

The Impact of Input Enhancement through Multimedia on the Improvement of Writing Ability

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Abstract

This study examined the role of input enhancement through multimedia on the improvement of EFL learners' writing ability. The researchers focused on the use of two writing tasks with the input enhanced using the Adobe Flash CS4 Professional Program. The tasks included text unscrambling or ordering task, which required the students to re-arrange the sentences to form a paragraph, and an editing task entailing performance on cloze-elide tests. Seventy homogenous female students studying English as an L2 participated in this study. They were divided into one control and two experimental groups. Initially, a writing pre-test was given to all the participants to measure their writing ability at the outset of the study. During the 8-week treatment period, the first experimental group received the writing tasks in an animated form and used computers to perform them in groups. The second experimental group received the same input in the paper-and-pencil format but performed the tasks in groups, and the control group neither received the cloze-elide and text unscrambling tasks nor any kind of multimedia treatment; however, they practiced writing in a conventional way by analyzing the writing samples given to them in groups. At the end of the treatment, a paragraph writing post-test was administered to the three groups. The results revealed that both experimental groups had significantly outperformed the control group, with the multi-media group also having outperformed the paper and pencil experimental group, lending support to the theory that enhancing the input through multimedia provides the opportunity for extensive visualization of the content, affects learner knowledge, and thereby produces more competent writers. The results also demonstrated the effectiveness of the use of cloze-elide and unscrambling tasks in training more skillful student writers.