Blogging vs Paper-and-Pencil Writing: Evidences from an Iranian Academic L2 Setting

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Abstract : Second language (L2) classrooms in academic contexts usually consist of learners with diverse L2 proficiency levels. One solution for managing such heterogeneous classes and addressing individual needs of students is to improve learner autonomy by using technological innovations such as blogging. The focus of this study is on investigating the effects of blogging on improving the quality of Iranian university students' writings. For this aim, twenty-six Iranian university students participated in the study. Students in the experimental group (n=13) were required to blog daily while the students in the control group (n=13) were asked to write a daily schedule using paper and pencil. After a 3-month period of instruction, the five last writings of the students from both groups were rated by two experienced raters. Also, students' attitudes toward the traditional method and blogging were surveyed using a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The research results showed evidences in favor of the students who used blogging in their writing program. Also, although students in the experimental group found blogging more demanding than the traditional method, they showed an overall positive attitude toward the use of blogging as a way of improving their writing skills. The findings of the study have implications for the incorporation of computer-assisted learning in L2 academic contexts.

Keywords : blogging, computer-assisted learning, paper and pencil, writing
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