A Study on Investigating the Effectiveness of Incorporating Edmodo to Improve English as Second Language (ESL) Tertiary Learners' Paragraph Writing Skills

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The rapid growth of technological devices over the twenty first century has revolutionised different fields of science. Similarly, the invention and use of computers have had a tremendous impact on various aspects of scientific studies, while expanding its role from a mathematical device to a device that is used for general education. For example, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) refers to the use of computers in the learning and teaching of English. CALL has played a vital role in personalising education while exposing language learners to a wide array of online learning platforms. Edmodo is one such platform that has been incorporated by many of the teachers for language instruction. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of Edmodo in improving the paragraph writing skills of tertiary level students' who study English as a second language, while examining their perceptions towards its implementation. The study was conducted based on forty first year undergraduates of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Kelaniya, who were following the course, English for Humanities. The researcher has used a mixed methodology to gather data, which consisted of a pre-test, a post test and interviews. Quantitative data that was gathered for this study has been analysed using paired sample t-test of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 2.0 version (SPSS). The qualitative data of the study was analysed using a thematic analysis that follows the theoretical framework designed by Brown and Clarke (2006). The findings of the present study indicated that Edmodo could be used to improve paragraph writing skills of the tertiary level students. Simultaneously, participants displayed positive attitudes towards the implementation of Edmodo highlighting the ease of access, improved levels of confidence and motivation, reduction of learning cost and opportunities for interaction outside the classroom as reasons for their positive attitudes.

Keywords: Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Edmodo, Paragraph writing, Effectiveness, Learner Perceptions