

Technology and Foreign Language Learning and Teaching

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Contents

Preface	vi
Language Teachers' Web Surfing Skills: Teachers' Knowledge of Metasearch Engines and Advanced Search Facilities Nuraihan Mat Daud	1
Challenges Facing Primary and Tertiary Language Teachers in Implementing CALL Nor Shidrah Binti Mat Daud & Nuraihan Mat Daud	12
Managing Language Learning Using MOODLE Mohd Azrul Azlen Abd Hamid, Adeline Low Hui Lin, Shahrizal Idzuan Wahab Abd Rahman & Nuraihan Mat Daud	30
Designing Language Activities Using Second Life Mohd Azrul Azlen Abd Hamid, Adeline Low Hui Lin & Nuraihan Mat Daud	45
Developing Arabic Writing Skills Using Facebook Wan Rusli Wan Ahmad & Nuraihan Mat Daud	57
SMS-aided Teaching of Reading in Malaysia: Factors to Consider Nuraihan Mat Daud & Zamnah Husin	68
Arabic Language Learners' Font Preferences Nurkhamimi Zainuddin & Nuraihan Mat Daud	81
Young Learners' Use of ICT Facilities and the Development of Their Language skills Nuraihan Mat Daud	90
The Relationship Between Learning Style and Writing Performance of Young Learners in Powerpoint Assisted Classes Radzita Radzi & Nuraihan Mat Daud	99
Factors Affecting the Teaching of Writing Using WIKI Nuraihan Mat Daud, Nor Shidrah Mat Daud & Zailin Shah Yusof	113
Contributors	122
Index	124

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 (Filippidi, 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.