TECHNOLOGY AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

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CHAPTER 3
MANAGING LANGUAGE LEARNING USING MOODLE

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This study aims to investigate if the use of MyArabic (using Moodle platform) can help develop students' writing skills. Students' perceptions of learning Arabic writing through Moodle were also sought. The study was conducted at a public university in Malaysia on a group of 47 pre-university Arabic language students taking elementary Arabic language course. Data collected using questionnaire survey was analyzed to assess the effectiveness of teaching writing using Moodle platform. The finding of this study suggests that the majority of the students found MyArabic interesting. The study also shows that it can be an effective tool for developing Arabic learners' writing skills.

Keywords: Moodle, MyArabic, Writing Skills, Collaborative learning

INTRODUCTION

Writing can be challenging to a language learner. In a traditional classroom, teachers usually discuss the possible structure and vocabulary to use when writing on a certain topic. To help enhance the development of writing skills, several pedagogical approaches and teaching aids have been proposed. One of the teaching tools that can be used is Moodle.

Moodle is a web 2.0 tool that can be utilized to teach a second language. This tool supports multiple languages. Learning tools such as online vocabulary activities, discussion boards, grammar clinics, and learning resources are available on Moodle. Studies have found that it can be a useful tool in language teaching (Al-Ajlan & Zedan, 2008). Moodle can support collaborative learning (Brandl, 2005) and offers a wide range of synchronous and asynchronous collaborative learning opportunities (Filippidis, Tselios, & Komis 2010).

Moodle is a web-based Learning Content Management System (LCMS) that is designed around the social constructivist philosophy using the collaborative possibilities of the Internet (Zenha & Carvalho, 2006). It is also a platform that allows instructors to provide and share documents, grade assignments, do quizzes with students in an easy-to-learn way, and create quality online courses (Al-Ajlan & Zedan, 2008). Besides that, Moodle has 75 language characters (Dougiamas, 2008) that enable language teachers and instructors to design lessons in those languages. The platform can be used as their teaching tool to support discussion, learning activities, feedback and assessment.