

On the Comparison of the Effects of Computer-Mediated and Peer Feedback on the Development of L2 Writing Ability of Male and Female Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners via the Process Writing Approach

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Abstract This study was carried out to compare the effects of computer-mediated and peer feedback on the development of L2 writing ability of male and female Iranian intermediate EFL learners via the process writing approach. For this purpose, 40 Iranian students, who were studying at Pardis Language Institute of Rasht, Guilan, 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 (twenty students in each group). In one group (the experimental group), students participated in process writing activities they received computer-mediated feedback at the responding phase of the process by using White Smoke Software. In the other group (the control group), students participated in process writing without using the computer but received peer feedback on their essays and compositions the conventional way as they exchanged paper drafts of their writing 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 received treatment via

the computer-mediated feedback performed significantly better than those who received peer feedback. The results revealed that computer-mediated feedback provided 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. The study, then, carries important implications for different groups of stakeholders, in particular, ELT practitioners and language learners.

Keywords :

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