



Using Web 2.0 technologies and collaborative work in teaching academic writing

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Outline

- Problems with teaching writing
- Why Google Docs?
- The study
- Results
- Discussion

Problem 1: Course design vs 21st century workforce requirements

- the exam

- time limit
- one – two drafts
- pen & paper
- offline
- no dictionaries
- simple topics

- real life

- deadlines
- multiple revisions
- computers
- online
- dictionaries
- complex topics

Problem 2: The tech-savvy student myth

- students are less tech-savvy than it is assumed
 - unaware of practical web tools
 - use Google search ineffectively
 - obtain information from unreliable sources
 - use poor quality bilingual online dictionaries

Problem 3: Students' misconceptions about the writing process



Why Google Docs?

- comes free with a Google account
- accessible from any device
- up to 40 concurrent users
- constantly developing
- safe cloud service

Why Google Docs?

- promotes collaborative writing (Kessler 2012)
 - pairwork and groupwork outside the classroom
 - peer learning and peer correction
 - asynchronous collaboration
 - effective comment system
 - access to previous versions

Why Google Docs?

- Documents
 - easy sharing and commenting
- Spreadsheets
 - keeping track of your students' progress
- Presentations
 - preparing slides for in-class activities
- Forms
 - getting feedback from your students

Pilot study

- Group A

- 10 1BA students
- individual work
- pen & paper
- 10 paragraphs

- Group B

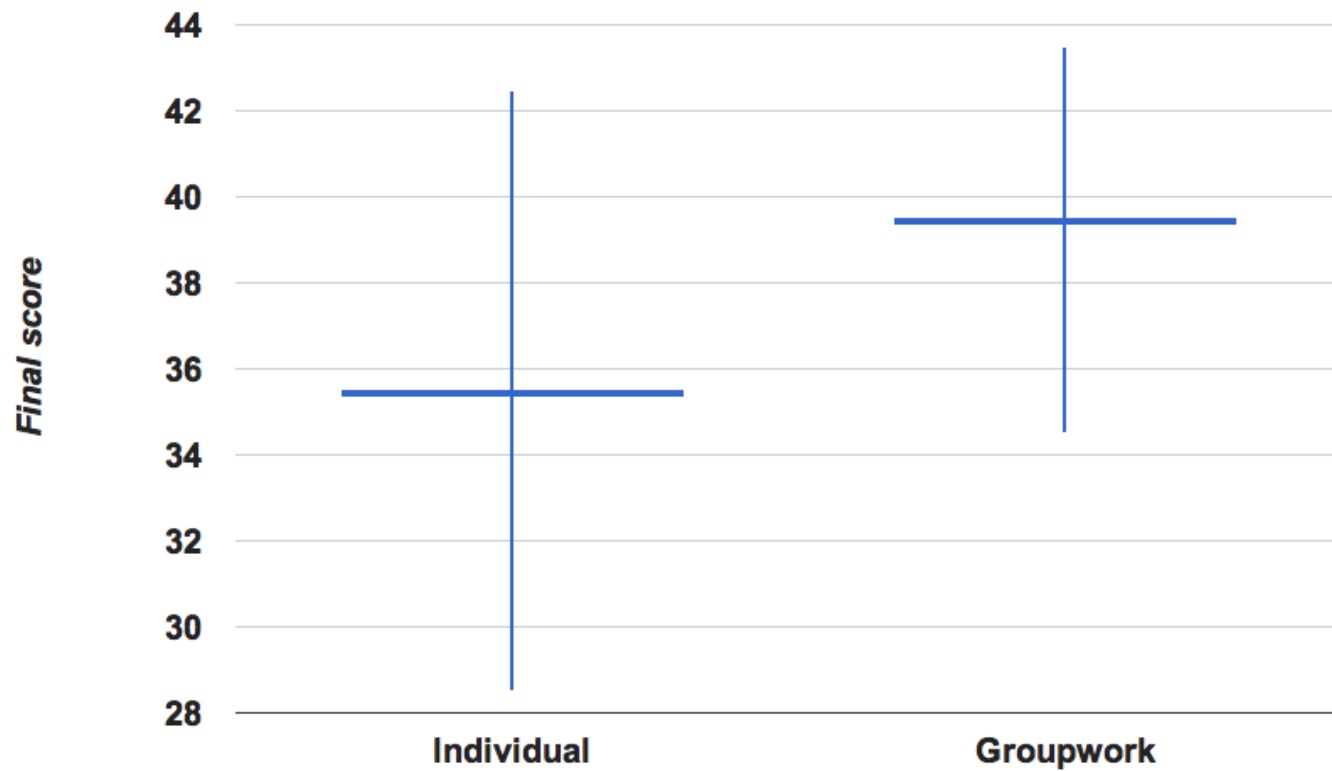
- 30 1BA students
- groupwork
- Google Docs
- 10 paragraphs

Assessment

- double-blind review
- course requirements
- paragraph marksheet

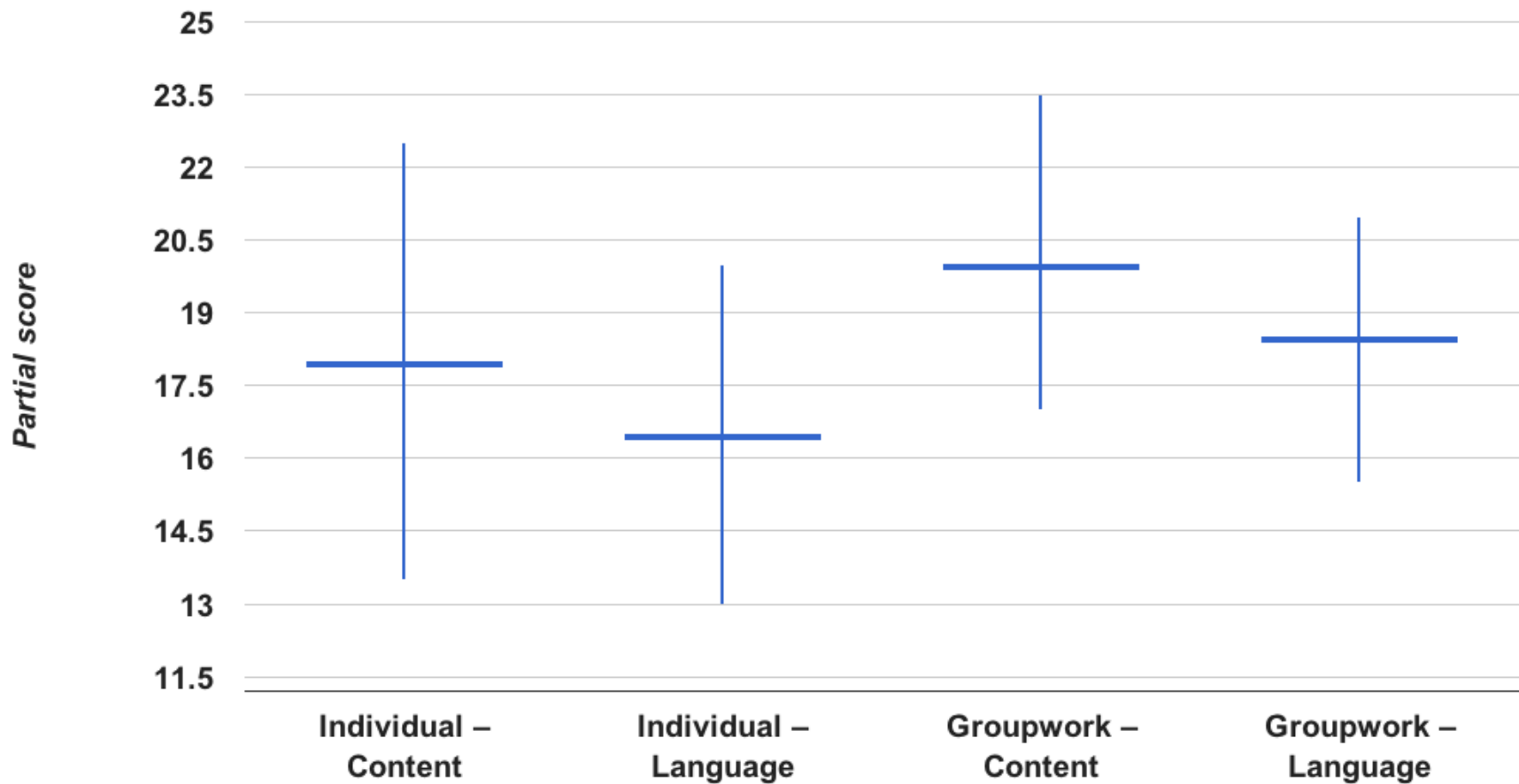
Results

Paragraph scores



Results

Content & language scores



Discussion

- students working in groups using web tools:
 - generate more complex ideas
 - create better texts in terms of content and language
 - learn from each other
 - raise their awareness of plagiarism
 - develop a positive attitude to collaborative work

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