

## An Investigation into the Use of Online Peer Collaboration in Creative Writing Activities: Qualitative Study in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Context

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### Abstract

The purpose of using Creative Writing (CW) activities in English as a Foreign (EFL) context is generally to increase learners' self-esteem and self-confidence, reduce their stress in writing and make the process more enjoyable. At the same time, with regard to learning English, it provides an opportunity for learners to explore the target language by themselves. Nevertheless, when it comes to deploying CW seen as a tool for expressing oneself and personal feelings, this can be difficult to implement in EFL at times for both teachers and learners since this type of writing effectively reduces the teacher's control and guidance and gives considerable more autonomy and self-learning to the learners. Even though EFL learners acquire these skills exponentially, they may still need an element of scaffolding while engaging in CW. Therefore, this study emerges from this tension.

There are few studies conducted on CW in EFL and these have investigated either the outcomes or the impact of motivation through CW. Hence, there is a gap in research on how CW could be implemented in EFL. Reasoning on the basis of Vygotsky's [1] social learning theory, I decided to implement an intervention study involving collaborative writing approach and implement the study in one of popular social networking sites called Facebook (FB). The study was designed as a qualitative study and focus group interviews and e-diary were used as data collection methods.

The central theme of the study was to investigate EFL learners' online peer collaboration processes in creative writing activities. Specifically, it intended to probe EFL learners' perceptions on online peer collaboration while producing a piece of creative writing (i.e. a short story, a series of poems/song lyrics in a context, a synopsis of a movie/play) collaboratively in groups of three in a FB group within a series of informal sessions.

In the presentation, I will talk about the findings of the study conducted in a six-week period with the involvement two groups of three in total six EFL high school (10<sup>th</sup> grade) EFL learners (A2 English level) from one of the high schools in Izmir, Turkey. These six participants in two groups of three attended the study outside of school hours in a FB group. I, the researcher participated in the study as a facilitator.

### References

- [1] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society. The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- [2] Webb, M. (2013). Changing models for Researching Pedagogy with Information and Communication Technologies. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 29(1), pp. 53-67.