EFL Learners' Lexico-grammatical Competence in Paper-based Vs. Computer-based in Genre Writing

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Abstract

With new technology, writing became a skill that is being developed year after year. The present study questions whether there is a difference between paper-based and computer-based writing in terms of errors and lexico-grammar. It aims at exploring sentence-level errors and lexico-grammatical competence in two writing genres in a collaborative writing environment within paper-based and computer-based writing. A sample of 73 female intermediate level learners participated in the study at the University of Business and Technology (UBT), in Saudi Arabia. This mixed-methods research is significant in the literature of second language writing since it highlights genre awareness, lexico-grammatical competence, analyzing errors, and collaboration in two styles of writing. The reading-based writing tasks acted as a reflection of the learners' lexico-grammatical competence on paper and via Web 2.0 tool (Padlet). Statistically, the Mann-Whitney U-tests showed that there was no significant difference between paper-based and computer-based groups in the sentence-level errors in narrative genre, whereas there was a significant difference between the two different tools of writing groups in the sentence-level errors in opinion genre. However, there was no significant difference between paper-based and computer-based groups in the clauses (lexico-grammar) of the two groups. Immediate semi-structured interviews were conducted and analyzed through NVIVO to get more insights from the learners to explain the comparison between the paper-based and the computer-based writing. In light of the significant findings, implications are sought to create an equilibrium between paper-based and computer-based writing, along with enhancing collaboration in second language writing.

Keywords: Computer-based typing (CB), Computer-assisted language learning (CALL), Collaborative writing, Error Analysis, Lexico-grammar, Paper-based writing (PB), Text Analysis, and Writing Genre

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