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***The Effect of Moodle Platform Teaching on Learners’
Writing Achievement: Case of Second-Year EFL Students
at Ahmed SALHI University Centre, NAAMA***

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requirement for the degree of Master in Linguistics

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Dedication

In the Name of God, Most Merciful

All the praise is to Allah, the Sustainers of all the worlds.

This work is dedicated to:

our parents. Thanks for all their sacrifices, their encouragement, and all their love

our brothers and sisters for their continuous moral support

all our extended family

all our best friends

all our teachers and classmates at the university centre of Naama

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Abstract

The current study aimed to explore the effect of using Moodle platform modules (activities) on EFL learners' writing achievement at the University Centre of Naama. Based on this, we hypothesized that using Moodle platform modules would potentially enhance both teaching and writing quality in general, with a specific focus on improving writing skills. To gather valuable data, we conducted semi-structured interviews with five written expression teachers and administered a questionnaire to 40 second-year students. The findings showed that writing was the most challenging skill for the students to master, thereby supporting our initial hypothesis that Moodle platform activities could serve as a viable solution to address these difficulties. Additionally, the results revealed that the use of Moodle can indeed assist students in improving their writing skills, leading us to accept our second hypothesis. In summary, we concluded that engaging in Moodle platform writing activities can contribute to the enhancement of writing skills by addressing and reducing a significant portion of the challenges faced by both students and teachers.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

HTML: HyperText Markup Language

ICTs: Information and Communication Technologies

Rss: Really Simple Syndication

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

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Résumé

ملخص

General Introduction

We are rising in a digital era, and the entire world has become a small village. The development in technology has changed our lives dramatically. Algeria is one of the nations that determined to advance its pedagogical system up to the level of flourishing accomplishments. It introduced Moodle for the students to get access to the digital learning atmosphere next to traditional face to face instruction, communication through online chat session, e-mails etc. This shift might have implications on students' approaches and attitudes.

According to Maikish (2006), online teaching and learning as an environment can be beneficial to both the students and teachers, which work well for the education goals in terms of curriculum. As e-learning and its tools are important in education, Hölbl and Welzer said that it is widely in universities, commercial organizations and educational institutions which are working on creating better tools for e-learning (2010). These days higher education is getting improved regarding the traditional and online learning, by emphasizing a high concern on the growth of Information Technology and use of e-learning (Alkhanak & Azmi, 2011).

As stated by Hsu (2011), face to face learning along with e-learning supports in bridging the gap between students and instructors. E-learning has proved that the usefulness, effectiveness and easiness are the key factors for its acceptance and usage (Tselios et al., 2011). In this light, students like to take the courses and activities offered through e-learning systems as they are more useful and valuable as compared to traditional classroom activities.

It is a fact that there are many types and components of electronic learning, we find the Modular Object Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (Moodle). Moodle is an online learning platform developed from pedagogical principles; it allows its users to learn through its content and activities. It has been created in the late 1970's in Australia, the founder and lead developer is Martin Dogiamas. It contains several activities that help learners develop their learning skills, and especially the writing ones (Kheireddine, 2020).

Education is a primary need in this time of globalization. It not only gives insight, also grooms the personality, instill moral values, add knowledge and develop skills. Education is necessary owing to the nature of competition our world has witnessed earlier. In every area, highly qualified people are needed. Battle and Machel (2002) indicated that in this era of globalization and technological revolution, education is considered as the first step in every human endeavour. It plays a fundamental role in the development of human capital and is linked with an individual well-being and opportunities for better living.

EFL learners generally do their best to perform well and attain success in all the modules they are taught. However, most of them still encounter several problems in terms of the writing skill because of its complex nature which demands several stages to go through as well as sub-skills to be respected. In this context, they produce pieces of writing including plenty of problems in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics. As a solution, this investigation intended to check the presence of any relationship between Moodle platform and EFL students' writing achievement at university level. According to what has been mentioned before, the research question is as follows: "Is this poor performance in writing as a result of limited access to the platform of Moodle?"

The current study is important because it may provide students with new techniques and tools as Moodle platform which can help them develop their writing skills. It also provides teachers with some updated teaching methods that facilitate the process of teaching and learning writing using technologies. In addition, it is considered a reference for those who intend to carry out further studies in the same area. Moreover, more researches can be conducted to test the effect of Moodle platform on learners' academic achievement in general and the language skills specifically.

This study aims to explore the teachers' perceptions of how the Moodle lectures and activities can affect students' writing performance. It further aims at finding out the students' opinions about the effectiveness of Moodle in improving their writing achievements.

The present research seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1-What are the main problems that face second-year students in writing?
- 2- How can Moodle lectures and activities help students overcome their writing difficulties?
- 3-Would the use of Moodle platform really help in improving students' writing performance?

Based on the above research questions, we propose the following research hypothesis:

- Second-year students encountered many writing problems, including grammar, vocabulary, organization, coherence and cohesion.
- If students use Moodle lectures and activities, they will overcome their writing problems through practice, their teacher's assessment and feedbacks.
- If students use Moodle lectures and tasks regularly, their writing skills will be improved in terms of content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

This research investigates the relationship between two variables which are Moodle platform teaching and student's writing performance. The qualitative approach is used to describe how writing productions are affected by Moodle lectures and tasks, and helps in gathering data about the subject under investigation. The data collection tools are semi-structured interview held with teachers and questionnaire administered to second-year students at Naama University Centre.

The research population is second-year English students who are enrolled in the academic year 2022-2023 at Naama University Centre. The sample of the study is 40 second-year students who have been chosen randomly, it will consist both male and female and different age and abilities. In addition, 5 teachers of English who are specialized in online learning and Moodle platform at the same university are concerned.

The current dissertation encompasses two chapters: a theoretical chapter and a practical one. Therefore, the first chapter covered the literature review about Moodle platform and learners' writing achievements, including the origins and philosophy of Moodle, the roles in Moodle, its relationships with EFL teaching and

its resources and activities. In addition, definition and importance of writing, approaches used to teach writing, using ICTs and Moodle in teaching writing.

The second chapter was devoted to the methodology used, including the research method, population and sampling, and the data gathering tools. Besides, it tackles the analysis and discussion of the data collected from teachers' interview and students' questionnaire, followed by some suggestions and recommendations.

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Review of Literature

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1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we reviewed the literature related to Moodle's platform as well as the writing skill. It started with the origins and philosophy behind creating this online space, its user types and roles. Then, it dealt with the advantages and disadvantages of using Moodle in English language teaching. In addition, it provided the Moodle components for writing, including resources and activities. Moreover, it shed light on the definition and importance of writing, approaches to teaching writing and the use of ICTs in teaching this productive skill. Finally, it focused on the impact of Moodle's platform on EFL writing skill.

1.2 Moodle

1.2.1 Moodle Platform: Origins and Philosophy

Moodle is an acronym that means Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. It is also called Learning Management System (LMS) or a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). It is a free and Open Source Course Management System (CMS) that was designed in 2002 by Martin Dougiamas at the Curtin University of Technology in Australia (Kurti, 2008; Nauman & Al-Khanjari, 2011). This online learning space allows educators to control and manage all features of course content and delivery using one integrated system (Brooks-Young, 2008).

Moodle is a software package that helps teachers upload online courses, assess and provide online feedback on assignments (Suppasetsee & Dennis, 2010). It creates a collaborative and virtual learning environment where learning is realised online (Oproiu, 2015). By accessing to this e-learning platform, students can interact with their teachers as well as their classmates about the uploaded courses and activities. They can also work collaboratively on the different assignments. According to Bouguebs (2019), Moodle allows students to study at their pace and this boosts their motivation in learning.

1.2. 2 The Roles in Moodle

After installing Moodle, we gain access to an administrator account along with its corresponding password. This account empowers us to create courses, manage user enrollment, and oversee various system functions. Moodle employs a role-based access mechanism, primarily consisting of three roles: administrator, teacher, and student. Each user can be assigned any of these roles based on their responsibilities. It is possible for a user to be a student in one course while simultaneously being a teacher in another. In addition, a teacher can assume the role of a system administrator. However, only individuals with the administrator role possess the authority to create and control courses, assign teacher roles to others, or assign the administrator role to different users. When a user enrolls in a specific course, they are automatically assigned the student role (Chourishi et al., 2011).

In short, Moodle offers a comprehensive user guide that clarifies the roles and permissions associated with each user, outlining their specific actions and limitations within different areas of the platform.

1.3 Moodle in English Language Teaching

Moodle is an online learning platform that has gained popularity in English language teaching. It offers numerous advantages to students. It enables them to effectively communicate with their teachers and access all the necessary materials and activities covered in lectures. Mikulan et al., (2011) stated that students have the opportunity to learn English in an engaging manner, which differs from their usual learning experiences. Moodle, the learning platform used, is user-friendly, and most students become proficient in its usage after a short 30 minutes training session.

Ćamilović (2013) mentioned that there are several advantages to online communication compared to face-to-face interaction:

-Flexibility: Online communication allows students to access teaching materials anytime and from anywhere.

-Additional time for consideration: Before participating in a discussion, students can thoroughly study the topic and take their time to think through their ideas and answers.

-Anonymity: Students are more willing to participate in discussions when their anonymity is guaranteed.

-No time zone limitations: This is particularly beneficial for students who live far away from the university.

-Cost-effectiveness: Online learning does not require expensive computers or high-speed internet connections, making it more accessible.

Despite its numerous advantages and advanced learning methods, Moodle is not without limitations when used for language learning (Saračević & Mašović, 2011). Technical difficulties, pedagogical challenges, computer literacy and training, advanced technology development, identity confirmation during online testing, and error treatment pose significant obstacles for English language teachers and students (Wen- Shuenn, 2008).

1.4 Moodle Components for Writing

Moodle's primary features are categorized into two main areas known as resources and activities.


1.4.1 Resources

In the Resources Tab, you have various options to organize your teaching materials. You can create *labels* to categorize topics or weeks, create *text or webpages* with text, images, and links, add links to *files* or external web pages, and even create directories to arrange your *folders*. These features provide flexibility in managing and presenting your educational resources (Devi et al., 2020). Hence, the label feature allows inserting various content into a specific section of the course. Students can view the label content easily because it is always visible on the home

page of the course. When it comes to files, users simply need to click on the file link to access the file content.

With the folder feature, you can display a list of files within a folder instead of having separate links for each file. By clicking on the folder link, users can conveniently access and download the desired files. Webpages are valuable resources for course creation as they contain textual content, often focusing on grammar and vocabulary. Additionally, they may include straightforward text pages, links, and directory displays (Bošković, et al., 2014). In this context, you can utilize an HTML editor to create a webpage. By clicking on the link associated with the webpage's name, users can access and view the content within the Moodle webpage.

1.4.2 Activities

✓ **Quizzes:** Moodle provides various options for assessing student learning. The quiz module offers a range of response types such as fill-ins, multiple-choice, true-false, matching, and short-answer (Brandle, 2005). To identify a test within a course, you will see this icon . Clicking on it will provide students with instructions from the teacher, the test objectives, and the allocated time. In order to begin the test, students should click on the 'Start the Test' button and enter the password given to them by their teacher to access it.


✓ **Lesson:** A lesson is a valuable activity when it comes to acquiring foreign languages. Each lesson consists of multiple web pages that offer diverse content tailored to the course requirements. The complexity of navigation within a lesson depends on the specific content provided. Additionally, lessons can incorporate power point presentations, which are beneficial for enhancing the language skills (Bošković, et al., 2014). Thus, the lesson constitutes a sequence of interconnected pages, which may include content, question and answer pages. Students can navigate through the lesson by clicking the 'continue' button to proceed to the next page. It has a range of resources and concludes with a question followed by answer choices, allowing to improve students' learning based on the responses they provide.

✓ **Forum:** One of the most effective ways for students and teachers to interact is through a forum. In this forum, students have the opportunity to ask their teachers questions about vocabulary and grammar (Bošković, et al., 2014). Therefore, the forum serves as a platform for engaging in discussions on various topics, allowing participants to express their perspectives on specific issues through written messages. Both the teacher and students can read and comment on these messages.

✓ **RSS Feed:** Rss, or Really Simple Syndication, is a technology that permits websites to share their news and updates in a standardized format. In the context of Moodle, RSS feeds can be integrated into the front page. Websites that support RSS display an icon indicating its availability. By accessing the RSS News feed, students can stay informed about the latest events taking place globally (Devi et al., 2020). To summarize, the web feed enables students to stay updated on the latest content from various websites. It provides a convenient way for users to keep track of new updates across multiple websites.

✓ **Wiki:** The term “wiki” actually comes from the Hawaiian word ‘wikiwiki, which means “quick”. In Moodle, the wiki activity is a collaborative tool that allows students and teachers to create and edit web pages together. Ferris and Wilder (2006) reported that utilizing wikis offers several benefits. Students can easily track and review comments and feedback provided by their instructor and peers. They find it valuable to engage in collaborative work regardless of time and location, while also taking advantage of the print-based features of wikis, such as embedded backlinks and comprehensive change logs. Moreover, instructors can use wikis as a platform for review, studying, and fostering ongoing discussions.

✓ **Chat:** According to Baron, the term chat is a " synchronous Computer Mediated Communication form that is based on talking online with different other participants" (1984, p.17). In other words, chat is an online form of communication where participants engage in synchronous computer-mediated conversations. Consequently, chat activity allows students and teachers to engage in real-time conversations. The teacher schedules a designated time for the chat activity that is

clearly indicated in the course space. Once the scheduled time arrives, students can actively participate in the chat. In Moodle, the chat activity is represented by this icon . The chat sessions can be saved and shared either with the entire class or with specific individuals.

✓ **Assignments:** In Moodle assignments, teachers have implemented a digital assignment submission system for students. This allows them to upload their assignments within a specified time frame. By using this system, students are no longer required to write their assignments on paper and physically submit them. Instead, they can easily upload their assignments through the designated platform. The time frame for submission is set to ensure that students submit their assignments on time. Failure to submit within the given deadline will result in zero marks. To add an assignment, students can click on “Add an Activity or Resource” and select the ‘Assignment’ option (Devi et al., 2020).

✓ **Glossary:** It is a specialized dictionary crafted by the teacher to provide definitions and explanations for key terms and concepts used in a particular subject or field of study (Chourishi et al., 2011). Therefore, glossary is a tool that allows teachers to create, maintain, or collect a list of definitions. When using the glossary, the definitions can be automatically linked whenever they are referenced in the course.

1.5 The Writing Skill

1.5.1 Definition of Writing

The concept of writing has been defined differently by many scholars and educationists. Harmer compared this productive skill to the speaking one, he stated that “Spoken language, for a child, is acquired naturally as a result of being exposed to it, whereas the ability to write has to be consciously learned” (2004, p.03). This shows that writing is an activity which needs to be taught and learned through specific instructions.

Writing is the process of combining letters to form words, sentences, paragraphs, essays and others. In other words, it is a way used to communicate our ideas and thoughts through graphic symbols. In this light, Byrne defined it as:

When we write, we use graphic symbols that is, letters or combinations of letters which relate to the sounds we make when we speak. On one level, then writing can be said to be the act of forming these symbols: making marks on a flat surface of some kind. (1991, p.01)

Based on this view, writing is an act of linking letters together to produce words that convey the message we want to address.

According to Nunan (2005), writing is both a physical and mental act. Therefore, it involves both forming words or ideas and inventing and organizing them into a readable text. Moreover, it is regarded as an outcome of a complex process, including prewriting or planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing the final version (Harmer, 1998; Richard & Schmidt, 2002).

1.5.2 The Importance of Writing

Writing is an important means of communication in all languages; especially in EFL classrooms because it determines learners' academic success. Thus, learners need to have a certain level in English writing so that they can pass their examinations and graduate from their universities.

Writing is an essential medium of personal self-expression (McArthur et al., 2008). This means that by writing we can express our ideas, feelings and emotions. In addition, this act helps us build social relationships with others (Hyland, 2003). It is a way through which writers create and engage in different social contexts.

In foreign languages, it is not easy to perform well in writing as it is considered a demanding task for most students (Chastain, 1988). It is a difficult skill for learners to master because it requires complex processes as well as plenty of language aspects.

1.6 Teaching Writing Approaches

Writing in EFL classrooms can be introduced using three main approaches: the product approach, the process approach and the genre approach.

1.6.1 The Product Approach

The product approach is also called the controlled writing approach. It was primarily adopted for teaching writing in the mid of 1960s. It involves students imitating texts which are provided as models (Tribble, 1996).

The major goal for this approach is the final product or draft which is evaluated according to the criteria of vocabulary, grammar, content, organization and mechanics. In this old-fashioned framework, teachers focus mainly on the form of language instead of the meaning transmitted to the reader. That's why errors is something forbidden (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Teaching writing using the product approach is based upon four stages which are familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing and free writing. First, students are exposed to the aspects of a text in order to be familiarized with them. Then, teachers control their learning by providing them some model texts. After that, they are asked to write a text similar to that model. Finally, they are required to write freely, a similar text by themselves (Badger & White, 2000).

In spite if its use for a long time in writing instruction, it is criticised a lot since it neglects the process of writing on which students go through to attain the final version of their product. It also concentrates much more on error correction which influences students' self-esteem, motivation, creativity and innovation (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

1.6.2 The Process Approach

The process approach came as a reaction against the product one. Teachers who advocate this approach they view writing as a non-linear process and they take into their account three elements: the student, the linguistics skills and the various stages of that process. The latter begins with the generation of ideas, then gathering

them in first drafts, revising and editing them and finally publishing or submitting the end products (Loucif, 2022).

During the first stage, you need to identify your audience, your purpose, the content and the situation. You also have to make brainstorming about the topic and generate as much ideas as possible. When you are drafting, you just put your ideas onto paper without paying attention to writing conventions. In revising, you check that you have conveyed the message clearly and appropriately. In editing, you just correct and modify your writing, finally you hand your piece of writing to your teacher to be assessed (Loucif, 2021).

As a criticism to this approach, it is considered a time-consuming approach and it is not suitable and appropriate in EFL classrooms where time devoted to teaching English and writing is so limited (Loucif, 2022).

1.6.3 The Genre Approach

The genre approach appeared in the mid of 1980s as a result of criticising the process approach. It is defined by Tribble as “more socially oriented and focuses on the ways in which writers and texts need to interact with readers” (1996, p.37). It is clear that this approach regard writing as a social activity since the writer interacts with his/ her readers through the text being written.

Harmer (2001) stated that the genre approach involves the students to think about the topic being discussed, features of the genre they choose, purpose of writing, context and the readers to whom the text is conveyed. However, he claimed that this kind of approaches is convenient to students of English for specific purposes.

1.7 Using ICTs in Teaching Writing

The use of information and communication technology in education can play a crucial role in providing new pedagogical forms to the process of teaching and learning. According to Raja and Nagasubramani, "The importance of technology in schools cannot be ignored. In fact, with the onset of computers in education, it has

become easier for teachers to impart knowledge and for students to acquire it " (2018, p.33). Obviously, technology integration in classrooms helps teachers create instructional materials that support learning in an enjoyable atmosphere. In the same context, Smith (2008) added that technology provides students with opportunities to practise what they learned. Thus, they can use online spaces resources to strengthen and broaden their knowledge about any topic.

As far as the use of ICTs in teaching writing is concerned, Goldberg et al. (2003) found that they create a supportive learning environment that helps EFL students produce written work that was of greater length and higher quality. In a similar vein, Yunus et al. (2013) reported that the advantages of using ICTs were attracting students' attention, facilitating their learning process, helping to improve their vocabulary and promoting meaningful learning. However, the disadvantages they found included the difficult class control, distraction, the students' tendency to use short forms in their writing and teachers' weaknesses in managing problems and planning writing activities using ICTs.

1.8 Moodle Platform and the EFL Writing Skill

Recently, the idea of exploring the effect of Moodle's platform on teaching writing has received much attention of a great number of researchers and educationists. Therefore, many studies were ventured on this area to help learners improve their writing abilities.

El-Maghraby (2021) investigated the effectiveness of implementing blended learning using Moodle to enhance writing skills. The number of participants was 60 first-year English students at Misr University. They were divided into two groups: control group and experimental group. The experimental group was taught using Moodle-based blended learning method, while the control group was taught with the traditional face-to-face method. The programme (SPSS) was used to analyze the data obtained from the pretest and posttest. The results showed that students' attitudes towards Moodle-based blended learning activities in the writing course were positive and their written performance was gradually improved.

Mujiono and Siti (2022) carried out a study that aimed to examine the effect of Moodle as a learning management system based on academic flow on EFL learners' writing skills. To achieve this objective, they used a quasi-experimental research with 69 second-year students from the English education department of PGRI Kanjuruhan University, Malang, Indonesia. They also used writing tests and Study Work-Related Flow Inventory (WOLF-S) as instruments. The findings revealed that students' writing skills were improved by using Moodle rather than the conventional methods.

The conclusion that one can draw is that Moodle's platform confirmed to improve the students' writing performance.

1.9 Conclusion

The use of Moodle has been recently getting more and more popular in the world of English Language Teaching (ELT) because it offers valuable opportunities for enhancing the four language skills; especially writing. By using the various features and resources available on Moodle, such as discussion forums, writing assignments, and peer feedback, students can actively engage in the writing process and receive constructive comments. This promotes critical thinking, collaboration, and self-expression, all of which are essential components of developing effective writing performance. Additionally, Moodle's accessibility and flexibility enable students to practice writing in a digital environment, which prepares them for the demands of contemporary communication. In conclusion, Moodle serves as a powerful tool for fostering and improving writing skills among students.

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2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we will analyze the findings obtained from the investigation tools used in the current case study. Our main goal is to highlight the influence of Moodle's platform teaching on EFL students' writing achievements. To address our research questions and validate our hypotheses, we administered a questionnaire to second-year students of English and conducted interviews with teachers of written expression module at Naama University Centre.

2.2 Research Method

The choice of the research method was based on the study's objective and nature. In this investigation, qualitative and quantitative research approaches were employed to examine the phenomenon of the Moodle platform and its impact on students' writing skills.

2.3 Population and Sampling

2.3.1 Students:

A sample of forty students from the second-year English students at Naama University Centre, who were already accustomed to learning through Moodle, was randomly selected to respond to the questionnaire.

2.3.2 Teachers:

We dealt with a group of five teachers of written expression module at the division of English at Naama University Centre. These teachers were specifically selected for their expertise and familiarity with delivering courses using the Moodle platform.

2.4 Data Gathering Tools

The students' questionnaire was designed primarily to assess their understanding of how Moodle could improve their writing achievements. It consists of 11 questions arranged in a logical sequence. These questions are a mix of closed-

ended, multiple choice, and open-ended questions. The questionnaire is divided into three sections. The first section comprises four questions that gather information about the students' age, gender, choice of English studies, and the most difficult skill for them. Section two consists of four questions aimed at gathering insights into the students' perception of Moodle's platform. The third section includes three questions focused on evaluating the impact of Moodle on students' writing achievements.

The teachers' semi-structured interview consists of eight open-ended questions. Its purpose is to gain an understanding of teachers' perspectives and experiences with the Moodle platform, as well as to explore the pros and cons of teaching writing through this virtual medium.

2.5 Results and Discussion

2.5.1 Teachers' Interview

Q1. According to your experience, which aspects of writing your students find difficulties to master?

Concerning this question, teachers stated that students may face challenges in learning writing. These difficulties typically revolve around various aspects, such as grammar, vocabulary, and organization. They also reported that the lack of reading and practice outside the classroom is one of the factors that may contribute to students' weaknesses in writing. As the saying goes, practice makes perfect, and the more students engage in reading, the more their writing skills will improve.

In addition to the common challenges in writing, they said that a significant number of students struggle with English writing subskills such as coherence and cohesion. Moreover, they asserted that their students struggle with generating ideas and mastering the mechanics of writing. Finally, the majority of informants declared that the major obstacles their students encounter while writing is the influence of their native language (L1). The process of thinking in Arabic and attempting to write in English can be problematic because each language has its own unique rules and expressions that may not align with those of a foreign language.

In brief, teachers viewed that the majority of second-year students experience at least one or two of these difficulties when it comes to writing in English.

Q2. Have you received any training to use the Moodle platform?

In this item, some teachers answered that they did not receive any formal training specifically focused on the use of the Moodle platform. This lack of training and familiarity could be the reason why they were initially hesitant to use course management software like Moodle prior the lockdown. Others responded that during the lockdown, they actively participated in an online training program offered by the university. This training consisted of a series of instructional videos that guided them on how to effectively use the Moodle platform.

In addition to the university's training program, they engaged in self-directed learning through various online resources such as youtube channels, blogs, and educational communities. These resources provided valuable insights and tips on utilizing Moodle effectively. Only one teacher had the opportunity to receive training on the Moodle platform at a specialised school. This training equipped her with additional knowledge and skills to navigate and use Moodle's features.

At last, one teacher claimed that she enhanced her understanding of Moodle by completing courses and workshops offered on online learning platforms dedicated to Moodle training. These resources further contributed to her professional development in using Moodle effectively.

Q3. Have you used Moodle for teaching writing?

Most of the interviewed teachers (4 teachers) acknowledged using the Moodle Platform for the written expression module. They stated that this platform offered them comprehensive control over their courses, enabling them to add or modify activities and access students' work. In addition, they found it useful for sharing lectures and worksheets, facilitating effective remote learning and ensuring continued engagement with their studies from home.

However, it is worth noting that one of the informants expressed a preference for the traditional teaching method. She explained that while she personally did not favor traditional methods, practical constraints such as equipment limitations, a

large number of students, internet connectivity issues, and communication challenges compelled her to rely on more conventional approaches. She believed that under such circumstances, the traditional method appeared to be a more suitable option.

Q4. If yes, are you satisfied with teaching writing through the Moodle's platform? Justify?

The majority of teachers expressed satisfaction with teaching writing through the e-learning portal due to the informative and useful nature of the Moodle platform. Only one informant did not feel completely proficient in using it. Other respondent did not use the term 'not satisfied', but rather stated a lack of conviction due to the absence of face-to-face interaction and student feedback, resulting in only partial achievement of the learning objectives. She suggested the incorporation of additional tools such as video conferencing and webinars.

Overall, the findings indicated that the majority of respondents were satisfied with the use of Moodle in teaching writing.

Q5. Do you think that the use of Moodle platform can improve students' writing achievements?

Four teachers find that the Moodle platform and its activities are beneficial for enhancing writing skills. They appreciate the additional practice time it offers, as writing skills require ample practice for improvement. They believe that traditional classroom settings often lack sufficient time for such practice, making Moodle a valuable tool in providing more opportunities to practice writing. However, one teacher holds a different viewpoint, expressing that Moodle is not helpful in improving writing skills. This teacher believes that writing should be practiced in a physical classroom environment, where face-to-face interaction between teachers and students can be beneficial.

Q6. What are the pros of teaching writing through Moodle?

By using Moodle, teachers said that students can stay engaged with their coursework by gaining access to downloaded course materials, written activities, and assignments provided by them. The platform is beneficial for enhancing writing skills, regardless of content, mechanics, or language use issues. They also stated that Moodle is something positive to efficiently share materials with students from home, saving time and easing their responsibilities in the classroom. In addition, it is a user-friendly platform that allows for effortless teaching and learning without the need to physically attend a university, saving time and energy for all involved.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Moodle provided a safe alternative for both teachers and students to continue learning. The interactive nature of the Moodle resources encouraged students to collaborate and improve their writing skills collectively. Moreover, teachers confirmed that through Moodle they can easily access and assess student work, and offer feedback to guide them through their progress. This feedback can help identify areas for improvement, allowing students to refine their writing skills.

Q7. What obstacle(s) have you faced while teaching writing through Moodle?

Regarding the obstacles of Moodle, teachers reported that many students are still unfamiliar with the platform, making it inaccessible to them. Moreover, some find it complicated to navigate and are unsure how to use it effectively. Teaching writing through this platform has been challenging due to the limited availability of materials. Not all students have access to phones or computers, and even those who do often struggle with weak and slow internet connections. This hampers both teachers and students in their online interactions.

The lack of reliable internet connectivity has made it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to deliver a seamless online course. Our country still has a long way to go in terms of emulating the online teaching practices of more developed nations. We simply lack the necessary resources, which presents a significant obstacle to achieving success in this endeavor.

Other teachers stated that one of the major hurdles they faced was the lack of proper training for both teachers and students on how to effectively use the Moodle platform. This hindered their ability to maximize its potential. Only one teacher argued that the absence of face-to-face interaction between teachers and students is a notable drawback of Moodle. She said: “I found it challenging to engage with my students in a more active and fruitful manner. The teacher-student relationship weakened considerably, and consequently, the teacher’s role also diminished”.

Q8. What would you suggest as far as the topic under discussion is concerned?

In terms of incorporating Moodle into teaching writing, the teachers shared some valuable suggestions. One suggestion is to conduct virtual writing workshops using Moodle’s video conferencing or chat features. These workshops can foster student participation and facilitate meaningful discussions. They think the idea is to create a collection of online resources covering grammar, punctuation, essay structure, and other writing-related topics. Students can access these materials conveniently to improve their writing skills.

For them, it is important to address connectivity issues to ensure successful online teaching. Slow Internet speed can hinder the learning experience, so having a reliable Internet connection is necessary for effective online instruction. In addition, they reported that proper training is essential for both teachers and students to use Moodle effectively, particularly in higher education settings. The Ministry of Higher Education should take significant steps to provide specialized training programs on how to use this platform.

One teacher proposed that while online teaching has its merits, it is important for educational institutions not to rely solely on it. Combining online instruction with traditional face-to-face education can create a more enriching learning environment where effective teaching and learning can thrive.

2.5.2 Students' Questionnaire

Section One: General Information

1. Age:

Table 2.1 Students' Age Distribution

Age	Number	Percentage%
Between 18 and 20	35	87.5 %
More than 20	5	12.5 %
Total	40	100%

Based on the data presented in the table above, the majority of second-year students fall within the age range of 18 to 20 years. This is primarily because they have recently completed their baccalaureate exams. This indicates that approximately (87.5 %) of the incoming students will find learning English or any other foreign language relatively easier without facing age-related challenges. On the other hand, around (12.5 %) of the students are older than 20 years. This can be attributed to various factors such as their failure to pass the baccalaureate exam or their professional requirements that necessitate the study of English.

2. Gender:

Table 2.2 Students' Gender

Options	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Male	11	27.5%
Female	29	72.5%
Total	40	100%

According to the findings, a significant proportion of the participants in the study are female, which represents (72.5%) of the sample under investigation. Conversely, males account for only (27.5%) of the sample. These results indicate that there is a greater inclination among girls to pursue the study of English as a foreign language (EFL) compared to boys.

3. Your choice of English was:

Table 2.3 Students' Choice for English Studies

Options	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Personal	36	90%
Imposed	4	10%
Total	40	100%

This question aims to explore students' preferences in choosing English as their major. A significant majority of students (90%) expressed a positive inclination towards studying English out of their own volition. However, a small group of 4 students, accounting for (10%) of the total, indicated a lack of interest in learning English. We can speculate that these students might be restricted from pursuing their desired academic path due to their baccalaureate average, or it is possible that they were automatically directed towards studying English due to their exceptional performance in the subject.

4. What is the most difficult skill according to you?

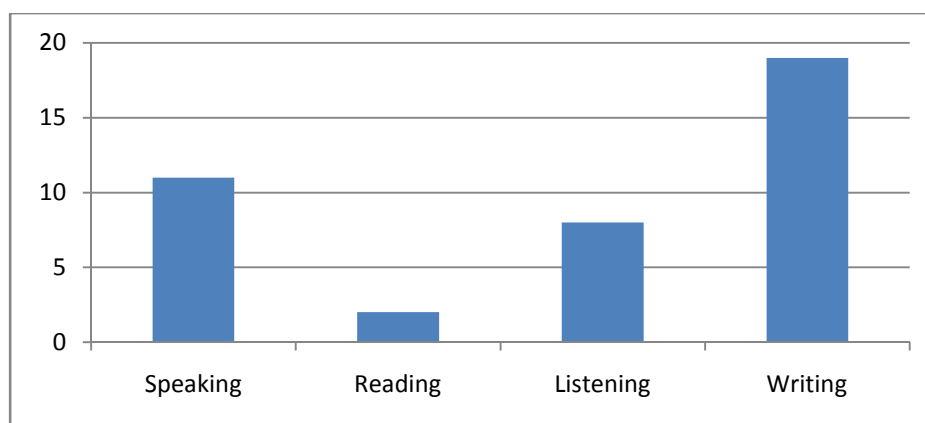


Figure 2.1 Students' Most Difficult Skill

According to the findings displayed in the figure, It can be observed that (47.5%) of students perceive writing as the most complex skill to acquire when learning English as a foreign language. Following that, (27.5%) of the respondents indicated that speaking poses the greatest challenge in terms of productive skills. Additionally, (20%) of the participants found that developing effective listening skills to be a demanding task. Lastly, a small percentage of students (5%) expressed that reading is the most difficult skill within the EFL context.

Section Two: Students' Perception of Moodle's Platform

5. Have you ever heard about Moodle platform?

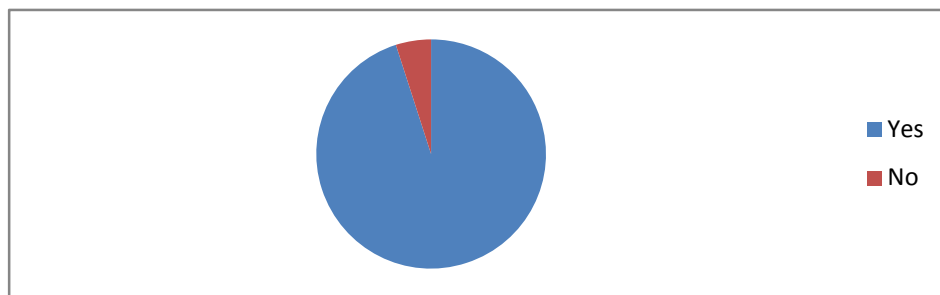


Figure 2.2 Students' Knowledge of Moodle Platform

In our survey, we inquired about students' familiarity with the Moodle platform. According to the findings, a significant majority of students (95%) reported being aware of Moodle. Only a small number of students (5%) indicated that they had not heard of it prior to receiving our questionnaire.

6. Do you know how to access to Moodle?

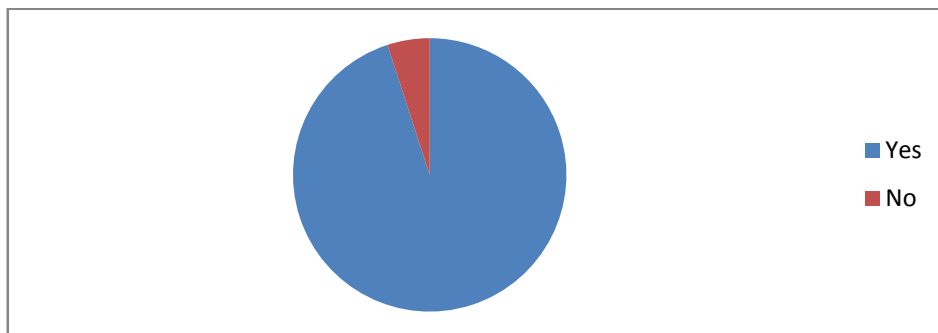


Figure 2.3 Students' Experience with Moodle

According to the data presented in the figure, the majority of students (95%) possess the knowledge required to access the Moodle. However, there is a small percentage (5%) of students who still lack this understanding.

Additionally, significant rate of students (78.95%) reported accessing the Moodle platform daily because their teachers uploaded assignments and lectures there. However, (13.15%) of students accessed it only once a week due to network issues. A small percentage (7.9%) accessed the platform monthly, as their classmates shared lectures on a Facebook group. It is worth noting that all the

students who know how to access to Moodle used the platform throughout the academic year 2022-2023.

7. Why do you access Moodle platform?

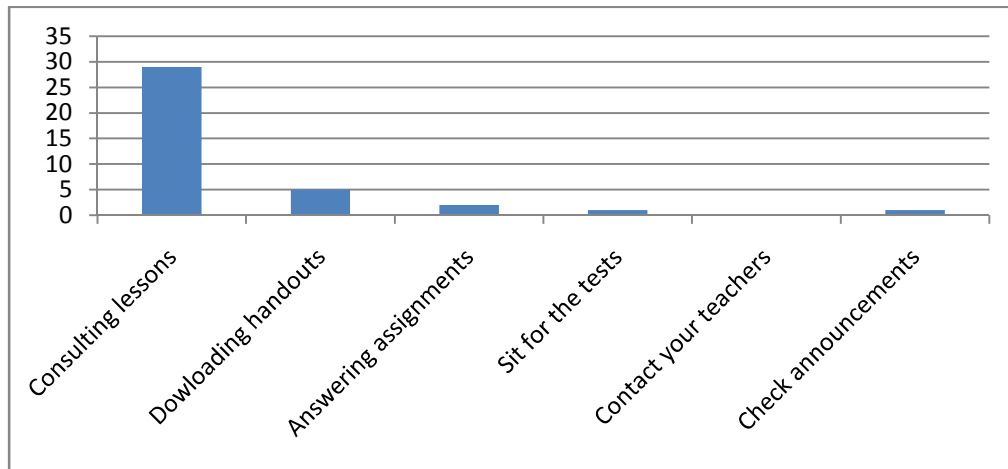


Figure 2.4 Reasons for Accessing Moodle Platform

As indicated in the figure above, most of the participants (76.32%) used Moodle to access lectures posted by their teachers. Around (13.15%) of informants reported using Moodle to download handouts, while a small percentage (5.27%) used it to complete assignments. A very small portion (2.63%) accessed Moodle specifically to take tests and check for announcements.

8. Do you face difficulties while accessing Moodle?

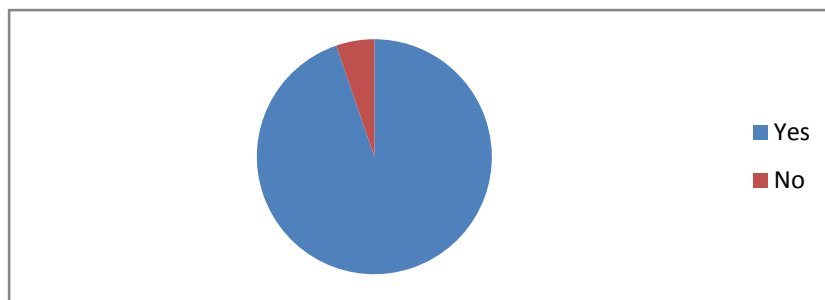


Figure 2.5 Difficulties in Accessing Moodle

On the basis of the findings obtained, (94.74%) of students encountered difficulties accessing their Moodle accounts. This could be due to several reasons, such as technical issues or unfamiliarity with the platform. Approximately (55.55%) of the students reported missing their passwords, which prevented them from accessing the Moodle platform. It is essential for students to keep their login credentials secure and readily accessible. A small percentage (44.45%) of the

participants faced challenges related to downloading handouts or accessing teachers' videos. These issues were attributed to network problems, which can occasionally occur and impact online learning experiences.

Section Three: The Impact of Moodle on Learners' Writing Achievements

9- According to you, your teacher of written expression should rely on:

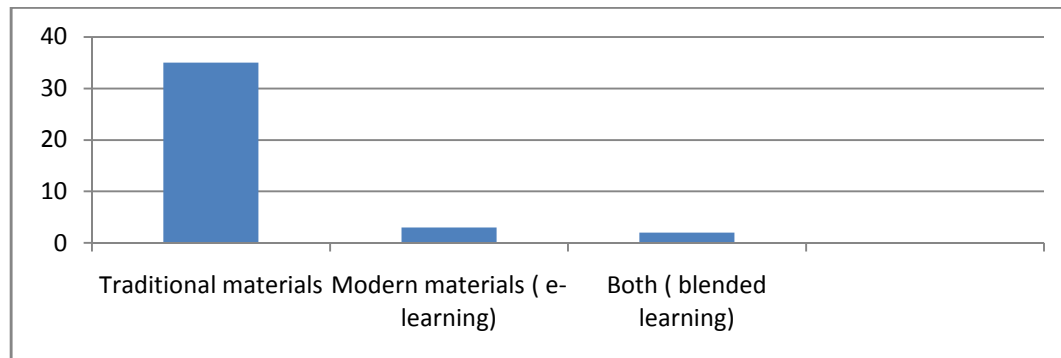


Figure 2.6 The Materials Used by Written Expression Teachers

As depicted in the figure, the majority (87.5%) of respondents believe that teachers should incorporate blended learning approaches when teaching writing. Blended learning involves combining modern and traditional teaching materials and methods. This approach is seen as beneficial in motivating students to learn, considering the significant role that technology plays in our lives today. However, there were different opinions among the remaining students, with (7.5%) advocating for solely modern methods and others (5%) preferring solely traditional approaches.

10- In case of modern materials, do you think they are effective in teaching writing? Why?

Three students who advocated for the use of e-learning, specifically Moodle, in teaching writing provided justifications for their stance. They emphasized the complementary relationship between Moodle and written expression. According to them, Moodle cannot function effectively without dedicated writing classes, and vice versa. They strongly believed that the Moodle platform, with its diverse activities, is beneficial for both teachers and students, enhancing the learning experience. They argued that English as a foreign language learners can engage in

more writing activities and practice extensively through Moodle. Ultimately, they concluded that using Moodle in writing instruction facilitates students' development in written expression.

11. Do you think that Moodle as a type of e-learning platforms would be beneficial to improve your writing performance?

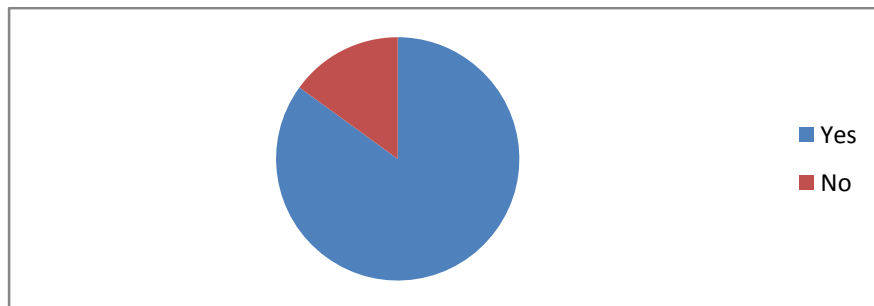


Figure 2.7 Moodle's Platform and the Writing Skills

According to the results obtained, the majority of participants (85%) confirmed that engaging in Moodle activities has positively impacted their writing skills. However, a small portion of students (15%) mentioned their lack of interest in using these activities to enhance their writing abilities. Their reasoning was twofold: some students highlighted the issue of limited internet access, which hindered their engagement with Moodle. Additionally, this group believed that there are alternative techniques that they consider more valuable for improving their writing skills compared to the Moodle platform.

2.6 Discussion of the Findings

The results obtained from the analysis proved that Moodle platform has positive impact on students' writing achievement. According to the teachers' interview, it could be concluded that students faced plenty of writing problems in terms of grammar, vocabulary, organization, coherence and cohesion. Besides, most teachers received training on how to use the Moodle platform, they used it for teaching written expression courses and they were satisfied with teaching this module through Moodle platform. In addition, they reported that the use of this platform and its activities were beneficial for enhancing writing skills. Moreover, they stated some pros and cons they faced while teaching writing.

The findings of the students' questionnaire showed that they consider writing the most difficult skill to be learned. Most of them are aware of Moodle platform and they know how to access to it. Besides, they expressed different reasons why they accessed to the platform as well as the various difficulties they faced while accessing to it. In addition, the majority of students find it better teachers implement blended learning approach while introducing writing courses. Furthermore, they confirmed that engaging in Moodle activities has positively impacted their writing skills.

2.7 Suggestions and Pedagogical Implications

Based on various literature reviews on the Moodle platform and its impact on writing skills, as well as the factors explored in this study, we would like to propose some recommendations derived from our investigation regarding the use of Moodle's platform activities in written expression classes. These suggestions aim to provide ideas for teachers, students, and administrators in the English division at Naama university centre:

- Capitalize on students' familiarity with technology: Since the majority of students already use various types of technologies in their daily lives, integrating technology into their learning process can enhance their motivation and engagement.
- Embrace global learning tools: Staying connected with global learning tools not only expands our teaching and learning abilities but also enhances the reliability and currency of our educational practices.
- Provide access to updated versions of Moodle platform: Ensuring that students have access to the latest versions of the Moodle platform allows them to benefit from the most recent features and activities it offers.
- Create more opportunities for practice: Moodle Platform activities provide EFL learners with additional time for practice, allowing them to reinforce what they have learned in written expression classes.

-Enhance efficiency for teachers: Implementing the Moodle platform can help teachers save time and effort by streamlining administrative tasks, such as correcting and evaluating students' written products.

- Foster independent learning: Moodle Platform inclusion in written expression classes provides students with more opportunities to independently practice and apply what they have learned, promoting self-directed learning.

-Facilitate assessment and evaluation: The Moodle platform offers teachers more opportunities to assess and evaluate their students' language levels through a variety of assessment tools and activities.

- Flexible learning in critical situations: Moodle platform can serve as a valuable tool to replace face-to-face teaching in critical situations, ensuring continuity in education even during challenging circumstances.

-Complement face-to-face teaching: It is important to recognize that Moodle platform and face-to-face teachings are complementary approaches that can be used in combination to enhance the overall learning experience.

-Promote professional development: Our University should consider providing workshops and conferences to familiarize both teachers and students with the Moodle platform, helping them effectively integrate it into their teaching and learning practices.

-Ensure internet accessibility: To make Moodle platform and electronic learning feasible, our government should prioritize providing a reliable and accessible internet connection for all university students, ensuring equitable access to online resources.

Ultimately, the study in hand recommends further studies to address the effect of Moodle's platform teaching on learners' writing achievement using experimental study. More research should be done on the impact of Moodle on the other language skills.

2.8 Limitations of the Study

As with the majority of studies, the design of the current study is subjected to some limitations. Firstly, we faced the challenge of lacking time to tackle the topic thoroughly. Secondly, we were, unfortunately, unable to access some paid resources and books.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided details and explanation about the methodology used in this research work. It included the qualitative and quantitative approaches adopted based on the nature of the topic. It also dealt with the population and sampling involved in the field work so as to answer the questionnaire and to hold the interview. In addition, it displayed the analysis and discussion for the results obtained; it finally mentioned the limitations of the study and suggested some pedagogical implications.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This study examined how Moodle's platform teaching influenced the writing achievements of EFL students. Its main objective was to assess the effectiveness of implementing Moodle platform activities at the University Centre of Naama in enhancing learners' writing skills. The study consisted of two parts: a theoretical part and a practical part. The theoretical part included a chapter that reviewed relevant literature on Moodle's platform teaching and writing skills. The practical part, which constituted the second chapter, presented the study's findings and their analysis.

In order to fulfill the objectives of our research, we conducted interviews with teachers of written expression and administered a questionnaire to second-year English students. The insights gained from the interviews indicated that many students face various challenges when it comes to writing difficulties. This idea helped us confirm the first hypothesis: Second-year students encountered many writing problems, including grammar, vocabulary, organization, coherence and cohesion. They also revealed that the use of Moodle platform can help students in overcoming some of these difficulties. Consequently, our second hypothesis was validated: If students use Moodle lectures and activities, they will overcome their writing problems.

Furthermore, the questionnaire results demonstrated that students possess a positive attitude towards the use of Moodle as a means to improve their writing performance. Thus, our third hypothesis: If students use Moodle lectures and tasks regularly, their writing skills will be improved, is theoretically approved.

As with the majority of studies, the design of the current study is subjected to some limitations. Firstly, we faced the challenge of lacking time to tackle the problem thoroughly. Secondly, we were, unfortunately, unable to access some paid resources and books.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Teachers' Interview

Q1. According to your experience, which aspects of writing your students find difficulties to master?

Q2. Have you received any training to use the Moodle platform?

Q3. Have you used Moodle for teaching writing?

Q4. If yes, are you satisfied with teaching writing through the Moodle's platform? Justify?

Q5. Do you think that the use of Moodle platform can improve students' writing achievements?

Q6. What are the pros of teaching writing through Moodle?

Q7. What obstacle(s) have you faced while teaching writing through Moodle?

Q8. What would you suggest as far as the topic under discussion is concerned?

Appendix B: Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly required to answer this questionnaire so as to express your attitude toward the effect of Moodle's platform teaching on learners' achievements. Your answers are important for the validity of our research. As such, we hope that you will give us your full attention and interest.

Please tick (✓) beside the option (s) you choose and make full statements whenever necessary.

I would greatly appreciate your collaboration.

Thank you so much

Section One: General Information

1. Age:

2. Gender: a- Male

b- Female-

3. Your choice of English was: a- Personal b-Imposed

-Whatever your choice please, explain.

.....
.....
.....

4. What is the most difficult skill according to you?

a- Speaking b- Reading c- Listening d- Writing

Section Two: Students' Perception of Moodle's Platform

5. Have you ever heard about Moodle platform?

a. Yes b. No

6. Do you know how to access to Moodle?

a. Yes b. No

If yes, how often do you access to Moodle during the academic year 2022/2023?

.....

7. Why do you access Moodle platform?

- a- Consulting lessons
- b- Downloading handouts
- c- Answering assignments
- d- Sit for the tests
- e- Contact your teachers
- f- Check announcements

8. Do you face difficulties while accessing Moodle?

a- Yes

b-No

If yes, please mention them

.....

.....

Section Three: The Impact of Moodle on Learners' Writing Achievements

9- According to you, your teacher of written expression should rely on:

- a. Traditional materials (classroom, board and chalk)
- b. Modern materials (e-learning)
- c. Both (Blended learning)

10- In case of modern materials, do you think they are effective in teaching writing?
Why?

.....

.....

11. Do you think that Moodle as a type of e-learning platforms would be beneficial to improve your writing performance?

a. Yes

b. No

Summary

This study aimed to explore the effect of using Moodle platform modules (activities) on EFL learners' writing achievement at the University of Naama. Based on this, we hypothesized that using Moodle platform modules would potentially enhance both teaching and writing quality in general, with a specific focus on improving writing skills. To gather valuable data, we conducted semi-structured interviews with five written expression teachers and administered a questionnaire to 40 second-year students. The findings showed that writing was the most challenging skill for the students to master; thereby supporting our initial hypothesis that Moodle platform activity could serve as a viable solution to address these difficulties. Additionally, the results revealed that the use of Moodle can indeed assist students in improving their writing skills, leading us to accept our second hypothesis.

Keywords: Moodle Platform, Activities, resources, writing skill.

Résumé

Cette étude visait à explorer l'effet de l'utilisation des modules (activités) de la plateforme Moodle sur la réussite en écriture des apprenants EFL à l'Université de Naama. Sur cette base, nous avons émis l'hypothèse que l'utilisation des modules de la plate-forme Moodle améliorerait potentiellement la qualité de l'enseignement et de l'écriture en général, avec un accent particulier sur l'amélioration des compétences en écriture. Afin de recueillir des données précieuses, nous avons mené des entretiens semi-directifs avec cinq professeurs d'expression écrite et administré un questionnaire à 40 étudiants de deuxième année. Les résultats ont montré que l'écriture était la compétence la plus difficile à maîtriser pour les étudiants, confirmant ainsi notre hypothèse initiale selon laquelle les activités de la plateforme Moodle pourraient constituer une solution viable pour résoudre ces difficultés. De plus, les résultats ont révélé que l'utilisation de Moodle peut effectivement aider les étudiants à améliorer leurs compétences en écriture, ce qui nous amène à accepter notre deuxième hypothèse.

Mots-clés: Plateforme Moodle, Activités, ressources, compétence rédactionnelle.

ملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى استكشاف تأثير استخدام وحدات (الأنشطة) لمنصة موودل على إنجاز كتابات متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة النعامة. بناءً على ذلك، افترضنا أن استعمال وحدات المنصة موودل من المحتمل أن يعزز جودة التدريس والكتابة بشكل عام، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على تحسين مهارات الكتابة. لجمع بيانات قيمة، قمنا بإجراء مقابلات شبه منظمة مع خمسة من اساتذة التعبير الكتابي ووزعنا استبياناً لـ 40 طالباً في السنة الثانية. أظهرت النتائج أن الكتابة كانت أصعب مهارة على الطلاب إتقانها، وبالتالي دعم فرضيتنا الأولية بأن أنشطة منصة موودل يمكن أن تكون بمثابة حل قابل للتطبيق لمعالجة هذه الصعوبات. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، كشفت النتائج أن استخدام منصة موودل يمكن أن يساعد الطلاب بالفعل على تحسين مهاراتهم الكتابية، مما يدفعنا لقبول فرضيتنا الثانية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: منصة موودل، وحدات، أنشطة، مهارة كتابة.