Wiki Development and Wiki-Based Activities: On Peer Collaboration, Feedback, and Correction and Their Effects on the L2 Writing Ability of Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners

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Abstract This study was carried out to examine the effects of wikis and wiki-based process writing activities on the L2 writing performance of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. For this purpose, 16 Iranian students who were studying at Mehraeen University (Higher Education Institute, Bandar-e Anzali, Guilan Province, Iran) were identified as intermediate EFL learners based on their performance scores on the Solutions Placement Test. The qualified candidates were divided into two groups (eight students in each group). In one group (the experimental group), students participated in collaborative writing through engaging in wiki development and online process writing activities in a social writing platform called Wikispaces. In the other group (the control group), students participated in collaborative process writing without using wikis and Wikispaces and received peer feedback on their essays and compositions the conventual way as they exchanged paper drafts of their writings between peers. The steps involved in using a process writing approach to harnessing L2 writing ability, however, were the same for both study groups, and all the participants, regardless of the treatment condition under which their writing ability was developed, engaged in process writing activities by passing through distinct stages, which involved: (a) planning, (b) drafting, (c) responding, (d) revising, (e) editing, and finally, (f) evaluating. The study was carried out for a period of one month and spanned eight training sessions. At the end of the experiment, a posttest measuring the participants' writing ability gain was administered. The results revealed that both groups made significant progress, however, the students who engaged in process writing activities in Wikispaces performed significantly better

than the other group. The results carried the implications that wikis and Wikispaces as an online social writing platform provides a more felicitous condition for promoting learners' L2 writing ability in an enjoyable learning environment characterized by increased learners' motivation and autonomy, as well as enhanced scaffolded learning.

Keywords : Error Correction, Second Language Writing Skills, Wiki-centric Activities