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A study of English as a foreign language (EFL) writers on a local-area network (LAN) and in traditional classes

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Abstract

This article describes Cantonese-speaking EFL undergraduates writing on a LAN and in traditional writing classes at a Hong Kong university. The study was conducted over a 3-week period during three semesters, and it compared the holistic scores of first drafts and final versions of students' papers. The aim of the study was to determine which context—LANs or traditional writing classes—produced better writing and more improvement in writing. Although first drafts in LAN classes were qualitatively higher than in traditional classes, final drafts in traditional classes were of a higher quality. Further, drafts in traditional classes improved more. The overwhelming quantity of writing produced and the disjointed nature of LAN discussions were seen as obstacles to the enhancement of EFL students' writing on LANs.



Keywords

Computers; English as a second/foreign language students; Hong Kong; Local-area networks (LAN); Writing

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- 8 George Braine is an associate professor of English at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. He has taught writing on local-area network (LAN) computers in the United States and in Hong Kong for more than 10 years. His latest publication is *Non-Native Educators in English Language Teaching* (1999).

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