

Peer Review 3.1

The Saga Continues

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Peer review (PR) is used as a way to help students improve psychology-related writing. In prior NITOP presentations we (Fournier & Karkowski) reported findings that students report benefiting from PR and the benefit is no different from having another student read their work out loud to them (oral reading, OR). Comparisons of grades indicated no difference between students who experience PR and those who experience a self-review exercise. Other work by the authors (Velkey & Rilea) indicated that the students receiving the feedback and those giving the feedback feel they have become more critical of their own work following a peer review experience. These findings led us to ask what students attend to when reviewing another student's work. Students from psychology classes (Social Psychology, Spring and Fall 2004; Experimental Psychology, Fall 2004) at two universities were surveyed following PR or OR. The following table contains information about the students in those classes.

	Social, Sp.	Social, Fall	Experimental
N	37	29	20
PR in English classes	29	14	14
PR in Psych. classes	13	15	9
PR in Other classes	20	14	3
First Year	2	0	0
Sophomore	13	5	1
Junior	12	12	15
Senior	9	12	4

After either a PR or an OR, all students completed a questionnaire containing items about aspects of the manuscript the student read. Students reported their degree of agreement to the items on a seven point scale (strongly disagree - strongly agree). Descriptive statistics, significant comparisons across classes, significant comparisons between PR and OR, and significant item relationships to class year are reported in the next table. Results indicate some item differences across classes, few differences between PR and OR, and even fewer relationships with class year. Students tended to agree with the statements; however, the degree to agreement varied across items. The top three items with the strongest (in green) and weakest (in red) agreement are highlighted.

Items	Social, Sp.	Social, Fall	Experimental	Class	PR vs OR	Year
Checked for IV & DV	4.65 (1.65)	5.45 (1.81)	5.75 (0.79)	5.36		
Checked literature tied to Research Question	5.42 (1.38)	4.84 (1.16)	4.15 (1.66)	5.40		-.324
Literature review relevant to paper	5.61 (1.55)	5.89 (1.34)	4.50 (1.79)	3.70		
Checked whether rationale clear	5.95 (0.74)	5.72 (0.92)	5.75 (1.07)			
Checked statistical tests identified	4.82 (1.40)	4.89 (1.12)	5.95 (0.89)	6.31		
Looked for link between results and literature	4.97 (1.44)	5.12 (1.14)	5.60 (1.53)			
Looked for theory in Discussion	4.86 (1.19)	4.74 (1.02)	5.25 (1.48)			
Checked accuracy of Participants	5.89 (0.98)	5.29 (1.01)	6.00 (1.08)	3.83		-.223
Checked accuracy of Materials	5.42 (1.32)	5.50 (1.00)	6.10 (1.07)			
Checked accuracy of Procedure	5.50 (1.18)	5.71 (0.90)	6.10 (1.02)			
Checked design tests hypothesis	5.73 (0.93)	5.62 (0.68)	5.66 (1.18)			
Checked all findings were included	5.59 (1.19)	5.27 (1.34)	6.25 (0.64)	4.27		
Checked hypothesis consistent w/ literature	5.58 (1.18)	5.22 (0.89)	5.55 (1.05)			
Checked hypotheses addressed in Method	5.92 (0.83)	5.69 (0.93)	6.20 (0.77)			
Checked hypotheses addressed in Results	5.32 (1.27)	5.31 (1.01)	6.20 (0.70)	5.10		
Checked hypotheses addressed in Disc.	5.31 (1.10)	5.14 (0.91)	6.15 (0.59)	7.33		
Made suggestions to improve Introduction	5.41 (1.48)	5.14 (1.03)	5.05 (1.64)			
Made suggestions to improve paper	5.43 (1.33)	5.11 (1.28)	6.25 (0.72)	5.41		
Made suggestions to improve Method	5.19 (1.41)	5.13 (1.45)	6.35 (0.75)	6.28	2.09	
Made suggestions to improve Results	4.97 (1.34)	4.56 (1.22)	5.65 (1.14)	4.36		
Made suggestions to improve Discussion	4.83 (1.54)	4.85 (1.38)	6.10 (0.64)	6.88	2.60	
Checked overall APA style	5.16 (1.44)	5.33 (1.71)	5.85 (0.75)			
Checked all references were cited	4.56 (1.70)	4.92 (1.76)	5.50 (1.43)			
Now I can better improve own paper	5.68 (1.12)	5.89 (1.19)	5.94 (1.39)			

Take Home Message: (1) Again, little to no differences between PR and OR. (2) Students more likely to check for basic information. (3) Students less likely to check for high-level (e.g., theory) or fine details (i.e., all references are cited).