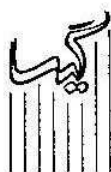


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روی مهارت تفکر انتقادی فراگیران ایرانی انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی

مریم رستمی

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## **Abstract**

The role and contribution of collaborative learning to fostering L2 writing and critical thinking skills are well attested. Based on Vygotskian theory, writing has a major role in the internalization social interactions. With regard to critical thinking skills, it is argued that students are capable of performing at higher intellectual levels when asked to work in collaborative situations than when asked to work individually. Taking a social constructivism frame of reference, the present study aimed at investigating the effect of collaborative learning through debate and discussion in both face-to-face and blog incorporated contexts on the Iranian EFL learners' writing achievement and critical thinking skills. It further investigated the possible relationship between the learners' critical thinking skills and their writing achievement results.

The participants of the study included 36 Iranian female adults learning English at an advanced level. They were all university students, ranging from 20 to 28 years old. They formed three groups; the face-to-face collaboration group and the face-to-face collaboration blended with blog group as experimental ones and the traditional individual group as the control one. Collaborative context of learning with two levels: exchanging ideas through small group's debate and discussion in classroom face-to-face or blended context was the independent variable and students' writing achievement and critical thinking skills were the dependent variables.

Three different types of instruments were used to collect data required for the present study. First, a TOEFL placement test was administered in order to make sure that all participants had roughly the same L2 level of proficiency. Second, the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (form B) was administered both at the beginning and at the end of the course to estimate the degree of change in the students' critical thinking skills. Third, in order to make sure that students had accomplished the set goals of the course, two TOEFL writing achievement tests as pre and post tests were administered.

The results showed that the collaborative context of learning through debate and discussion had a significant effect on the learners' writing achievement and critical thinking skills scores. The increased level of collaboration as a result of adding blog to face-to-face collaboration was also significant. The findings further revealed a significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' critical thinking skills and their writing achievement results.

Key Terms: Blog, Writing, Critical Thinking Skills

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## List of Abbreviations

Zone of Proximal Development	ZPD
California Critical Thinking Skills Test	CCTST
Collaborative Learning Theory	CLT
Socio-technical System	STS
Computer Assisted Language Learning	CALL
Programmed Logic for Automated Teaching Operations	PLATO
Face-to-face	F2F
Computer- supported Collaborative Learning	CSCL
Critical Thinking Ability	CTA
Blog Assisted Language learning	BALL
Hypertext Markup Language	HTML
Universal Resource Locator	URL
Computer-mediated Communication	CMC