Writing week-journals to improve the writing quality of fourth-graders’ compositions

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Abstract Students’ writing problems are a global educational concern and is in need of particular attention. This study aims to examine the impact of providing extra writing opportunities (i.e., writing journals) on the quality of writing compositions. A longitudinal cluster-randomized controlled design using a multilevel modeling analysis with 182 fourth grade students was conducted. We examined whether students’ writing quality differed when writing journals on a weekly basis for 12 weeks, compared with a control group. Three covariates were analyzed, namely: (i) the students’ attitudes towards writing; (ii) their self-efficacy in writing; (iii) and their use of self-regulation (SRL) strategies while writing. Findings have shown that students who wrote week-journals significantly improved the writing quality of their compositions and reported a higher use of SRL strategies in writing. Nevertheless, self-efficacy and attitude towards writing were found to not be related to the quality of the compositions. Moreover, data indicated that the writing quality of compositions improved along with the writing quality of the week-journals. Findings suggest the use of week-journals in class to promote writing.

Keywords Week-journals · Writing quality · Self-regulation in learning · Longitudinal design · Multilevel modeling

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