



كلية التربية

كلية معتمدة من الهيئة القومية لضمان جودة التعليم

إدارة: البحوث والنشر العلمي (المجلة العلمية)

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Using Edmodo in teaching English to develop secondary stage students' writing performance

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{ المجلد السابع والثلاثون - العدد الثالث - مارس ٢٠٢١ م }

http://www.aun.edu.eg/faculty_education/arabic

مستخلص البحث

هدف البحث الحالي إلى استقصاء فاعلية استخدام منصة إدمودو لتنمية الأداء الكتابي لدى طلاب الصف الأول الثانوي وتم اختيار مجموعة البحث من طلاب الصف الأول الثانوي بمدرسة علوان الثانوية بإدارة أسيوط التعليمية محافظة أسيوط محل عمل الباحث و استخدم البحث الحالي المنهج التجريبي ذي التصميم شبه التجريبي القائم على المجموعة الواحدة وقام الباحث بأعداد اختبار قبلي بعدى للأداء الكتابي لقياس أداء الطلاب في مهارات الأداء الكتابي و توصلت الدراسة الحالية إلى انه يوجد فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى (٠.٠٥) بين متوسطات درجات طلاب الصف الأول الثانوي في الاختبار القبلي البعدي للأداء الكتابي لصالح التطبيق البعدي وهذا يدل على تحسن واضح في الأداء الكتابي لدى طلاب الصف الأول الثانوي نتيجة لتطبيق منصة إدمودو فقلد بلغ حجم الأثر لتطبيق البرنامج (٩٨). وهى قيمة حجم اثر اكثر من (٨). وفقا لمعادلة إيتا. و اكدت النتائج على ان منصة ادمودو يمكن ان توفر بيئة تعليمية امنة لعملية التعلم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأداء الكتابي، منصة ادمودو ، عملية الكتابة .

ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating the effect of Edmodo on developing secondary stage students' writing performance skills. Thirty students from Elwan secondary school, Assiut Educational directorate were chosen as the study participants. The study adopted one- group quasi-experimental design. A pre-post writing performance skills test was designed to assess the students' level in the specified skills before and after the treatment. Data collection process included both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Results were analyzed and findings revealed there was a statistically significant difference at (0.05) level between the mean scores of research group in the pre-post administration of the writing performance skills test favouring post testing. The results revealed that Edmodo was effective in developing first year secondary stage students' writing performance skills. The effect size using Eta equation was (.98) which is higher than (.8).Using Edmodo, both students and teachers can have a safe online environment to conduct more effective and sustainable teaching and learning process.

Keywords: Edmodo, writing performance, writing process.

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a great role in man's life and in society. It is a means to communicate with others, search for knowledge, express ideas and emotions and deep understanding of the different cultures. Learning a foreign language has become one of the necessities of modern life as no one can only use his mother language if he looks for a bright future. There are four basic language skills: listening, speaking reading and writing and each skill has characteristics and merits but they complete each other to reach good performance in learning the language and practicing it. Therefore, acquiring all the skills is necessary in language learning. The four skills affect each other as the development of any skill affect the development of the others .This important role of language does not only necessitates acquiring these skills but also applying them in a better way.

Writing skill is very important for many reasons .First, it is the basis on which an individual is assessed in different educational stages. Besides, it expresses the personality of the individual and its development and makes his/her thinking visible. Valli, & Priya (2016,2114) state that writing is in the middle of the academic life and it is the suitable means by which we can judge the performance of students in exams . The perfection of this skill takes a lot of time. Darayseh (2003,7) noted that teaching writing no longer means simply having students do grammar exercises in writing or getting writing which is free from grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes. Instead, we are after writing about what students are interested in and what they really want to communicate to the reader, and how they reach their final writing products.

Among the four language skills that are learned by the students, writing skill is considered as an important communication medium. Simply, students and people generally through written forms can express their feelings and generate new ideas. Hence, understanding and developing this skill is strongly needed. On the other hand, it is not easy for the students to write down their ideas on paper. This could be attributed to the difficulties and low abilities for effective writing among students (Sudarningsih and Wardana, 2011,3).

In today's digital era, there are a lot of social media that can be used as a tool to assist writing skills for those who learn English. Edmodo is a very efficient vehicle for communication and discussion for teachers and students. With Edmodo, students can easily interact and discuss with the direct observation of the teacher. Teachers can provide teaching materials such as questions, photos, and learning videos to students easily. In addition, students can also download the teaching material. Nic Borg and Jeff O'Hara created Edmodo in 2008 who realized the need to evolve the school environment to meet the connectedness of the 21st century world. It is a safe environment that might enhance students' learning. Teachers post announcements and assignments for their students. Students use Edmodo to communicate with their teachers to ask questions about lessons and homework and collaborate with other classmates on activities and project ideas. Using Edmodo, students and teachers can reach out one another and connect by sharing ideas, problems and helpful tips. A teacher can assign and grade work on Edmodo and students can get help from the entire class on Edmodo (Mills and Chandra, 2011)

Halil (2020) studied the effectiveness of using Edmodo, as one of the online learning platforms. A sample of 124 students participated in this study by filling out questionnaires distributed online. Student responses were analyzed descriptively quantitatively to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of learning, in terms of two aspects .The results of data analysis showed that online learning using Edmodo has been carried out effectively. The effectiveness of using Edmodo is due to its practicality (simple display, provides various features, and supports various file types), as well as the accessibility of its use (accessible even though the connection is unstable, and saves internet quota). The convenience provided by Edmodo platform is able to increase the average participation rate of students in online learning.

By using Edmodo as the extension of the face-to-face interaction, it is expected that students can improve their English proficiency in a provided length of time, since it will increase the contact hours among students and teachers and facilitate peer feedback among students, which may create a productive learning environment for them,. It arises from the idea that the focus of cognitive change of an individual is created the individual mindset after the intervention of this technology tool. Students are actively involved in preparing for their classroom lessons, and a sense of excitement for learning builds among themselves and the teacher during this early stage of the unit (Dewi, 2014).

Several recent studies have confirmed various advantages of employing Edmodo in learning. Fauzi (2017) conducted an experimental study with high school students, to determine the effects of Edmodo use and concluded that using Edmodo facilitated a safe online environment, both for the students and the teachers, to carry out a more effective and sustainable teaching and learning process. Ramdhani (2017) used Edmodo to evaluate the academic paragraph writing skills of prospective English teachers and stated that using Edmodo was useful in developing the paragraph writing skills of the students. Kongchan's (2012) study on the teacher's and students' perception towards using Edmodo in EFL classroom showed that Edmodo is a user-friendly social learning platform which is so simple that even a non-digital native teacher can make use of the site to set up and run online classes without a need for support from a computer technician.

Doğan (2019) studied the effects of Edmodo use on the English writing skills of university level English preparatory class students. The findings of the study indicated that the majority of the participants were satisfied with Edmodo, appreciated using Edmodo for English writing classes, and that it was more pleasant to write English via Edmodo. Other significant findings pointed out that the participants believed their writing skills developed via Edmodo use, that the students appreciated collaborative writing activities and the availability of works and course materials in Edmodo facilitated self-observation of progress for the students. Hastomo (2016) investigated the effectiveness of Edmodo to teach writing viewed from students' motivation. The participants for this

study were two classes of senior high school students from a senior high school in Bandar Lampung. The experimental design was used as methodology in which one class as control group and another one as experimental group. Two kinds of tests were given to both groups; writing test and motivation test. The findings of this research reveal that Edmodo is more effective to be used in teaching writing, and the students with high motivation have better writing skill than those having low motivation. The study also shows that there is an interaction between teaching media; Edmodo and students' motivation in teaching writing.

Based on reviewing the related studies, the researcher seeks to use Edmodo in teaching English to develop secondary stage students' writing performance.

Statement of the problem

The researcher noticed during his work as an English language teacher weakness of the students in the writing performance of English language. The researcher noticed these weaknesses during his work in class, correcting and analyzing students' work and test results. This weakness appeared in the sentence, paragraph and essay level in not using the correct grammar, not using the correct tense and not linking between ideas and applying vocabulary correctly. This also appeared in the sentence structure and the spelling of words. Teachers are not interested in developing writing performance and concentrating on one side that is spelling and grammar mistakes.

Many studies showed weakness in the writing performance of students in general and secondary stage students in particular. Bukhari (2016,58), Attia and Hafez (2006), Abdel Aziz (2018).To assure the existence of the problem, the researcher has done a pilot study. The researcher designed a writing performance test. This test included the sub-skills of the writing performance on the sentence, paragraph and the essay level. This test was administered to 30 first year secondary students in Elwan Secondary school. The results of the test showed that students have weaknesses in the writing performance levels. In the sentence level, there were many wrong sentences and many meaningless sentences. In the paragraph level there was no organization, there are no supporting ideas and some sentences are irrelevant. In the essay level, most students are unable to write an essay .It was irrelevant and weak in content.

After reviewing the related studies, the results of the writing performance test, the research problem can be defined as follows: there is weakness in first year secondary stage students in writing performance. The researcher suggested using Edmodo in teaching English to develop secondary stage students' writing performance.

Questions of the study

The study tries to answer the following question:

- 1- What is the effectiveness of using Edmodo in teaching English to develop secondary stage students' writing performance?

Hypotheses of the study

The current research attempted to test the following hypothesis:

- 1-There is a statistically significant difference at 0.05 level between the mean scores of the research group before and after administering the suggested program in the writing performance skills test.

Definitions of terms**Writing performance**

Richard and Schmidt (2010:248) defined writing performance as " the real use of the language and there is a difference between person's knowledge of the language (competency) and how to use this knowledge in understanding and using language (performance)."

For the purpose of the current study the researcher defines writing performance as the skills that first year secondary stage students have on the sentence, paragraph and the essay level to write ideas into words meaningfully and acceptable ideas (supported with details ,related and organized) with the correct form (spelling, grammar, word.

Edmodo

Haygood et al. (2012:80) state that Edmodo is a private micro-blogging service which provides a free and secure learning platform.

Cauley in Abadi et al. (2015:55) mentions that Edmodo is "an educational website that takes the ideas of a social network and refines them and makes it appropriate for a classroom. Students and teachers can create their own account and have their own profile page."

For the purpose of the current study the researcher defines Edmodo as a free of charge social learning platform which provides first year secondary students with access to course content presented by teachers. It helps students interact with each other and teachers through instant messages, thus enabling them to cooperate and collaborate in virtual classroom environment.

Objectives of the study:**This study aims at:**

- 1- Developing secondary one students' writing performance skills using Edmodo .

Significance of the study:

The present study is expected to be significant for the following reasons:

Theoretical significance

The current research could provide theoretical framework about writing performance supported with Edmodo : concept , stages, and importance.

Practical importance :

The significance of this study emerges from the fact that Edmodo has been newly introduced to the field of education. Moreover, it is the first study, to the best knowledge of the researcher , conducted in the field of English language . For this reason, the study may be highly significant for:

Students : Using Edmodo could help first year secondary students in developing their writing performance. Besides providing activities in the teacher's guide could help them develop these skills.

Teachers and supervisors : The suggested program could provide them with a list of writing performance subskills to develop them . The study may attract the attention of English language teachers to the importance of implementing the Edmodo technology as a means of developing writing skills, which may result in improving learners' writing skills in general, and getting rid of traditional methods, and encouraging the use of new nontraditional ways. This study stimulates specialists' and supervisors' interest to conduct training courses for teachers to enhance their skills in using the Edmodo approach in teaching English writing Skills and other subjects.

Curricula developers : The suggested program could help in developing the English language curricula in general and the writing skills in particular by using Edmodo. The study may help concerned them to employ the Edmodo technology in teaching English language and other teaching fields.

Researchers : Researchers can do more studies by using Edmodo in developing other skills like listening, speaking and reading .

Delimitation of the study:

The current research was delimited to the following :

- A group of secondary one students schools as EFL learners, Elwan Secondary School, Assiut Directorate, Assiut.
- The present study was limited to some writing performance skills on sentence, paragraph and essay level for first year secondary students :

Tools and materials of the study :

The researcher prepared the following tools and materials

- 1-Writing performance skills list suitable for secondary one students
- 2-A program using Edmodo in teaching English to develop secondary stage students' writing performance. The program includes:
 - The teacher's guide.
 - The student's book.
- 3- A writing performance skills pre-posttest.

Procedures of the study:

To answer the questions of the study : the following steps were followed:

- 1-Reviewing literature related to writing performance and using Edmodo
- 2 Preparing a list of the writing performance skills on sentence, paragraph and essay level needed by secondary one students and submitting them to the jury members.
- 3 Making the appropriate adjustments according to the opinions of the jury members to reach the final form of the list of the writing performance skills.
- 3 Preparing the suggested program using Edmodo in teaching English to develop secondary stage students' writing performance which includes:
 - Objectives of the program.
 - Program content.
 - Identifying teaching strategies.
 - Selecting appropriate teaching aids during the application of the program.
 - Selecting evaluation methods for the program.
- 4 Presenting the program to the jury members to ensure its veracity, consistency and applicability.
- 5-Preparing the final form of the program after conducting any modifications made by the jury members.
- 6- Preparing the writing performance skills test and submit it to the jury members then modifying it according to the jury members' feedback.
- 7- Piloting the tools of the study.
- 8- Choosing the group of the study from first year secondary students.
- 9 Pretesting the writing performance skills test.
- 10-Teaching the program using Edmodo to the research group of the study.
- 11-Post testing the writing performance test on the research group.
- 12- Collecting and analyzing data statistically.
- 13- Interpreting and discussing the result. Providing conclusion, recommendation and suggestion for further researchers.

Participants of the Study

The Participants chosen for the present study were 30 students (both male and female) enrolled in the first year Elwan secondary school in Assiut. Their age ranged between fifteen to sixteen years old. They all live in Assiut. They have been learning English since primary one. Participants came from almost the same socio-economic background. First year secondary stage students might maximize their benefit to make use of all the skills they acquired and mastered in their coming years of study.

Design of the study

For the purpose of the present study, the quasi-experimental design was used to identify the effect of the employed program as intervention for developing the writing performance skills of first year students in Elwan secondary school, Assiut educational directorate, Assiut Governorate. The one group pre-post- test was used in this study. The participants were first pretested using the writing performance skills test. After administering the suggested program, they were post tested using the same instruments.

The Writing Performance Skills Test

Objective of the test:

The Writing performance skills test was constructed by the researcher, it was used to assess the students' writing performance before being exposed to the program, and to evaluate the effect of the suggested program in developing the subjects' writing performance after being taught it.

Construction of the test:

The test was divided into Two parts including randomly selected prescribed topics that were related to students. The first part consisted of one essay writing on a familiar topic .Essay writing was chosen because students would use all the writing performance skills they had learned during the program .They would use sentence performance skills to write a paragraph and use paragraph writing skills to write a good essay . The second part included writing a short story ending in all is well that ends well and this part is a good example of all the writing performance skills that students acquired and used.

Validity of the test:

To determine the validity of the writing performance skills test ,it was submitted to a jury of professionals. Some jury members objected to the form of the first question (write a forty sentence essay)They asked to change it to(write 150 words essay)but others agreed with the researcher concerning the choice of the question form. In the light of the jury members' suggestions,some items were modified and others were deleted. The jury members agreed that the final form of the test was generally valid.

Reliability of the test

A pilot study was conducted about a month before the administration of the program to estimate the validity and reliability of the test. A group of 30 first year secondary students not included in the study group were selected randomly representing different levels of achievement; high, middle and low. The reliability of the test was determined by the test-retest method. In the pilot study the researcher administered the test and part of the program on first year secondary school in Elwan secondary school. The test was administered again on the same group after 28 days. The Correlations between examinees scores were computed. Using the SPSS program (Cronbach's Alpha), the reliability of the test was computed and proved to be reliable at (0.74) and significant at (0.01).

Scoring the Test

Two raters, the researcher and the English teacher, were involved in the grading task. Prior to formally rating each writing sample, the two raters met and discussed the rating scale. They also graded a few samples together to establish reliability. Since there were two raters evaluating the writing, the average of the two raters' scores was used as the actual score of each collaborative writing sample. The correlation coefficients were computed after grading to calculate the degree of agreement between the two raters.

Instructions of the test

Instructions were written in English. They were brief, simple, and easy to comprehend. They contained information about the purpose of the test, time permitted to complete the test and the criteria on which scoring would be based. The time allowed for the test is 90 minutes.

Results

Testing Hypothesis One

The question of the research was "What is the effectiveness of using Edmodo in teaching English to develop secondary stage students' writing performance?"

To answer this question hypothesis one predicted that "There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the research group in the pre- post administration of the writing performance skills test favouring post administration."

Table (1) "t" value, Standard Deviations and Means of Scores of the Subjects in the Pre –Post Test of writing performance skills test

	n	Mean	SD	t-value	Degree of freedom	Sig. (2-tailed)
pretest	30	181.0000	8.17059	42.862	29	0.05
Post test		92.7000	9.19951			

Table (1) shows that there is a statistically significant difference between means of scores obtained by subjects in the pre-post writing performance skills test in favor of post testing . The research group got a higher mean (181.0000) in post testing than that obtained by pretesting (92.7000). The result of the t-test shows that t-value is (42.862) and significant at 0.05 level. This supports the hypothesis of the research and affirms that students' writing performance skills underwent considerable improvement as a result of being trained by the using Edmodo to develop students' writing performance skills. Therefore, it can be concluded that the suggested program highly affected the subjects' writing performance skills.

Table (2) "t" value, Standard Deviations and Means of Scores of the Subjects in the Pre –Post Test of writing performance sub skills test

Subskill	Test	N	Means	St	Df	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Vocabulary and meaning	posttest	30	55.0667	2.50425	29	48.521	0.05
	pretest		26.4333	2.75034			
Grammar	posttest	30	54.9000	2.12295	29	41.777	0.05
	pretest		27.7000	2.91429			
mechanics	posttest	30	54.1667	2.85371	29	31.365	0.05
	pretest		27.7000	4.09499			
Technicalities of writing	posttest	30	8.3333	.88409	29	13.814	0.05
	pretest		5.4667	.62881			
organization	posttest	30	8.5333	.81931	29	15.099	0.05
	pretest		5.4000	.93218			

Table (2) shows that there is a statistically significant difference between means of scores obtained by subjects in the pre-post writing performance sub skills test in favor of post testing . The estimated value of t-test for the writing sub skills (Vocabulary and meaning, grammar, mechanics, technicalities of writing and organization) is (48.521, 41.777, 31.365, 13.814 and 15.099 respectively). These values are significant at (**0.05**) level.

To measure the effect size of using Edmodo to develop writing performance skills on the research group in the post writing performance skills test, the researcher applied the "Eta square" .

Table (3) The Critical Values for the Effect Size Levels

The Table References to Determine the Level of the Effect Size (η^2) Value

Test	Effect size		
	Small	Medium	Large
η^2	0.01	0.06	0.14

Table (4) Eta Square of the effect size of using Edmodo on writing performance skills.

The independent variable	The dependent variable	t-value	Df	(η^2)	The effect level
Using Edmodo	Writing performance skills	42.862	29	0.98	high

Table (4) shows the effect size of applying Edmodo on the subjects' achievement in the post writing performance skills test. Implementing the effect size equation, the researcher found that the effect size of using Edmodo on students' writing performance skills (.98) is high. This can be attributed to the types of activities presented on Edmodo as well as students' motivation, interaction and collaboration when using the Edmodo as it allows learners to interact with each other, teacher and learning material synchronously and asynchronously through making comments and answering activities on Edmodo anytime and anywhere.

Table (5) Eta Square of the effect size of using Edmodo on writing performance skills .

The independent variable	The dependent variable	t-value	Df	(η^2)	The effect level
Using Edmodo	Vocabulary and meaning	48.521	29	0.98	high
	Grammar	41.777	29	0.98	
	Mechanics	31.365	29	0.97	
	Technicalities of writing	13.814	29	0.86	
	Organization	15.099	29	0.96	

A quick look at Table (5) shows that the effect size is large for each sub skills for the writing performance skills .The outcomes show the high effect size for all the sub skills (vocabulary and meaning, grammar, mechanics, technicalities of writing and organization) is (0.98,0.98,0.87,0.86 and 0.96) This means that using Edmodo is effective in developing the sub skills of writing . This indicates that the research group achieved higher proficiency in terms of overall writing performance skills and in every writing sub-skill.

Conclusion

To sum up, the study provided important data on the use of Edmodo as a teaching and learning virtual class to the product writing approach. The results of the study provided strong evidence that the use of Edmodo as a teaching and learning virtual class resulted in achieving better results in students' writing performance in general and in their writing product skills in particular than the traditional method does. Moreover, the study proved that the use of Edmodo as a teaching and learning virtual class can enrich students with the use of the product of writing.

Recommendations

In light of the study results, the researcher suggests the following:

1. Teachers should be aware of the importance of the Edmodo as a teaching and learning virtual class in developing students' writing performance as the traditional method in teaching writing is less effective.
2. Using Edmodo enables students to develop their attitudes towards learning in general and writing in particular.
3. Using Edmodo allows for a social constructivist learning experience, allowing teachers and students to interact with each other that will bring the learning.
4. Using Edmodo allows students to receive and submit assignments online easily.
5. Teachers of English language should be trained on using web based social learning applications especially Edmodo , while teaching English to their students in different educational stages.
6. Curriculum designers should make use of Edmodo when designing English language courses and overcoming any teaching or learning problems.

Suggestions for Further Research:

Based on the findings of the present research, the following implications for further research are suggested:-

- 1- Investigating the effectiveness of Edmodo in English language learning among students teachers at University level.
- 2 Investigating the influence of Edmodo on other language skills such as speaking, reading or listening.
- 3 Investigating the effectiveness of using Edmodo in decreasing students' anxiety.
- 4- Conducting studies to examine which type of the feedback received in the Edmodo writing class either peer feedback or teacher feedback that learners take into account when they revise or edit their piece of writing.
- 5- Improving prep School Students` Writing Skills and Attitudes toward Writing using Edmodo.
- 6 Investigating the effectiveness of using Edmodo to develop secondary stage students writing fluency.

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