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Reducing Writing Anxiety Through Peer Revision

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Abstract

Recent studies in writing instruction have resulted a debatable assumption about the negative effects of writing anxiety on the whole actors of learning operation; starting from the student's motivation and his academic achievement, and ending with teacher's attitude towards writing in the EFL classes. In this paper, we investigated the effects of peer revision on reducing writing anxiety of EFL students. A group of 30 students from third year classes of Biskra University took part in this study. They were divided into two groups: the experimental and the control groups. The first group was trained to work in pairs; they had revised and discussed the written product of each other in terms of grammar, spelling, content, organization and mechanics. While for the second group, it was the instructor who revised the written product of each member in this group by giving them detailed feedback on their paragraphs through certain clear scoring rubrics. The observed results and based on the data collected from the semi-structured interview clearly showed that the peer revision group experienced less writing anxiety, it proved that they were more motivated to exchange their ideas on how to evaluate their written products with peers of the same class. Whereas, the teacher revision group proved to be less motivated because they thought the teachers is more experienced, and they have to perceive that there is no way to discuss their ideas especially if they face a scoring scheme that is unclear in terms of its rubrics for them. Peer revision made the students aware of their mistakes and errors, and it helped them to look at their written products from a different angle; however, it does not work efficiently if it is not used in parallel with the teacher revision which can direct them academically.

Keywords

Writing anxiety, academic writing instruction, peer revision, teacher revision