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“Computer and Writing in the American University in Cairo (AUC) Writing Program: Students' Perspectives”

Is the computer helpful with the process of writing, i.e., drafting, editing, re-writing? Does it make the process of writing enjoyable or even more laborious? Some contradictory results regarding the use of the computer in the ESL/EFL writing class have been documented. Al-Jarf (2004) and Sullivan and Lindgren (2002) reported two positive outcomes of the use of computers in the writing class: motivation and increased learner autonomy. On the other hand, Matsumura and Hann (2004) and Abrams (2003) found two drawbacks: putting the computerphobic students (i.e., those who fear the use of computers) at a disadvantage and flaming (i.e., impolite or sexually-explicit language). Such contradictory findings can be better understood if students’ perspective is taken into consideration. The poster presents the results of a pilot study for a project examining the views on the use of the computer in writing among the students in the writing program at the American University in Cairo (AUC).