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Should Peer E-Comments Replace Traditional Peer Comments?

Pham Vu Phi Ho

Assoc. Prof., BaRia VungTau University, Vietnam, hopyv@bv.u.edu.vn

Luong Thi Kim Phung

Van Lang University, Vietnam, luongthikimphung@vanlanguni.edu.vn

Tran Thi Thuy Oanh

University of Foreign Languages Studies, The University of Da Nang, Vietnam, ttoanh@ufl.udn.vn

Nguyen Quang Giao

Assoc. Prof., The University of Da Nang, Vietnam, nqgiao@ac.udn.vn

Many studies in literature have compared peer e-feedback/comments to traditional peer feedback/comments to see whether one medium of providing feedback should replace the other. However, few studies investigated to see whether two modes of commentary activities positively affected the students' writing quality, instead of just comparing one to another. The literature failed to investigate the extent to which each had effects on students' writing skills. The purpose of this study was to fill this gap. The current study employed quasi-experimental research with control and experimental groups to study the issues. Seventy-two native Vietnamese students from two intact classes at Ho Chi Minh City University of Science who had ever obtained this kind of training activities participated in the study. The training procedures for both groups were similar except one conducted face-to-face peer comments on papers and the other on Facebook social network. Data collection was from pre- vs. post-tests rated by inter-raters and analyzed by the t-tests of SPSS software. The findings of the study revealed that peer commentary activities of both groups had significant impacts on students' writing quality; however, the peer e-comments outperformed the traditional peer comments.

Keywords: peer e-feedback/comments, face-to-face peer comments, writing quality, traditional peer comments, Facebook-based peer comments

INTRODUCTION

For the writing teachers in Vietnam, large size of the class acts as a major barrier (Nguyen, Fehring, & Warren, 2015; Dang, 2010). With 45 to 50 non-English major

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