' ability to write clearly and accurately depends, to an extent, on their general level of proficiency in the target language (Bardovi- Harlig, 1995; Cumming, 1989).

According to Cumming (1989), and Pennington and So (1993), writing proficiency consists of linguistic and writing ability, and these components contribute to good and effective writing. L2 proficiency is a distinct factor that influences the quality of L2 writing (Cumming, 1989) and has been found as one of the most significant explanatory variables for L2 writing ability (Sasaki and Hirose, 1996). Students' L 2 proficiency was the only factor that differentiates good writers from poor writers (Pennington and So, 1993). Good language proficiency has an effect over writing performance (Cumming, 1989). In contrast, limited language proficiency is found to adversely affect the writing performance (Obrom, 1996; Sasaki and Hirose, 1996; Wongtip, 1998).

Due to the different proficiency level, a teaching approach cannot be the same for every student. Evidently, it is central to writing instruction that writers make progress as a direct result of the instruction they receive (Archibald, 2004). However, a great deal of research reveals that students with high English proficiency level achieve a higher level of learning achievement than those with low English proficiency level no matter whether they learn in a traditional mode (Rossuk, 1985), by computer-assisted instruction (Chollatarnm 1987, Jansom 2006), by computer assisted language learning (Sukamolson,1998; 1998-1999), and by WBI (Homchan, 1999). Therefore, it is

interesting to study whether different types of peer feedback used in the research help improve writing ability of all proficiency level students.

Based on the previous studies on different types of peer feedback, Berg (1999) stated that traditional peer response is by no means beneficial to all students under all circumstances. The idea is similar to Nelson and Murphy's study (1993). They found that low-proficiency-level ESL students were capable of effectively participating in and benefiting from peer response. They concluded that these students can indeed successfully be involved in peer response, and this activity is helpful to their revision strategies. They did, however, offer their recommendations to consider for peer response to work well with less proficient ESL students. In the Thai context, the same findings can be confirmed by Chaisuriya (2003). He reported that less proficient students learned a great deal from more proficient writers through collaborative writing and peer review.

According to Thongrin (2000), the study explored the effects of traditional peer feedback with Thai college students who had different levels of English ability –good, average and weak. The results revealed that the peer feedback method worked well with the three groups, but it seemed that the difference between the mean score of weak students was higher than that of the good and average students' mean score. Moreover, the students seemed to have positive attitude toward peer feedback. She also suggested that when matching with their good or average counterparts, weak students might have learned from the other two groups. On the contrary, it might not have been of use to good or average students to be paired with weak students. As such, weak students might receive greater benefits than the other two groups. Moreover, she argued that the different results maybe due to the number of students in each level. Four of good students, 10 of average students and 4 of weak students of the subjects are not sufficient to represent the standardized sample size. Although the results are still inconclusive and further research is needed in the field, previous literature and research results have guaranteed the influence of different levels of proficiency on students' writing ability in the traditional peer feedback method. Kamimura (2006)'s study investigated the effects of peer feedback on high and low proficiency Japanese students .The two groups were compared in terms of their pre- and post test scores. Results showed that peer feedback had overall positive effects on the compositions for both high and low proficiency students. However, the students with the high proficiency students demonstrated greater

improvement than low proficiency students. This finding was not surprising since the low ability students actually had limitations in their English proficiency.

A number of research studies have put efforts on investigating the characteristics of students who had different levels of proficiency as it is believed that different characteristics could be another vital factor that could explain why some students are more successful than others although they are provided with the same instruction and equal facilities.

Thai primary school students' characteristics and attitudes that contribute to high academic achievement were investigated by Chatbubpha (1896 cited in Swatevacharkul, 2006). The results revealed that the high achievers attended class regularly, collaborated in learning activities, received high expectations from teachers, had positive attitudes toward their classes and school, had reading ability, and could plan for their own future learning.

Based on higher education, a study conducted by Rattanapruk (1990) found that for Thai first year undergraduate students, the high English proficiency students had strong interest in the language since they were young, and they paid more attention in learning English. Moreover, they seemed to have stronger intrinsic motivation and more patience in performing long and repeating tasks than the students who have low English proficiency.

In conclusion, it appears that high proficiency students differ from low proficiency students in a number of ways, and the high proficiency learners tend to be more successful in language learning as they have more positive attitudes, more responsibility, and more active in their own learning. Most aforementioned studies also confirmed that levels of proficiency had the effects on the students' achievement in all learning skills and instruction methods. *Consequently, it is plausible to set the hypothesis in the present study that the different levels of general English proficiency have an effect on the students' writing achievement.*

Additionally, so far no previous research has shed any light on the effects of the combination of technology with peer feedback on students who have different levels of general English proficiency on their writing achievement. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate the interaction effect of different types of peer feedback and levels of general English proficiency with the hope that the results can provide prior evidence in the peer

feedback study. However, numerous studies revealed that different levels of proficiency yield the effect on the students' achievements regardless types of instruction they received, such results lead to the third hypothesis that *there is no interaction effect between types of feedback and levels of general English proficiency on students' writing achievement at 0.05 level.*

2.6 Attitudes and language Learning

2.6.1 Definitions of Attitude

There are many different aspects of the concept of "attitude" offered by different authors. Attitudes are usually defined as a disposition or tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain thing (idea, object, person, and situation). They encompass, or are closely related to, our opinions and beliefs and are based upon our experiences (Hohenthal, 2003).

Generally, attitudes are usually evaluating in the sense that they consist of a positive or negative reaction towards a certain thing (idea, object, person, and situation). Attitudes have an influence on emotional reactions, thoughts and beliefs and observable behavior of human toward attitude objects. This is owing to the fact that people are not neutral observers of the world but constant evaluators of what they see (Bargh, Chaiken, Raymond, and Hymes, in press).

2.6.2 Components of Attitudes

Attitudes are made up of different components or parts. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), attitudes consist of three components:

2.6.2.1 An affective component, consisting of emotional reactions toward the attitude object (e.g., another person or social issue).

2.6.2.2 A cognitive component, consisting of thoughts and beliefs about the attitude object.

2.6.2.3 A behavioral component, consisting of actions or observable behavior toward the attitude object.

Krench, Crutchfield, and Ballachey (1962 cited in Gardner 1985)'s view of attitudes, they stated that there is moderately high relationship between the three components.

In everyday conversation we often speak of person's attitude as the cause of his actions toward another person or an object. Stuart Oskamp (1971) gave many reasons why attitude is such a popular and useful concept as follows:

1. Attitude is a shorthand term. A single attitude can summarize many different behaviors.

2. An attitude can be considered the cause of a person's behavior toward another person or an object.

3. The concept of attitude helps to explain the consistency of a person's behavior, since a single attitude may underline many difference actions.

4. Attitudes are important in their own right, regardless of their reaction to a person's behavior. Your attitudes toward various individuals, institutions, and social issues reflect the way you perceive the world around you, and they are worth studying for their own sake.

5. The concept of attitude includes idea of unconscious determinants of behavior and the dynamic interplay of conflicting motives, whose importance has been stressed by Freud and other psychoanalysts.

6. The concept of attitude bridges the controversy between heredity and environment as factors influencing behavior, for both instinct and learning can be involved in the information of attitudes.

7. Within psychology, the concept of attitude provides a common topic of interest for schools of thought as diverse as phenomenoiogy and behaviorism.

8. Within the filed of sociology, some authors have viewed attitudes as most central concept and the basis of all social behavior, since they provide the mechanism by which cultural patterns influence individual behavior.

2.6.3 Language Attitude

Focusing on language attitude, attitudes are crucial in language growth or decay, restoration or destruction: the status and importance of a language in society and within an individual derives largely from adopted or learnt attitudes. An attitude is individual, but it has origins in collective behavior. Attitude is something an individual has which defines or promotes certain behaviors. Although an attitude is a hypothetical psychological construct, it touches the reality of language life (Hohenthal, 2003).

Baker (1992) stressed the importance of attitudes in the discussion of bilingualism. Attitudes are learned predispositions, not inherited, and are likely to be relatively stable; they have a tendency to persist. However, attitudes are affected by experience; thus, attitude change is an important notion in bilingualism. In addition, attitudes vary from favourability to unfavourability. Attitudes are complex constructs; e.g. there may be both positive and negative feelings attached to, e.g. a language situation.

According to the second language acquisition theory, the affective filter hypothesis, it said that the affective factors-motives, needs, attitudes, and emotional states might affect learners to acquire language. That is, the filter will be up when a learner who is stressed, self-conscious, or unmotivated that these feelings will prevents learners from using input which is available in the environment. On the other hand, the filter will be down when the learner is relaxed and motivated (Krashen, 1988).

Oxford (1990) supported that the affective side of the learner is probably one of the very biggest influence on language learning success or failure. However, it is rather difficult to be sure that the affective factors cause the differences in language acquisition. Anyhow, in conclusion, negative feelings can obstruct progress while positive emotion and attitudes can make language learning far more effective and enjoyable.

Many research studies have shown that attitudes (including beliefs, affective attitudes, and behavioral attitudes) are related to language achievement. In addition, Lightbrown and Spada (1993) noted that there is a positive association between language proficiency and attitudes towards the second language.

Furthermore, Oxford (1990) pointed out that attitudes not only affect motivation, but also attitudes and motivation work together to influence performance of language learning it self, global language proficiency and proficiency in specific language skills, such as oral production, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension.

When studying language attitudes, the concept of motives is important. Several researches suggested that attitudes are related to motivation by serving as supports of the learner's overall orientation.

Two basic motives are called instrumental and integrative motives. If L2 acquisition is considered as instrumental, the knowledge in a language is considered as a "passport to prestige and success". The speaker/learner considers the speaking/learning of English as functional (Ellis 1991). On the other hand, if a learner wishes to identify with

the target community; to learn the language and the culture of the speakers of that language in order to perhaps be able to become a member of the group, the motivation is called integrative.

In general, research has proved the integrative motivation to be more beneficial for the learning of another language. On the other hand, Gardner & Lambert, for instance, have found out that where the L2 functions as a second language (i.e. it is used widely in the society), instrumental motivation seems to be more effective. Moreover, motivation derived from a sense of academic or communicative success is more likely to motivate one to speak a foreign/second language. (Ellis, 1991)

Ellis (1991) summarized the major findings of the previous research which is based on the theoretical frameworks of Gardner and Lambert as belows:

1. Motivation and attitudes are important factors, which helps determine the level of proficiency achieved by different learners.

2. The effects of motivation/attitudes appear to be separated from the effects of aptitude. The most successful learners will be those who have both a talent and a high level of motivation.

3. In certain situations an integrative motivation may be more powerful in facilitating successful second language learning, but in other situation instrument motivations may be more influential.

Lightbrown and Spada (1993) stated that motivation is a complex phenomenon which can be defined in terms of two factors: learner's communicative needs, and their attitudes towards the second language community. They said that if learners need to speak the second language in wide range of social situations or to fulfill professional ambitions, they will perceive the communicative value of the second language and will be motivated to acquire proficiency in it. Likewise, if learners have favorable attitudes towards the speakers of the language, they will desire more contact with them.

Brown (1994) said that the benefits from positive attitudes and negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and in all likelihood, because of decreased input and interaction, to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) attempted to examine the effect of attitudes on language learning. They found out that motivation is made up of certain attitudes.

Ellis (1994) stated that in order to demonstrate the overall effect of motivation on L2 achievement, Gardner (1985) chose to report the effect of a general measure of motivation (based on the Attitude Motivation Index, which includes variables relating to both integrative and instrumental motivation). A survey of seven different geographical areas in Canada revealed a median correlation of 0.37 between the AMI scores and French grades. In addition, A high level of motivation does stimulate learning, but perceived success in achieving L2 goals can help to maintain existing motivation and even create new types. Conversely, a vicious circle of low motivation is low achievement and lower motivation can develop.

In fact, It was clear that there is no general agreement about what precisely motivation or attitudes consist of, nor of the relationship between them. This was entirely understandable given the abstractness of these concepts, but it made difficulty to compare theoretical propositions (Gardner, 1979, cited in Ellis, 1985).

Anyhow, there is little doubt that motivation is a powerful factor in SLA. This is because its effects are to be seen on the rate and success of SLA, rather than on the rout of acquisition. Precisely, it is not clear that how motivation affects learning, one of the problems of the correlational studies, which constitute the bulk of the available research, is that it is possible to show relationship, not the direction of this relationship. Additionally, how to know whether it is motivation that produces successful learning, or successful learning that enhances motivation (Ellis, 1985).

Like belief, it contributes to the development and content of attitudes. Therefore, if attitudes are studied, beliefs could not be overlooked. Belief in a general sense, can be seen as individually held subjective hypotheses that some object or event possesses and are distinguished by certain characteristics. A belief involves a link between the belief object and the characteristics that distinguish it. It has been proved that belief is related to language proficiency and language achievement positively and an individual has his own beliefs, which lead them to particular feeling and specific behavior.

According to Chirdchoo and Wudthayagorn (2001), their research showed that students who have positive and appropriate beliefs about language learning also tend to like or enjoy language classes and express positive feeling toward language learning. Moreover, those beliefs and feelings will lead them to certain behavior. As a result, they are more likely to be successful language learners.

Consequently, both motivation and belief cannot be separated from language attitude study; this is owing to the facts that both play an important role and influence language proficiency.

2.7 The Effects of Various Peer feedback Types on Students' Attitudes

Responding to students' writing can greatly influence student attitudes to writing and their motivation for future learning. This is due to the fact that students can be confused by unclear, vague, or ambiguous feedback and can become frustrated with their writing process. Alternatively, students can be positively motivated to explore many areas of knowledge and personal creativity through supportive and constructive feedback to their writing. As a result, the affective aspects of students toward or preferences for various types of feedback have been considerably investigated by many scholars in the field (Chaudron, 1984; Radecki and Swales, 1988; Jacob and Zhang, 1989; Leki, 1991; Enginarlar, 1993; Saito, 1994; Ferris, 1995; Hedgcock and Lefkowitz, 1996).

Among the many controversies in second language writing instruction is the issue of whether or not to employ peer feedback. Generally speaking, students may prefer teacher feedback to peer feedback, which is not particularly surprising in the L2 teaching and learning context (Nelson & Carson, 1998; Zhang, 1995), but this does not mean that students find peer feedback a waste of time. Tang and Tithecott (1999) found that the Asian ESL students had positive perceptions of peer response and their attitudes towards peer feedback became more favorable as the semester progressed.

Mangelsdorf (1992), in her study of the attitudes that advanced ESL students had toward peer review, determined that 69% had positive reactions to peer review. Mendonca and Johnson (1994) found that all the students in their study considered peer review helpful with regard to audience perspective and idea development. Furthermore, Nelson and Murphy (1993) found that students did incorporate their peers' suggestions into subsequent drafts, but the amount of incorporation greatly depended on a cooperative environment among the group members.

Jacobs, Curtis, Braine, and Huang (1998) collected anonymous questionnaire data on whether second language learners prefer to receive peer feedback as one type of feedback on their writing. Participants were first-and second-year undergraduate ESL students of lower intermediate to high proficiency, 44 in a university in Hong Kong and

77 in a university in Taiwan. All enrolled in writing courses in which peer, self, and teacher feedback were used. The chi-square test was used to analyze the questionnaire data, with the alpha level set at 0.05. A statistically significant percentage of participants (93%) indicated they preferred to have feedback from other students as one type of feedback on their writing. This finding, as well as students' written explanations of their choices, is discussed with reference to how best to incorporate peer feedback into second language writing instruction.

Mandelsdorf (1992) examined the students' opinions on the usefulness of peer feedback in an ESL composition classroom. The subjects of the study were first-semester freshman ESL students of various language backgrounds. All teachers used peer feedback after the first draft, and similar review sheets that asked the students to evaluate content, organization, development, unity, and clarity were used. The results of the study indicated that most students and teachers perceived peer feedback as a beneficial technique that helped the students revised their papers. The students named content and organization as the main areas that were improved after peer reviews. More specifically, the students noted that peer reviews led them to consider different ideas about their topics and helped them to develop and clarify these ideas. These comments suggested that peer reviews can make students more aware of the needs and expectation of their audience, helping them to meet the demands of the writing classroom which their peers are reflecting to them. At the same time, many of the students believe that peer feedback had neither helped them to be responsible for their improvement, nor to be confident in their ability to critique a text. A partial solution to that problem would be to provide more training and guidance for the students in analyzing each other's texts and writing peer feedback.

Based on the affective perspectives of adopting technology in language learning, previous studies showed that the more familiar students were with technology, the more positive attitudes they had toward it (Jones, 1992). No doubts, learners' motivation and attitudes are correlated with their language acquisition. Affective domain does make a difference for language learners. When working online, especially in Internet-based collaborative learning, students develop the sense of community and respect different opinions. It also provides an environment that combines the feeling of security. Furthermore, Warschauer (1996) reported that most students become motivated if

teachers integrate the technology in the curriculum, provide opportunities of interactivities, help them get knowledge and computer skills, and helps learners develop learner autonomy and independence as well as the growth of self-access language learning. Moreover, students can gain confidence through learning by doing in an interactive environment, increase self-esteem and improve academic skills (Brajcich, 2000; Schoepp and Erogul, 2001). It is also claimed that CMC fosters student-student discussion and promotes cooperative relationships among students (Langston & Batson, 1990). Pow (1999) indicated that learners experienced the value of group work when they were engaged in interactive activities online. In addition, students reportedly become better writers by having an authentic audience and a purpose for their writing (Peyton, 1990) as well as more time on tasks. Bethl (1998) said that CMC does more than facilitating the production of writing, but it is the tool that can encourage students to talk enthusiastically about their writing.

The motivational benefits of e-mail communication were further explored by Warschauer (1996), who carried out an international survey of 167 students in 12 university language classes in three countries. The survey found that three factors explained students' heightened motivation due to participation in e-mail exchanges: their enjoyment of international communication, their sense of empowerment (and possible career benefit) due to the development of new technological skills, and their belief that communication via e-mail assisted their language learning. The study also found that these benefits were heightened in courses in which the e-mail exchanges were well-integrated into the overall goals and structure of the course rather than included as a marginal add-on to course activities. In contrast, Wei (2003) found that Chinese ESL learners' attitudes toward e-mail peer review were mixed; some students liked receiving e-mail comments from their partner, whereas others thought it was a waste of time.

As the affective factors are the key elements in the students' learning process and influence on language learning success or failure as well (Oxford, 1990), there is no clear set of universal guidelines that will guarantee such a supportive and positive experience for all students (Grabe and Kaplan 1996). However, it can be concluded that negative feelings can obstruct progress while positive emotions and attitudes can make language learning far more effective and enjoyable. Accordingly, the students' attitudes toward the

peer feedback they experience are also praiseworthy findings. This leads us to the forth research question.

2.8 The Role of Culture in Language Learning

With the inseparable entities between language and culture, language should be considered as a pattern of communicative behavior in the holistic context of culture (e.g. Goodenough, 1964; Seelye & Seelye-James, 1995; Goddard & Wierzbicka, 1997, 1998; Kramsch, 1988;). Culture has a significant role to play in how students learn a language, students' learning behaviors, student-teacher interactions, and peer group interactions. In fact, there have been numerous studies on the relationship between language and culture. This section will focus on some dimensions of culture and the Thai culture concepts that may play in Thai students' learning behaviors in peer feedback interaction.

A number of researchers (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1992; Paulus, 1999; Villamil & Guerrero, 1998; Zhu, 1995) highlighted that not all peer feedback groups are successful, and the importance of peer feedback training and of structuring peer feedback sessions are the potential factors that influence the quality of feedback. Although the students were well trained how to provide effective feedback in the at the beginning of the course, and the peer groups were structured with caution, the influence of culture in language learning and the students' leaning behaviors should be taken into consideration when applying new teaching approaches or activities that the students have not been familiar with before.

Hofstede (1986) studied the impact of culture on Thai students' learning behaviors, and he found that Thai students seemed to have teacher-dependent characteristic. One possible reason may be due to the fact that Thailand is considered as collectivism which is characterized as individuals' subordinating their personal goals to the goals and for the good of the group. Important values for collectivists are harmony and cohesion within the group (Triandis, 1995 cited in Hyland 2006). In contrast, individualism is a social pattern characterized by individuals' subordinating the goals of the collective to personal goals. It is believed that people are motivated by their won preferences and needs. Self-assertion and achievement are considered as important values for individualists.

In the collectivist societies students expect to learn how to do while students expect to lean how to learn in the individualist societies. As a result, this tends to be a

mismatch between the Thai students' characteristics and the expectation of learner-centered approach which promotes autonomous learning.

Another dimension which could explain the teacher- dependent characteristic of Thai students may be due to the power distance. Hofstede (1986) stated that in large power distance societies, the less powerful people in a society accept inequality in power and consider this as normal. In terms of social expectations, Hallinger and Kantamara (2001) said that this not simply a matter of superordinates desiring authority, but within this large power distance culture subordinates expect them to exercise their legitimate power. Like the differences in teacher-student or student-student interaction related to the power distance dimension, a teacher in large power distance societies like Thailand merits the respect of students, teacher-centered education is emphasized. In Thai culture, teachers are viewed as the holders of absolute truth, wisdom, and knowledge. They are pictured as wise, moral and wormy as most students, as well as their parents, give them respect, obedience and gratefulness (Thongrin, 2002). As such, power distance between teachers and students reinforces the teacher-centered teaching approach. This causes Thai students to become passive and view learning as the way they just soak up materials and learn them for exams. They rarely learn how to speak their minds so this phenomenon does not offer opportunity for them to express ideas in the class discussion. They expect teachers to initiate communication and outline paths to follow. In contrast, the interaction in small power distance societies is in the opposite way. It is noted that most cultures which are high in collectivism are also high in large power distance.

Another study conducted by Deveney (2005 cited in Swatevacharkul, 2006) investigating the impact of Thai culture on Thai children in the international school in Thailand found that the communication in Thai schools was mainly one-way from teacher to students, and students were taught to be silent in class so as to listen to the teacher. The researcher labeled this characteristic a passivity of Thai students. The author concluded that a positive and supportive environment where students can feel confident in class discussions is necessary when teaching Thai children. This passivity of children's learning behavior may unavoidably continue to be a characteristic of Thai students which is difficult to change in later stage of education. The findings conform to Thomson's (1996) research indicating that Asian students lacked self-confidence in all areas of self-assessment aiming to help them develop self-directed learning.

As the conceptual underpinning the theory of peer feedback in writing is mainly derived from the learner- centered approach which the students are active learners who can take control of their own leaning in accordance with their own preferences and needs. However, it could not deny the fact that in Thai learning context teachers play a significant role and have more authority in students' learning. As a result, the students tend to be dependent on the teachers' knowledge and evaluation rather than acquiring their own knowledge and believing peer and self assessment. Unavoidably, this phenomenon might impact the quality of peer feedback and the peer response interaction as the students might prefer teacher feedback and consider peer comments as an unreliable source, so this definitely downgrades the value of peer feedback.

Besides the teacher-dependent characteristic of Thai students, the Thai cultural trait, Kreng Jai, which refers to face preservation and/or harmony maintenance, possibly influences the quality of peer feedback and peer group interaction. Generally, most Thai people are considered polite and somewhat considerate to others' feeling and place extreme weight on positive social interactions (Yablo, 1990). Moreover, Deephuengton (1992) showed that politeness and face-preservation played an important role in Thai showing refusal and disagreement because the subjects of her study relied on an indirect, roundabout and hedging communication style. This becomes interaction conventions of Thais, which sometimes delay reaching conclusion.

According to Thongrin (2002)'study, she found that the *krengjai* attitude in the personality system is the factor that influenced the way the students gave responses to other peers. She supported that in peer group interaction where discussions with the for and against aspects are essential for writers to reach conclusions, the lack of critical thinking seems to impede the response processes because the students are very concerned with their peers' face preservation. They feel that critiquing their peer essays means humiliating their peers or insulting their peers' ego and recognition. This might cause personal conflicts in the end.

2.9 Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, the underlying theoretical frameworks of peer feedback pedagogy, as well as its roles and benefits to writing instruction are reviewed. The development of peer feedback from the traditional mode to electronic mode, and the key constructs of

variables pertaining to the research such as levels of writing proficiency and attitudes of the students are also discussed.

Peer feedback is a writing activity, where the writers work in groups collaboratively and provide information on each other's writing either through a written, oral, or computer-mediated mode (Liu &Hansen, 2002). Its theoretical underlying is a social constructionist view which believes that the construction of knowledge is a result of working collaboratively, so writing is a social act, and that the writing process lies beyond cognitive levels (Brufee, 1986; Trimbur, 1987).

Peer feedback activities have become an important activity in the writing classroom since the writing instruction moved form a product based approach to the process-based approach. In the past few years, the mode of peer response has shifted from a traditional pen-and paper and/or face-to face modes to the use of computer-mediated communication modes for commenting and discussion due to the great benefits of such innovation.

However, instructors and students are using technology to collaborate on writing tasks, but the research on the effects of this technology on L2 writing has not kept up with the increase of technology in L2 instruction (Tuzi, 2004). In fact, the increasing impact of technology on L2 instruction is inevitable in the future, as a result, it is important for L2 instructors, and researchers to explore the significance of adopting technology for the writing course in order to determine how to most effectively use technology in L2 teaching and learning situations.

So far the findings on the efficacy of CMC peer feedback mode for writing and language classrooms are still relatively rare in most ESL/EFL classrooms. Although a number of teachers begin incorporating various technological innovations into their curricula and activities, there is still a question of whether these innovations enhance language learning because it is not necessary that CMC mode is more effective than the traditional one (Hassen, 2005). As a result, it is worth the time and effort to investigate whether which type of peer feedback is more effective if used with EFL students.

In this study, only asynchronous mode, in particular e-mail and web board peer feedback, and traditional paper-pencil peer feedback are compared in order to investigate their effects on students' writing achievement especially in EFL writing context. Furthermore, the interaction effect of students' levels of writing proficiency (high,

moderate, and low) and different types of peer feedback is also in the study's main concern since levels of writing proficiency have a significant impact on teaching and learning a second language. Finally, the students' attitudes toward the experience on peer feedback are investigated because this unavoidably brings about the success or failure of second language learning.

Four research questions are addressed in this study. Due to the experimental nature of the study, these questions are accompanied by hypotheses which would help to answer the questions more precisely. Creswell (1994 cited in Padgate, 1999) recommended that in experimental studies, particularly doctoral dissertations, hypotheses are usually recommended because they represent the traditional, classical form of raising questions.

Null hypotheses were set in research question 1 and 3 because the research reviewed in the chapter have not yet provided a definite conclusion about which types of peer feedback are more effective in L2 writing, at times contradictory and no prior evidence of any studies have investigated the interaction effect of types of peer feedback and levels of general English proficiency before. On the other hand, a number of research shared the same conclusion that the different English proficiency has the effect on the students' learning achievement, so there is no doubt for the justification of the second research hypothesis set: the mean scores from the writing achievement test of students who have different levels of general English proficiency are significantly different at 0.05 level. Again, research findings on the students' attitudes toward different peer feedback also vary. It is therefore worth time and effort to investigate whether which type of peer feedback gains more positive attitudes in the students' point of view.

Finally, it is expected that the results of this study would help in adding new information and filling the gap in the existing body of knowledge of previously conducted research on the effects of peer feedback especially with the integration of asynchronous CMC on the students' writing and language development in EFL context.