Self-Paced Reading and the Achievement of Persian EFL Learners

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This study aimed at investigating the effects of reading goals on L2 reading comprehension in a computer-mediated environment when reading is self-paced by the learners and students are responsible for their own comprehension. Sixty participants (30 males and 30 females) in three groups of 20 were provided with one of three reading goals: read to comprehend the text, read to take a test, and read to teach the material to another student. Then, the participants were asked to read two passages on a computer screen. A computer program, written in C#.NET program, presented the text on the screen four lines at a time, and measured the amount of time students would spend on each page initially, how many times students reread pages, and how much time students would spend re-reading pages. L2 learners’ comprehension and learning strategies were measured in three ways: recall of materials, time spent reading each page of the text and time spent re-reading pages, and the number of times pages were re-read. Finally, after one month from the first test a posttest was administered to determine which group could remember materials better. The results revealed that recall of materials was significantly greater for the teaching-goal group than the other two groups in both first and second tests. Time spent rereading was significantly greater for the teaching-goal group as well. These findings suggest that reading goals do have an effect on comprehension and recalling in a computer-mediated environment and students with a different reading goal performed differently while reading passages. This study proposed a way to reduce the burden of teaching on teachers and made the learners responsible for their study.