



RESEARCH ARTICLE

## The Impact of a Web- based Writing Instructional Program on Improving University Students' Writing Skills

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Dec 28, 2024 Accepted: Feb 6, 2025	The study aimed at exploring the impact of a web-based writing program on enhancing the level of university students. It also aimed at investigating the effect of a discorsal technique on university students' writing level. The participants were 40 university EFL students at Ajloun National University( 20 male students and 20 female ones). The study followed quasi-experimental design. The participants were divided into two groups: control and experimental. A pre-test and post-test were used. The findings of the study show a significant difference between the two groups due to the instrument of the study. There was also a significant difference between the two groups due to gender. At the end some recommendations were suggested.
<b>Keywords</b> Web-based Writing Program, ANU EFL University Students Writing Discorsal Technique	

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### INTRODUCTION

#### Background of the study

Information communication technology plays a very important role in different aspects of life in general and in education in particular. Many educational organizations use these technologies as educational means in educational institutions as they create an effective learning environment which helps students in their learning. As a result new concepts in education have appeared, such as e-learning, e-book and Internet. With the availability of these technologies, new learning programs have been designed (Al-Majali, Al-Jerrah, Al-Younes, Al-Shunnaq, Al-Ayasrah and Al-Nsoor, 2005).

With the use of computer technology in ESL/EFL classrooms, teachers are challenged. The literature shows that students have benefited a lot from the computer technology (Silver, 1990; Allen, 1995). With the increasing of educational technology, students need to cope with different means of technology that immerge. Therefore, students can benefit from the Internet, magazines and newspapers. (Teacher's magazine, MOE, cited in Jaradat, 2009).

It is recognized that communicating effectively is a result of mastering a language , so people can succeed in work.

This means that one should master the main language skills. Writing is a major skill in language which can be used to express one's thoughts and feelings (MOE, 1993: 6). Therefore writing is a very important skill for developing one's ability. The importance of writing is great because of the following reasons, most of which is that it reinforces other language main skills and it enables students to see the way they succeed and get feedback. It also helps instructors diagnose problems that may hinder language Communication.

Whiteman (1981) states that students' problems in writing result from shortage of practice and concentrating on grammar, spelling and punctuation activities rather than the writing process itself. Strategies that are used inside classroom should suit students and encourage them to write. This can affect learning the language in other areas positively.

Technology is a tool for teaching the writing skill. Using technology for writing includes deferent programs, such as processing, projects and software programs that help assist students enhancing their own writing skills as e-mail, websites and other writing activities (Abd Al-Hag & Al-sobh, 2010).

Many teachers do not utilize classroom and computer labs to teach writing. They also do not use such activity programs and tools to enhance students' writing and communication.

Research findings have supported the idea that using technology has positive influences upon students' attitude and motivation (Tsou, Wang & Li, 2002). Technology programs have been encouraged as cost effective ways of replacing or improving direct human input (Ware and Warschausr, cited in Tsou, 2008). Besides, exposing students to the use of the web-based writing instructional programs, they will change their attitudes towards language and help them write coherent compositions. Therefore, using the web-based program is a strategy that may help students to write effectively in a communicative sense.

The use of the Internet and the World Wide Web (www) has affected the educational process and the way teachers teach students and the field of EFL teaching and learning is no exception (Chuo, 2007; Abd Al. Hag & Al-Sobh, 2010).

The Internet serves as a tool and an information resource (Cunninghum, 2000; Lee, 2009), in fact, the most frequent classroom use of the Internet is looking for resources to get information (Grabe & Grabe, 2001).

Langone and Levine (1996) explored the use of computer based word processing. They found a positive effect on the writing of students with disabilities by making them more independent. Other students' writing revealed little improvement.

A meta-analysis of 176 studies from 1990-1995 (Colely, 1997) indicated that using technology for writing instruction was essential in improving writing because of the ease of editing, thus the quality of writing was improved.

Al-Madi (2002) investigated the effect of using computer instruction on the achievement of Jordanian scientific eleventh graders in English. The results showed that there was a positive significance in the effect on the achievement of students in favor of the experimental group.

Al-Salah (2004) explored the effect of a computer instructional program on secondary stage students reading comprehension skills. The results indicated a significant difference in the communication skills for students using computerized reading program to those taught using the traditional method.

Kenworthy (2004) indicated a marriage between writing and electronic technology which is an ideal means to help writers develop the skills essential to succeed at academic writing.

Chuo (2007) explored the impact of a Web Writing Instruction Program on Taiwanese learners' writing performance, using web resource integrated language learning. The participants were two classes college students, one received a traditional learning and the other received a web writing instructional program. The findings indicated that the class used a web writing instructional program enhanced their writing performance significantly more than the traditional class.

Tsou, Wang & Li (2008) investigated the effectiveness of web-based writing program "My Access" on university students at the southern part of Taiwan. Qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed. The findings showed that the students who used the web-based writing program outperformed regular writing group in most variables, especially in content development and organization.

Oweis (2018) explored the impact of blended learning on Jordanian University students learning English achievement. A strategy pilot case study was used.. The study participants consisted of 34 students selected purposefully and distributed into experimental and control groups. The experimental group studied English through a computerized program , while the control group studied with the traditional method. (ANCOVA) was used in the analysis of covariance. It showed a significant difference in achievement in favor of the experimental group who performed the control group.

Zuhrieh Shana, Sherin M. Alamassi, Maram Jaradat, Jihan Yousef (2018) explored the impact of educational websites on the primary students' academic achievement in the UAE. As there are conflicts and discussions around the world regarding the impact of using websites on students' learning outcomes, the researchers investigated the academic achievement of primary stage students with the use of technology. An educational website Purple Mash was used as an instrument to teach the experimental group(n = 14). A control group (n = 15) was taught with the traditional method. The findings of this study indicated that there was a positive effect of educational websites on student's achievement.

In short, these studies stress the positive effects of using web and computer in teaching writing. Few of the studies were conducted to investigate the effect of the web on the university students' writing performance in Jordan. Therefore, this study comes to fill the gap. It may provide EFL teachers with a suitable way that they can employ to teach the writing skill effectively.

### **Statement of the problem**

Throughout the researcher's work as an instructor of writing at university, he noticed that university students are poor in the writing skills and they are in need to improve and develop them.

Moreover, many researchers see that most of their students at the various stages of learning are unable to write properly (Batayneh, 1986; Khuwaileh, 1991; Toubat, 2003). They believe that there are many reasons for students' weakness in writing, the most important of which is the technique of teaching. Moreover, they think that the Internet influences students' writing skills. It seems that there is a need to use new techniques in teaching writing that may help overcome students' writing difficulties.

In this respect the researcher attempted to teach writing skills through using a program based on the internet prepared by Abd Al-Haq and Al-Sobh (2010).

The researcher hoped that the results of the study may help improve and enhance the writing skills level of university Jordanian students.

### **Questions of the study**

Is there any significant difference in university students' mean scores in the English writing achievement test due to the instructional program, gender, and interaction between them?

Is there any significant difference in university students' mean scores of the achievement test due to the discorsal components: content, organization and mechanics and language use?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The study purpose was to explore the impact of a web writing program on university students' writing performance.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study was restricted to the sample of 40 second year university English language majors at Ajloun National University in the academic year 2024, the second Semester.

The type of writing was restricted to:

Descriptive writing.

Narrative writing.

### **Design of the study**

The researcher used quasi experimental design to achieve the aims of the study. Both the control and the experimental groups were given the same test before and after the study to measure the differences in the achievement of the university students' writing.

### **Participants of the study**

The study Participants were 40 second year English language majors enrolled at Ajloun National University, Jordan (10 male students and 10 female ones), studying writing course at the Department of English Language and Literature. Students were divided into two groups, control and experimental (10 students of each group were control and 10 were experimental). Two instructors who hold ph. D. taught them. The teaching process took two months, 2 lectures a week.

### **Instruments of the study:**

The instruments of the study were the following:

1. The achievement test prepared by the researcher, which was validated by a group of university professors. Student were asked to write on six topics, two were descriptive , two were narrative and two were argumentative.
- 2.The instrumental program (WbWIP) adopted From Al-Abed Al-Hug and Al-Sobh, 2010.

The components of the writing program and Assessment criteria were as follows:

content: 20 marks.

organization: 10 marks.

Vocabulary: 10 marks.

Language: 20 marks.

### **procedures of the Study:**

permission was taken to conduct the study.

The pre - test was given to both groups.

Instructors and students of the experimental group were trained by the researcher to use the program.

The control group were taught by the traditional method.

At the end of the experiment, both groups were given the post-test.

### **Data Collection and analysis**

The data were collected from Second year university English language majors, studying a writing Course. The researcher used the pretest and the post test and recorded students' scores. The experiment lasted two months (16 lectures).

### **Data Analysis:**

The Data of the test was calculated for analysis using (SPSS) and means scores, and standard deviation for students' achievement were calculated for both groups experimental and control to answer the first question.

ANCOVA analysis was used to calculate the interaction between treatment and gender.

MANCOVA analysis was used to see whether the discoursal Components had affected the group and gender (content, organization and mechanics, Vocabulary and Language up.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of the study showed the following:

The experimental group surpassed the control group significantly on the achievement post- test scores that may be attributed to the use of the technique, which was the use of the web based program. The practical significant percentage was (3.4%) at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ).

The researcher also claims that the significance between the mean scores of the two groups may be resulted due to the motivation got by the experimental group because they used a new technique which had positive influence on them.

Moreover, the experimental group might shift to the internet and get a lot about the topics given, and this helped them a lot, whereas the control group only stick to course textbook which has a limited material, and the instructor explained the material or topic in a direct way that may not motivate them and sometimes lead them to be bored.

The Findings also revealed a statistical significant difference between the two groups experimental and control concerning the discorsal technique Components: content, organization, vocabulary and Language use in favor of the experimental group, the significant value was 8% at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). The researcher may attribute this result to the abundant material students of the experimental group get from the internet.

The findings also revealed that there was a significant difference at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) in the students main scores in favor of female students of the experimental group. The significant value was 7.2%.

The researcher may attribute this result to the more serious way female students follow in their study as more researchers noticed this in many studies they conducted.

This study does not conform with Brain (1997) that using the traditional method of using the board only may enhances the students' level better than using the computer. But the results of the study conform with yang (2004), Al-Jarf (2004), Tsou (2008), Al-Abd Al-Hagan Al-Sobh (2010) who found that students used the the web-based program got better performance.

The researcher find that using a web writing program in teaching university students enhances and improves their writing level, and helps both instructors in teaching and students in learning their writing skills.

### **Recommendations**

The researcher recommends the following in light of the results of the study:

- Other studies should be conducted at other universities.
- Similar Studies Should be conducted to explore the impact of web programs on other language skills.
- Another study should be conducted to explore the effect of a web-based writing program taking a bigger number of participants.
- A training course on web writing program can be implemented for the teaching staff at the Department of English Language.

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