The Effect of Multimedia-Based Materials on L2 Proficiency Development of Iranian High School EFL Learners

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Along with development of information technology and its important applications in education, the field of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has developed significantly during the past decades and an increasing number of research studies have been conducted in this area. CALL deals with teaching of foreign or second language via computer programs and software and can offer many potential benefits for both learners and teachers. This study seeks to find the effectiveness of multimedia-based learning materials in improving L2 language proficiency of Iranian high school learners and also investigates the attitudes of the learners toward CALL. The sample consists of 116 female high school students in District One in Isfahan. They were selected through the administration of Nelson Proficiency Test and were divided into three groups (two experimental groups and a control group). The first experimental group was instructed through multimedia-based materials, the second group via combined use of multimedia-based materials and the textbooks, while the control group was taught conventionally by means of textbook. A pretest was administered at the beginning of the experiment and a posttest after conducting all stages of the study in order to compare the scores. The software used for analyzing the results was SPSS. A questionnaire surveyed the attitudes of the participants toward the use of multimedia-based materials in teaching and learning English and the results were both quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed. The results showed that the use of multimedia-based materials led to higher ability of the learners in English and CALL could be used as an effective instructional
method for improving L2 proficiency of the learners, while the combined use of multimedia-based material and textbook was not significantly prior to merely use of CALL materials. The results of the questionnaire, on the other hand, indicated positive inclination of the learners toward the use of CALL materials in language learning. The outcomes of this study can hopefully open a new way to help EFL learners to develop their L2 proficiency more effectively.