Enhancing Writing Proficiency in EFL Learners through Task Repetitions in TBLT: A Comparative Study

[1]Fatemeh Raeesi, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Foreign Languages, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad university

Fatemehraeesi72@gmail.com

[2]Nafiseh Hosseinpour, Assistant Professor, Department of Foreign Languages, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad university, Isfahan

nafishosseinpour@yahoo.com

[3]Fariba Rahimi Esfahani, Assistant Professor, Department of Foreign Languages, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad university

Rahimi_fariba@yahoo.com

Abstract

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) is an instrumental approach in equipping students with the necessary skills and preparing them for success in academic, professional, and real-life communication contexts. However, the lack of research in this area in teaching writing is a notable gap in the field of language education. This gap in research hinders the understanding of how TBLT can be optimally applied to the development of writing proficiency in language learners. To this end, the current study aimed at finding the effects of three types of task repetitions (exact, procedural and content) on the writing quality of a group of EFL learners. A convenience sample of 120 intermediate EFL learners agreed to participate in this study. The participants were then randomly assigned to 4 groups: 1 control group and 3 experimental groups. The initial writing task, functioning as the pre-test, was conducted across all groups. In this task, learners were requested to rephrase the reading passage from unit 6A of the American File book, which was considered a descriptive writing assignment. Following this, the participants underwent the necessary treatment over three sessions in three experimental groups. The variations among the experimental groups were related to the types of task repetition. After the treatment sessions were completed, the same pre-test was given to the participants as the post-test to measure any difference in the quality of the participants' writing. Data analysis was done through a series of t-tests and one-way ANCOVA. The results showed that, overall, the three writing tasks influenced the quality of EFL learners' writing to the same extent. Suggestion for future research has also been proposed.

Key words: Task repetitions; Exact task repetition; Content task repetition; Procedural task repetition; Complexity, accuracy and fluency (CAF) measures

INTRODUCTION

Pedagogical tasks, thoroughly defined as classroom activities that aim at promoting second language (L2) development via meaningful language use (Samuda & Bygate, 2008), have attracted much attention among TBLT researchers over recent years. Different task implementation factors have been demonstrated to impact learners' performance. Among them, task repetition (TR) has gained more prominence (Bygate, 2018). As defined by Bygate and Samuda (2005, p. 43), TR refers to the act of repeating "the same or slightly altered tasks" and varies in its three forms regarding whether language learners repeat the same task (exact TR), or whether the content of tasks is repeated with different procedures (procedural TR) or re-perform the written task with the same type but with different content (content TR) (Bygate, 2001). Till now, most TR-related studies have mainly focused on oral communication skills and provided adequate evidence about the positive influence of TR on the speaking performance of language learners (see review provided by Bygate, 2018). There are only a few investigations into how TR can influence L2 writing performance (see for example Nitta & Baba, 2014, 2018; Sánchez-López, 2018; Tabari et al., 2022), even though TBLT aims at increasing learning opportunities supplied by all modalities (Manchón, 2014).

Manchón (2014) believed that two unique features of L2 writing may enhance TR's possible benefits. Considering its offline nature, writing allows much more processing time than speaking. Accordingly, fewer time constraints might enable L2 writers to have more acceptable control for attentional resources and engage language learners in deeper linguistic processing than what is available in most oral task performance. The second feature deals with the opportunity of integrating different types of feedback that draw L2 writers' attention to areas for enhancement in the TR cycle. Since written corrective feedback (WCF) deals precisely with linguistic errors in writing, it could explicitly direct writers' attention to work on language issues in subsequent and upcoming task encounters. In light of the above considerations, language researchers look for a similar positive influence of TR on L2 writing quality such as increased use of sophisticated lexical and grammatical items, and eventually greater accuracy.

The overarching aim of the current study was, therefore, to examine the influence of different types of TR, namely exact, content, and procedural on linguistic aspects of L2 writing (complexity, fluency, and accuracy), since these aspects have been found to strongly correlate to L2 text quality (Kim & Crossley, 2018). Additionally, the researchers were interested in

investigating whether there were any differences between the types of task repetition regarding their efficiency in improving writing CAF measures.

1. Theoretical background

With the continuous and growing importance of English as a global language, especially in education and business, many universities are putting real investment into teaching their learners how to communicate effectively in both spoken and written English. (Al-Seghayer, 2011, 2014). There has been a wide-ranging debate among educators over writing for many years. The research shows that there are a large number of EFL students who cannot write and understand materials in English efficiently (Rafiee & Abbasian, 2020). There are many factors contributing to the weakness of language students in writing. According to Westwood (2008), these factors are classified as limited vocabulary knowledge, limited knowledge of grammatical structures, lack of familiarity with the subject matter, inadequate use of effective writing strategies, problems with processing information, lack of accuracy, fluency, and complexity.

Ogunsolu, Wang, and Hanson (2018) claim that in a usual writing class when the teacher requests the students to write the texts, there are some kinds of monotonous writing activities. These kinds of writing activities usually result in bored students and a sleepy atmosphere. Teachers usually have a few innovations, task assignments, and techniques to have more interactive writing activities in the class to probe students to be active. It seems that there are some kinds of satisfaction with TR which contains written texts and answering questions based on the presented texts frequently.

Research on TR has demonstrated that repeating the same tasks helps learners pay more attention to linguistic forms in their performance. The seminal work by Bygate (1999), for instance, indicated that when learners repeated the same story-telling task, they performed better in terms of accuracy and fluency. In subsequent studies, Bygate (2001) and Bygate and Samuda (2009) pinpointed the potential of TR to enhance accuracy. Bygate and Samuda (2008, p. 67) delineate repeated task performance not as “doing the same thing, but rather working differently on the same material”. Moreover, previous research shows that TR serves to familiarize learners with task procedures and their interactional requirements to ease the task completion process (Payant & Reagan, 2018). Repeating task content and/or task type at different time intervals help learners release their limited attentional resources and shift their focus from content to other elements of L2 production (Bygate, 2001).

Meanwhile, it is believed that TR, as one of the task implementation factors, has the potential to free up learners' attention to focus on the formal and systemic aspects of language (Ahmadian, 2011; Ellis, 2009). TR presents numerous opportunities for learners to rehearse or attend to new linguistic structures in the same or similar tasks, thereby attracting learners' attention during task performance (Samuda & Bygate, 2008). According to Ellis (2002), the design of a task-based lesson involves consideration of the stages or components of a lesson that has a task as its principal component. Furthermore, TR helps the restructuring of declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge with a lower working memory load (DeKeyser, 1998). According to Ellis (2002, p. 80), the design of a task-based lesson involves consideration of the stages or components of a lesson that has a task as its principal component. However, they all have in common three principal phases. These phases reflect the chronology of a task-based lesson. Thus, the first phase is 'pre-task' and concerns the various activities that teachers and students can undertake before they start the task, such as whether students are given time to plan the performance of the task. The second, named the 'during task' phase, centers on the task itself and affords various instructional options, including whether students are required to operate under time pressure or not. The final phase is 'post-task' and involves procedures for following up on the task performance.

TR influences the way learners perform a task and the language they use to deal with it. TR has been found to help learners produce enhanced output (Bygate, 1999, 2001; Lambert, Kormos, & Minn, 2017; Sample & Michel, 2014). By repeating a task, learners' attention is diverted from conceptualizing the meaning they want to convey during the first iteration, to the formulation of their message in subsequent encounters with the task (Bui, Ahmadian, & Hunter, 2018).

TR has been shown to positively change learners' task performance in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency (Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011; 2001; Lynch & McLean, 2001). Repetition has been considered as a vital factor in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) from various perspectives. Traditionally, the behavioristic view of learning has assigned a basic role to repetition. Through applying the principles of repetition and reinforcement, the proponent of this view of learning draws on exercises and drills that lead learners to L2 habit formation (Pica, 2011). To date, research results suggest that task repetition positively affects oral task performance. However, researchers have not yet shown the extension of the benefits of repeating the same task to the performance of a new task. As Bygate and Samuda (2005) claim, TR is characterized as the repetition of the same or slightly altered task– whether the

whole task or parts of a task. SLA researchers now look at TR as essentially a kind of planning that is particularly promising for manipulating and channeling learners' limited attention resources (Ahmadian & Tavakoli, 2011).

Research has demonstrated that TR can positively affect L2 development and performance by promoting L2 processing capacity, increasing memory capacity, and creating faster access to language components (Ahmadian, 2011; Hawkes, 2011; Larsen-Freeman, 2012). Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.223) assert that "task-based language teaching refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core units of planning and instruction in language teaching". According to Willis and Willis (2011), "Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) helps language learners make real efforts to communicate as best as they can in the foreign language which they are learning" (p. 2). Willis (1996) contends that Task-Based Instruction (TBI) is, in fact, a meaning-focused approach that reflects real-world language use for purposeful communication. As investigated by Sheppard (2019), for TR to have beneficial effects on acquisition, learners are required to receive feedback on their initial performance of the task.

So far, the effect of task repletion on speaking proficiency has been studied in several studies (see for instance, Lambert, Kormos & Minn, 2017; Lynch & Maclean, 2000). However, whether different characteristics of task repetition affect language learners' L2 written production has received little attention. Writing and speaking are different from each other in terms of the nature of language use and the psycholinguistic processes involved (Kormos, 2014; Ravid & Tolchinsky, 2002). What makes writing different from speaking is that in writing, because of the lack of pressure caused by situational factors present in speaking, the existence of time compared to speaking, and the visibility of the text produced, learners have more opportunity to pay attention to form and meaning simultaneously and to involve more active monitoring. Owing to the existence of these differences, various types of tasks may lead to different results when applied to writing (Tavakoli, 2014).

Along with the growth in interest in TR research, there is increasing concern about whether different types of task repetitions, including exact, procedural, and content repetitions have any influence on the improvement of EFL learners' writing. The current study, thus, aims to find the impact of TR on the writing complexity, fluency, and accuracy of EFL learners.

The present research seeks to find answers to the following questions:

- Does exact task repetition have any effects on writing CAF measures of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
- Does procedural task repetition have any effects on writing CAF measures of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
- Does content task repetition have any effects on writing CAF measures of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
- Are there any differences among the types of task repetition regarding their efficiency in improving writing CAF measures of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

2. Methodology

2.1.Participants

In this study, a convenience sample of 120 respondents has been obtained, from English language learners who were studying English in different language institutes in a city in Iran. EFL learners who met the following conditions were selected: having the experience of learning English for more than 3 years, studying the English File 3 at the time of conducting the research, and having a willingness to take part in the study. Based on these conditions, a number of 120 EFL learners agreed to participate in the study. The mean age of the participants was 20 and their first language was Persian. Of the participants, 62.5% (n = 75) were female and 37.5% (n = 45) were male. Regarding their educational status, 32.5% (n = 39) were students studying at senior and junior high school, 47.5% (n = 57) were university students and 20% (n = 24) were university graduates. Before conducting the study, the participants were given the required information about the research aims. Only once they had adequate preparation, the researchers started the study. The necessary explanation and help were given to them during the process of data collection as well.

2.2.Research Instruments

2.2.1. American English File

American English File Level 3 (Latham-Koenig, Oxeden & Seligson, 2013) was applied as the instructional material, from which the reading passage of unit 6A was selected as the writing prompt in this study. The reason for choosing this passage was that all tenses of passive voice were presented in this passage which was considered to be challenging for the learners.

2.2.2. CAF Measures

To determine whether there were any identifiable differences in the written tasks by the learners in the experimental and control groups, the writings were analyzed for complexity, accuracy, and fluency by using the measures developed and used by Wigglesworth and Storch (2009). Following their model, at first, the length of each story in words was calculated using the computer word count function. Then, each story was divided into T-units, clauses, and dependent clauses. A T-unit is defined by Wigglesworth and Storch (2009) as consisting of an independent clause plus all subordinate clauses that are attached to or embedded in it.

The concept of T-unit was first proposed by Hunt (1965) and has been extensively used to measure the overall syntactic complexity since then. This measure of subordination works well for the analysis of L2 written texts (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). Finally, the identified T-units, clauses, and dependent clauses that are error-free were counted. Errors of capitalization, spelling, and lexical choice, unless meaning, were counted. The way complexity, accuracy, and fluency were measured is shown in Table 1.

Table1

CAF measures

Measures	Their explanations
Complexity	- Proportion of clauses to T-units - Proportion of dependent clauses to total clauses
Accuracy	- Percentage of error-free T-units - Percentage of error-free clauses
Fluency	- Average number of words per text - Average number of T-units per text - Average number of clauses per text

2.3.Procedure

A group of EFL learners at the intermediate level who were studying English in language institutes were considered as the participants of the study. Their level of proficiency was controlled by the institute. To further ensure their homogeneity, the researcher gave a QOPT (2014). Based on their scores on this QOPT, 120 intermediate EFL learners were selected. Then, they were randomly assigned to 4 groups: 1 control group and 3 experimental groups. Regarding the practicality matters, each group had 30 participants. The necessary instruction was given to the participants in an introductory session held before the study. The first writing task, working as the pre-test, was carried out in all groups. In this task, learners were asked to rewrite the reading passage that they had studied in unit 6A of the American File book. This reading passage was considered a descriptive writing task. To ensure the comparability of the pretest and the posttest, they were administered with the same writing

conditions. Both tests used the same text type (descriptive4 essay), setting (classroom), length (200 to 300 words), and duration (within 90 minutes) without the aid of any reference materials, such as a dictionary. Then, the participants received the required treatment for three sessions in 3 experimental groups. For the first experimental groups, who received exact task repetition treatment, the classroom instructor asked the participants to write multiple sentences using the same grammatical structure or to repeat a particular vocabulary word in different contexts. For the second experimental group, those with content task repetition, the research participants were required to write multiple paragraphs or essays on the same topic, but with different perspectives or points of view. For the third experimental group who should received procedural task repetition treatment, the classroom instructor asked participants to complete the same type of writing task multiple times, with each repetition focusing on a different aspect or skill, such as organization, vocabulary choice, or sentence structure. Participants in control group are typically be students who are not exposed to a specific intervention or teaching method being tested. In this regard, the participants in control group had their regular writing instruction without any additional interventions. After the treatment ended, the same pre-test was distributed among the participants as the post-test.

2.4.Data analysis

As mentioned before, the present quasi-experimental work study was carried out in an attempt to deal with the possible influences of types of task repetition (i.e., content, exact, and procedural repetition) on writing complexity, fluency, and accuracy (CFA) of EFL learners. Simply stated, the dependent variable was students' writing performance, including complexity, accuracy, and fluency, and the independent variable was task repetition. To answer research questions, a series of t-tests were carried out comparing the pretest and posttest writings of EG1, EG2, EG3, and CG1 respectively. To answer research question 2, a series of one-way ANCOVA tests were implied to compare the four groups mentioned above considering pretests as the covariate. SPSS 22 was used for all these statistical procedures.

3. Results

The first research question aimed to investigate whether exact task repetition had any influence on improving EFL learners' writing. To answer this research question, a paired-sample t-test was run whose results are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2.

Results of paired-sample t-test for the first experimental group

		Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pair 1	Pretest1 - Posttest1	-.50000	.33709	.08704	-5.745	14	.001
Pair 2	Pretest2 - Posttest2	-.17867	.12626	.03260	-5.481	14	.002
Pair 3	Pretest3 - Posttest3	-.18467	.11388	.02940	-6.280	14	.001
Pair 4	Pretest4 - Posttest4	-.23067	.14380	.03713	-6.213	14	.003
Pair 5	Pretest5 - Posttest5	-26.93333	15.40161	3.97668	-6.773	14	.001
Pair 6	Pretest6 - Posttest6	-3.80000	2.36643	.61101	-6.219	14	.001
Pair 7	Pretest7 - Posttest7	-2.60000	2.19740	.56737	-4.583	14	.001

For the group who received exact task repetition before and after treatment, 7 dimensions related to CAF indicators were measured. The significance level for all dimensions was less than 0.05, which shows that exact task repetition training affected 7 dimensions. Consequently, it can be stated that this type of task repetition had an effect on students' writing performance.

The second research question which was formed to measure the influence of procedural task repetition on the quality of EFL writing, 7 CAF indicators were measured and the results are given in Table 3.

Table 3.

Results of paired-sample t-test for the second experimental group (EG2)

		Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pair 1	Pretest1 - Posttest1	-.52000	.32567	.09567	-5.745	14	.000
Pair 2	Pretest2 - Posttest2	-.16567	.11432	.04321	-5.481	14	.000
Pair 3	Pretest3 - Posttest3	-.19345	.13478	.03220	-6.280	14	.000

Pair 4	Pretest4 - Posttest4	-.22607	.12387	.04327	-6.213	14	.000
Pair 5	Pretest5 - Posttest5	-19.65789	14.423867	4.01453	-6.773	14	.000
Pair 6	Pretest6 - Posttest6	-2.90000	2.22675	.59901	-6.219	14	.000
Pair 7	Pretest7 - Posttest7	-2.40000	1.98453	.49768	-4.583	14	.000

According to the information provided in the table above, the significance level for all dimensions was less than 0.05, which shows that the procedural repetition training had an impact on 7 dimensions of L2 learners' writing. As a result, it can be concluded that the procedural repetition training affected the students' writing performance.

The third research question was:

- Does repetition of content affect the writing of Iranian language learners?

To find an answer to the above question, a paired-sample t-test was used for the experimental group (EG3) who received content task repetition. The results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4.

Results of paired-sample t-test for the third experimental group (EG3)

		Paired Differences			T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pair 1	Pretest1 - Posttest1	-.49000	.29346	.08905	-5.745	14	.000
Pair 2	Pretest2 - Posttest2	-.15797	.13654	.03438	-5.481	14	.000
Pair 3	Pretest3 - Posttest3	-.17991	.14598	.02887	-6.280	14	.000
Pair 4	Pretest4 - Posttest4	-.21987	.13569	.03253	-6.213	14	.000
Pair 5	Pretest5 - Posttest5	-22.65533	16.12765	3.86754	-6.773	14	.000
Pair 6	Pretest6 - Posttest6	-3.40000	1.9765	.58754	-6.219	14	.000
Pair 7	Pretest7 - Posttest7	-3.10000	2.11456	.53245	-4.583	14	.000

For the experimental group who received only content task repetition, 7 dimensions related to CAF indicators were measured. The results of the above table indicated that the significance

level for all dimensions was less than 0.05, which shows that content task repetition had an impact on these 7 dimensions. Consequently, it can be concluded that content task repetition training had an effect on the overall writing performance of language learners.

The last research question was formed to investigate the significant difference between types of repetition tasks regarding their effectiveness in improving writing skills. One-way analysis of variance test was used to investigate the difference between the three groups who were each trained in exact, procedural, or content task repetition. This was done in order to examine their effectiveness in improving writing skills. Table 5. below shows the results.

Table 5.

Comparing the mean of CAF indicators between groups according to the types of repetition of tasks

Dimensions	F	Sig.
Proportion of clauses to T-units	0.018	0.997
Proportion of dependent clauses to total clauses	0.611	0.609
Percentage of error-free T-units	0.070	0.976
Percentage of error-free clauses	0.173	0.915
Average number of words per text	0.428	0.733
Average number of T-units per text	0.004	0.999
Average number of clauses per text	0.337	0.799

Based on the implementation of one-way variance analysis and the given significance value, the difference in the mean of CAF indicators according to the types of repetition of tasks in all seven dimensions was not significant (0.05<Sig.). In other words, the one-way analysis of the variance test showed that the mean of the three groups who received task repetition training did not have a significant difference. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was no difference between the types of repetition tasks in terms of their effectiveness in improving writing skills.

4. Discussion of the Results

4.1.Effect of Exact Task Repetition on Writing CAF

Our analysis of the results showed that exact task repetition may have a nuanced effect on the writing complexity of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. On one hand, the repetition of the same writing task could lead to increased complexity as learners become more familiar with the topic and can incorporate more sophisticated vocabulary, sentence structures, and

organizational patterns (Tabari, Khezrlou & Tian, 2022). This familiarity may enable learners to express their ideas more elaborately, resulting in higher syntactic and lexical complexity in their written output. On the other hand, exact task repetition might also lead to a plateau effect, where learners produce similar or repetitive linguistic structures without necessarily enhancing the overall complexity of their writing (Sánchez, Manchón & Gilabert, 2020). Therefore, the impact of exact task repetition on writing complexity may depend on the learners' individual language proficiency, cognitive resources, and the specific nature of the writing tasks.

The effect of exact task repetition on writing accuracy among Iranian intermediate EFL learners is likely to be multifaceted. As stated by Ahmadian (2011), repetition of writing tasks may provide learners with opportunities to refine their language production skills, leading to improvements in grammatical accuracy, punctuation, and spelling. By revisiting the same task, learners may become more adept at applying grammatical rules and conventions, resulting in greater accuracy in their written compositions. However, it is also important to consider the potential for learners to simply reproduce previously encountered language patterns without necessarily internalizing the underlying grammatical rules (Ahmadian, Tavakoli & Vahid Dastjerdi, 2015). This could lead to a superficial improvement in accuracy without fostering a deeper understanding of language structures. Therefore, the influence of exact task repetition on writing accuracy may vary based on the extent to which learners engage critically with the linguistic features of the task and integrate feedback from previous attempts (Amiryousefi, 2016).

The results showed that exact task repetition may have a positive impact on the writing fluency of Iranian intermediate EFL learners as well. This result is in accordance with previous findings which illustrated that by revisiting the same writing task, language learners may experience increased fluency as they become more comfortable with the content and structure of the task (Khezrlou, 2020). This familiarity can lead to a reduction in hesitations, pauses, and disruptions in the flow of writing, allowing learners to express their ideas more cohesively and efficiently. Moreover, the repetition of writing tasks may contribute to the development of automaticity in language production, enabling learners to generate written discourse with greater ease and speed (Tatsushi, 2023). However, it is important to consider the potential for learners to become overly reliant on memorized language chunks and formulaic expressions as a result of exact task repetition, which could impact the originality and authenticity of their written output.

4.2.Effect of Procedural Task Repetition on Writing CAF

Another important finding of this investigation was that procedural task repetition had the potential to enhance the writing quality of Iranian intermediate EFL learners regarding three measures of fluency, accuracy, and complexity. This finding is consistent with that of Mehrang (2016) who found that by engaging in a sequence of related writing tasks that build on each other, L2 learners may be exposed to a wider range of topics and language structures, leading to greater syntactic and lexical complexity in their written output. It is encouraging to compare this result with that found by Nitta and Baba (2014) who found that the scaffolding provided by procedural task repetition may enable learners to gradually develop their writing skills and expand their linguistic repertoire, resulting in more sophisticated and varied writing. However, it is important to consider the potential for learners to become overly reliant on the scaffolding and not develop the ability to produce complex writing independently. Therefore, the impact of procedural task repetition on writing complexity may depend on the learners' individual language proficiency, cognitive resources, and the specific nature of the tasks.

Regarding the positive effect of procedural task repetition on writing accuracy among Iranian intermediate EFL learners, it can be noted that learners may receive feedback on their previous attempts in writing and might have opportunities to refine their language production skills. This feedback may help learners identify and correct errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling, resulting in greater accuracy in their written compositions. Moreover, the scaffolding provided by procedural task repetition may enable learners to internalize the underlying grammatical rules and conventions, leading to more accurate and appropriate language use. However, it is important to consider the potential for learners to become disengaged or overwhelmed by the repetitive nature of the tasks, which could impact their motivation and attention to detail (Sachs & Polio, 2007).

Consistent with the literature, the results illustrated that procedural task repetition may have a positive impact on the writing fluency of Iranian intermediate EFL learners (see for example Bygate, 2018). Engaging language learners in a sequence of related writing tasks may enable them to become more familiar with the content and structure of the tasks, leading to increased fluency in their written output. The opportunities provided by procedural task repetition may enable learners to develop more automaticity in their language production and allow them to generate written discourse more easily. Moreover, as found by Amiryousefi

(2016), the feedback provided throughout the sequence of tasks might help learners identify and address areas of difficulty, leading to more efficient and cohesive writing.

4.3.Effect of Content Task Repetition on Writing CAF

The current investigation found that content task repetition may have a mixed effect on the writing fluency, accuracy, and complexity of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. By building on their previous knowledge and experiences, learners may be able to produce more complex and varied language structures and expressions. On the other hand, the repetition of content may also lead to a lack of creativity and originality in the learners' writing, as they may become overly reliant on memorized language chunks and formulaic expressions. Therefore, the impact of content task repetition on writing complexity, accuracy, and fluency may depend on the learners' individual language proficiency, cognitive resources, and the specific nature of the tasks (Amelohina, Nicolas-Conesa & Manchón, 2020).

Regarding content task repetition and writing accuracy, the result showed that this type of task repetition had a positive effect on writing accuracy among Iranian intermediate EFL learners. By revisiting the same topic or theme in multiple writing tasks, learners may become more familiar with the relevant vocabulary, grammar, and discourse conventions, leading to greater accuracy in their written compositions. Moreover, the repetition of content may enable learners to internalize the underlying grammatical rules and conventions, resulting in more accurate and appropriate language use (Bram & Housen, 2018)

The current finding also showed that content task repetition had a positive impact on the writing fluency of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. These results are in agreement with those obtained by Khezrlou (2019a) who believed that by revisiting the same topic or theme in multiple writing tasks, learners may become more comfortable and confident in expressing their ideas, leading to increased fluency in their written output.

In all, the potential effects of content task repetition on the writing ability and quality of Iranian intermediate EFL learners are multifaceted and may be influenced by a range of individual and task-related factors. Content task repetition offers benefits in terms of promoting automaticity or even familiarity among EFL learners. Therefore, educators need to consider the balance between repetition and the development of deeper language skills.

4.4.Differences among types of task repetition regarding their efficiency in improving writing CAF measures

Concerning the fourth research question, it was found that there was no significant difference between the three types of task repetition, namely content, procedural, and exact, and improving the writing efficiency of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. This finding is partially in line with some previous studies (see for example Abdali & Fatemipour, 2014; Pourdana, Behbahani, & Safdari, 2011) who found no significant difference between the types of task repetition and the quality of language learners' written production.

Kuiken et al. (2005) suggested that CAF constructs may not always reveal significant distinctions between the types of task repetition. However, this assertion cannot be supported as previous studies, which either involved different tasks without specifying their complexity levels or manipulated the complexity of the same task, yielded varying CAF written outcomes. There could be other reasons for the absence of differences in some CAF constructs across three types of task repetition. For instance, in the present study, the resemblance of the impact on CAF constructs in the classification and argumentative tasks may be attributed to how the writing tests were conducted.

Overall, the efficiency of each type of task repetition in improving writing complexity, accuracy, and fluency measures of Iranian intermediate EFL learners may depend on various factors such as individual learner characteristics, task design, and the balance between repetition and the development of deeper language skills. Educators should consider these factors when implementing task repetition strategies and tailor them to the specific needs and abilities of their learners.

5. Conclusion, limitations, and suggestions for further research

Returning to the questions posed at the beginning of this study, it is now possible to state that different task types, namely exact, procedural, and content can improve the quality of Iranian EFL writers regarding three measures of complexity, accuracy, and fluency. The second major finding was that there was no difference between the types of repetition tasks in terms of their effectiveness in improving writing skills.

The present study has certain limitations that should be kept in mind when interpreting its results. First, the study was conducted outside the regular classroom context. Thus, the findings cannot be directly applied to language classroom contexts. Thus, studies using the same research design in regular classroom settings would yield results that could be generalized in a more direct way to language classroom contexts.

The study's sample size was also relatively small. Furthermore, the participants produced sample texts of different lengths. To address length text variation, proportions of errors, or the ratio of error rates per 100 words, were used for the analysis. Nonetheless, differences in text length could be considered as a differentiated factor, and therefore together with the small sample size could be taken to partially explain some of the non-significant and non-related results.

One type of classroom placement test was used to assess participants' level of L2 proficiency. However, research showed that placement tests cannot be fully accurate in assessing language proficiency (Saxon & Morante, 2014). A replication study applying the same research design but more robust language proficiency tests to measure language learners' linguistic and writing abilities would be more helpful.

In further trials, it is advisable to implement longer treatments and even conduct delayed post-tests, since it is difficult to make claims about the effects of these treatments on EFL writing performance in a short-term study such as this one. Future works with EFL learners would also benefit from a larger sample size and could consider the existing studies by using other task types. A longer sequence of repetitions could be administered to examine the fluctuation of task repetition effects. Additionally, the longer-term influence of repetition on EFL writing performance and development could be investigated in a longitudinal study. It is necessary to note that the participants of the present study were of the intermediate level of proficiency. A future study is needed to examine the effects of different task repetitions on learners across different levels of proficiency and education. As a result, this can reveal how task repetition treatment would influence learners' writing at different levels of proficiency. Last, but not least, future research might consider the impact of written corrective feedback on enhancing L2 writing measures as well as TR procedure. on student writing performance

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