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# **The Effect of Using internet tool with TBL on enhancing writing skills of Palestinian EFL student teachers**

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## **Abstract**

This research investigated the effectiveness of using internet tools with TBL to enhance university students' EFL writing skills. Participants of the research were two groups of university students (one experimental and one control) at University of Palestine- Gaza, Palestine. Instruments of the study were an EFL writing test, The experimental group was taught based on the internet tools with team-based learning program and the control group received regular instruction. The test was post-administered to both groups after the program had been applied. Results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control one. This indicated that the program was effective in developing EFL writing and skills. Therefore, it concluded that using team-based learning is effective in developing EFL writing skills.

**Key words:** Internet tool (LMS), Team Based Learning- EFL writing Skills

## **Introduction**

For undergraduate students, mastering English writing is not just about fulfilling course requirements but is also crucial for academic success and future career prospects (Roofi, Binandeh & Rahmani, 2017). It is fundamental for students of English as Foreign Language (EFL) to acquire the productive language skills of speaking and writing. However, most EFL students find a difficulty in practicing writing skills. Therefore, a large range of technology tools, such as e-learning, and internet tools as learning management system (LMS model) have been established to enhance the communication of information as an important part of learning writing skills through team-based learning method.

The current era, especially during the war on Gaza, is characterized by coping with problems that raised up. Consequently, local university relied on e-learning tools such as Moodle or UPINAR and Microsoft Teams

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have been used to enhance the communication of information as an important part of the learning environment. Learning English as a foreign language in Gaza university is a difficult process for students, particularly with writing skills which are affecting their learning and demotivating them to study English. Writing is the ability to write thoughts into written texts.

### **Theoretical background**

Fortunately, new methods and tools have been introduced to help enhance students' writing skills. It succeeds in education because it enables teachers to keep track of their students' progress as a group or individually, allowing for more effective student evaluation. The implementation of internet tools with team-based learning demonstrates the benefits of teacher-led instruction among students. While the learners become energetic, thoughtful students, co-operation, engaged learning, and enhanced performance, the team-based learning includes teacher active intensification to application of technology in learning via LMS, particularly English productive writing skills (Teng et al., 2020), and content distribution in experiencing the fulfilment of classroom processes and experiences.

### **Writing skills**

Writing is one of the most demanding tasks for EFL learners (Yih, Rahim, Marimuthu & Liaw, 2021). Writing is a significant skill in language production. Its significance increases when it comes to writing in English language which is extensively used for global mediation of knowledge (Marlina & Giri, 2014). Writing is one of the important communication skills in which we convey our thoughts to others. It includes all the knowledge and abilities related to expressing ideas through the written words.

Writing skills, as the chief means of expressing ideas, feeling, thoughts, desires, and plans, mainly aimed at allowing EFL curriculum to effectively communicate in today's communicative skills and their creativity (Akkaya & Kirmiz, 2010). Omar et al. (2014) asserted that writing as a complex process that involves many skills, processes, and strategies. It requires a modifiable medium to convey meaning, and uses a vocabulary, based on known conventions and rules of usage to create new ideas. Consequently, writing skills play an important role in the process of learning a second or a foreign language (Bora, 2023). Writing is the ability to write thoughts into written texts.

In fact, writing is essential for producing well-structured paragraphs, essays research papers, and academic projects (Jackson, 2019). Writing paragraph, essays and research papers develop critical thinking, creative

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thinking by requiring EFL students to gather and analyze information also construct logical arguments. In an academic context, writing has become the most important skill that students must be mastered (Fareed et al., 2016). To conclude, writing is an important and necessary skill for student teachers to master. Student teachers need to learn how to write and this is achieved by mastering writing sub skills such as content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics. secondly, the higher-level skills that contribute to proficient writing level such as preparing, editing, revising, and self-monitoring, self-assessing, using strategies...etc. Mastering these skills is essential for most academic success.

### **Internet tool (LMS)**

Technology is one of the most important characteristics of 21st-century learning. The role of technology in learning is to facilitate the formation of collaborative interactions and build a more meaningful learning process (Agustian and Salsabila, 2021). Today, the internet is one of the many resources available for learning English (Metruk, 2022). Internet is a heart for global education and communication, enabling students to connect with one another and share ideas, information, and experiences through a variety of online communities and education networks (Huang et al. 2022, Tao and Xu, 2022)

Internet tools is considered to be a matured field, both in theoretical foundations as well as practical applications. The e-learning platform help with the readiness of productive aspects of language skills (Madanat et al., 2024), especially writing on a group of learner's kind of essay writing and written communication (Hamat et al., 2014; Laflen and Smith, 2017).

There are many open-source platforms providing LMS that can be used by the teacher and students. One of them is Moodle. According to, Wahyuni & Arieffiani (2022), digital tools as Moodle and Classroom allow interactive and interesting learning, also have a positive impact on learning English language skills. Moodle was the first one they used when it was still relatively new, and, at the time, since then, they have felt comfortable using Moodle, and it was easy to use and to engage EFL students, also give teacher feedback.

The LMS Moodle allows students to enhance a more interactive and structured learning skills process. Learning using LMS can be defined as learning that facilitates learning experiences using computing devices such as mobile and laptops connected to the internet (Geovanny, Chisag, and Tabuena, 2022). LMS becomes one of the most widely used platforms in academic institutions. Hence, using internet tool within LMS in education

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provides numerous benefits, enhancing accessibility, engagement, and efficiency in the learning process. These systems support diverse language learning skill as writing and foster collaboration.co-operation and enhancing skills.

### **Team-based learning (TBL)**

Due to the development of technology, it became a necessity to integrate technology with the processes of teaching and learning language skills. In recent years, team-based learning has been widely used as a learning and teaching method in the world (Gao, et al. (2024). Team-based learning (TBL) pedagogy, therefore, is used to motivate students before and during class preparation engagement to uniquely increase student learning of economics (Silva et al., 2022; Ruder, Maier & Simkins, 2021; Davidson, Major & Michaelsen, 2014). Furthermore, Team-based learning can help address these pragmatic teaching issues through it is attention to team formation, student accountability, and structured course design. In many disciplines, TBL has led to increases in student learning and engagement (Haidet, Kubitz, & McCormack, 2015). Moreover, teaching with team-based learning instructional techniques face the same motivation, and achieving a high level of engagement of all students in class-based activities (Johnson, Johnson, and Smith 2014; Salari & Hosseini, 2019; Cantos & Coello, 2023).

### **Background of the Problem**

This research problem is that university student teachers in Palestine have poor writing skills. Therefore, this research is an attempt to enhance EFL writing skills through internet tool (LMS)with team-based learning. Learning English as a foreign language in Palestinian universities is a difficult task for students, particularly with writing skills which are negatively affecting their learning and demotivating them to study English well. Effective communication skills, particularly in English writing, are crucial for students' academic journey and future career readiness (Al-Mahrooqi, 2012). They lack the necessary writing skills, such as: content, grammar, and organization of ideas, vocabulary, and writing mechanics (Thompson & Childer, 2021). Moreover, the students mainly face a problem of choosing appropriate vocabulary for the appropriate situation, lack of knowledge of the syntax of the language, and coherence and cohesion-related issues (Taye & Mengesha, 2024). Their challenges can be encountered by providing online writing topics activities and exercises through using internet tools (LMS) with TBL to help EFL enhance their writing skills.

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Thus, the present study seeks to investigate the effect of using one of the internet tools namely, learning management system (LMS) with team-based learning approach to enhance English student teacher's productive skills.

The researcher conducted a pilot study to assess the current level of Palestinian EFL student teachers writing skills. A randomly selected sample from university of Palestine was examined during the first term of 2024 to evaluate their proficiency in writing.

The primary objective of the pilot study was to gain insights into the instructional methods used for teaching English writing skills. To achieve the study's objectives, a writing test that involved five writing skills. The test items were systematically presented and categorized in alignment with the specific purposes of the research.

**(Table 1, pilot study writing test)**

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD.</b>	<b>% Mean</b>
Content	4	1.5333	.51640	38.33
Organization	4	1.4667	.51640	36.67
Vocabulary	4	1.4667	.51640	36.67
Grammar	4	1.4000	.50709	35.00
Mechanics	4	1.2000	.41404	30.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7.0667</b>	<b>1.66762</b>	<b>35.33</b>

Results in table 1 showed that the participants' total mean score on the writing test was low. This means that the students had difficulties in writing skills.

#### **Statement of the problem:**

Based on a literature review and pilot study results on Palestinian EFL student teachers, it was found that students struggle with writing skills such as planning, outlining, editing, revising, spelling and grammar, organization, sentence structure, and formatting. These issues appear to negatively impact students' motivation towards writing. Consequently, the researcher recommends implementing internet tool LMS Moodle with team-based learning program to enhance students' writing skills.

#### **Study Questions**

The research seeks to answer the following main question that was derived in view of the literature review and internet tools with TBL:

**1-What is the effect of using internet tool (LMS) with TBL on enhancing writing skills for EFL student teachers.**

This main question elicits the answer to the following sub-questions:

What are the writing skills necessary for EFL student teachers?

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What are the internet tools suitable for enhancing writing skills for EFL student teachers?

What is the effectiveness of a program based on the internet tools with TBL on enhancing writing skills of EFL student teachers?

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this research is to determine the impact of using internet tools LMS with team-based learning program to develop university students' writing.

**Significance:**

The goal of the study is to create a learning environment that includes online collaborative activities as well as differentiated instruction. Moreover, enhancing writing abilities not only boosts academic achievements but also arms students with vital communication skills necessary for their professional endeavors. Given the preceding considerations, it is intended that the current investigation will:

- **For students:** The study underlines the value of taking online tool (LMS) with TBL approach to learning. The students will be exposed to a variety of resources, which they must evaluate and use.
- **For instructors:** The suggested program and activities can be used to help instructors enhance the language performance and engagement of their students.
- **For Curriculum Developers:** When creating activities or assignments for students, they can consider the findings of the research.
- **Researchers:** This study motivates researchers to seek out, create, and use cutting-edge learning methodologies, particularly during of wars and political conflict conditions and its significant impact on the learning process

**Delimitations:** This research was delimited to:

- Participants: A group of EFL 40 student teachers enrolled in University of Palestine in Palestine.
- Place: University of Palestine, in Palestine.
- Time: The first semester of the university year 2024

**-Skills:**

The following five writing skills: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

**Hypotheses:**

The following hypotheses are made in terms of the research questions:

- H1. There is a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) level between the mean score of the experiment group and Control group on the post- administration of the writing skills test in favor of experiment group.

H2. There is a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) level between the mean rank scores of the experiment group on the pre- and post-administrations of the writing skills test in favor of the post one.

## Methodology

### Participants:

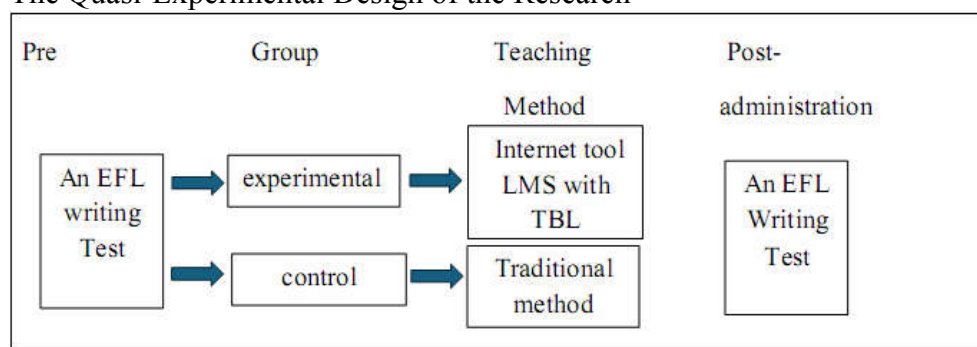
A group of EFL university students ( $N=40$ ). They were randomly selected from University of Palestine, in Palestine. Those participants were divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group.

### Design:

The current research adopted the quasi-experimental design in terms of dividing the sample into two groups (experimental and control) that aimed to investigate the impact of using internet tool LMS Moodle with TBL program on developing EFL students writing skills of university of Palestine. The experimental group was trained using the internet tool LMS Moodle with TBL program while the control group was taught using the traditional method. A pre-post writing test was conducted to assess their writing skills. The pre-post EFL writing test was administered to both groups before and after the program. The results of the pre-post EFL writing test were analyzed by using t-test for independent samples. This was to find out whether there was any significant difference between the mean score of the two groups after the implementation of the program. Figure (1) illustrates the quasi-experimental design of the research.

**Figure 1**

The Quasi-Experimental Design of the Research



### Instrument:

For the purpose of the research, the following instrument was designed:

- An EFL writing skills test (pre-post) for assessing EFL university students' writing skills.

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## **Definition of Terms:**

### **Writing skills**

According to Hussin et al., (2015). Writing skills is defined as a significant skill and an important productive activity for communicating with other people from all over the world. However, it is considered a more complex skill than other language skills (Akhtar et al., 2019).

In this study, writing is operationally defined as the students' ability to simultaneously extract and construct meaning through interaction and involvement with written language and the ability to process a text, understand its meaning, and to integrate with their prior knowledge.

### **Internet tools (LMS)**

Turnbull et al (2020) defined learning management system as web-based software platforms that provide an interactive online learning environment and automate the administration, organization, delivery, and reporting of educational content and learner outcomes.

LMS is defined in this study as education platform, cloud-based or installed software which assists in the teaching writing and speaking skills also learning process, helping ineffective delivery of instruction, management and development.

### **Team-Based Learning**

According to Waghel, and Dinkins (2022) Team based learning is an evidence-based collaborative pedagogy that has been employed in numerous settings to enhance student preparation for class.

Team-based learning (TBL) pedagogical approaches might be beneficial to improve teaching quality (Gao et al., 2024). Using Team Based Learning synchronously in an online setting as a response to the pandemic was received favorably by students (Silva et al., 2022).

In this study, TBL is a pedagogical learning and teaching method that enables English student teachers to follow a structured process to enhance their student engagement, and is an evidence-based collaborative pedagogy that has been employed in numerous settings to enhance student preparation for class.

## **Statistical Analysis and Results**

### **Testing the first hypothesis of the research:**

The first hypothesis stated "There is a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) level between the mean score of the **experiment group** and **Control group** on the **post- administration** of the **writing skills** test in favor of experiment group. Mann-Whitney equation was used to identify the significance between mean ranks of two groups in post administration of the test. Also, effect size was estimated

Results are presented in table (2):

**Table 2**

Comparing the Performance of the Control and the Experimental Group on the Post Administration of the Writing Test.

Skills	Groups	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	U	Z	Sign.	d	Effect size
Content	Exp	20	30.5	610	0	5.642	0.01	0.892	high
	Control	20	10.5	210					
Organization	Exp	20	30.5	610	0	5.716	0.01	0.904	high
	Control	20	10.5	210					
Vocabulary	Exp	20	30.5	610	0	5.597	0.01	0.884	high
	Control	20	10.5	210					
Grammar	Exp	20	30.5	610	0	5.600	0.01	0.885	high
	Control	20	10.5	210					
Mechanics	Exp	20	30.13	602.5	7.5	5.498	0.01	0.869	high
	Control	20	10.88	217.5					
Total	Exp	20	30.5	610	0	5.436	0.01	0.859	high
	Control	20	10.5	210					

Table 2 shows that all the mean rank scores of the experimental group in the writing skills (Content, organization, vocabulary, Grammar, and Mechanics) and in the total were higher than those of the control group. The table illustrates also that the estimated d value (0.859) there are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

This indicates that there are statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups in all the writing skills and in the total score on the post-administration of the test. These significant differences are in favor of the experimental group. In other words, the experimental group outperformed the control group in their EFL writing performance. It is also clear that all effect size values are greater than 0.5, which means that the internet tools with TBL is effective in developing those skills. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the research was accepted.

#### **Testing the second hypothesis of the research:**

The second hypothesis stated that “There is a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) level between the mean rank scores of the experiment group on the pre-and post-administrations of the writing skills test in favor of the post one”.

There is a statistically significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) level between the mean rank scores of the **experiment group** on the **pre-and post-administrations** of the **writing skills** test in favor of the **post one**. Two

related group test (wilcoxon) was used to estimate the difference significant between mean rank scores of pre and post score of the test.

Results are presented in table (3):

Table (3)

Comparing the Performance of the Experimental Group on the Pre and Post Administrations of the Writing Test

skills	Ranks	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Sign.	d	Effect size
Content	(-)	0	0	0	4.472	0.01	0.71	High
	(+)	20	10.50	210				
Organization	(-)	0	0	0	4.379	0.01	0.69	High
	(+)	20	10.50	210				
Vocabulary	(-)	0	0	0	4.472	0.01	0.71	High
	(+)	20	10.50	210				
Grammar	(-)	0	0	0	4.379	0.01	0.69	High
	(+)	20	10.50	210				
Mechanics	(-)	0	0	0	4.472	0.01	0.71	High
	(+)	20	10.50	210				
Total	(-)	0	0	0	4.379	0.01	0.69	High
	(+)	20	10.50	210				

Significant at 0.01 level

Results in table (3) illustrate that the estimated d-value (0.69) is significant at 0.01 level. This reflects that there are statistically significant differences between the mean rank scores of the pre-post- administration of the writing test in the investigated the five writing skills investigated (Content, organization, vocabulary, Grammar, and Mechanics) and in the total score. These significant differences are in favor of the post-test score. According to field equation, the effect size was more than 0.5 so all effect size was great. That is mean the independent variable had a great effectiveness to enhance writing skills that included at the test. The researcher attributes these results to the effect of using internet tool LMS with team-based learning program.

Results in tables 2 & 3 prove that the statistical differences between the pre- post administration of EFL writing skills test are in favor of the post-administration. In addition, results indicated that the effect size is high in the five writing skills investigated. This difference between the pre-posttest reveals that 95% of the total variance of the overall EFL writing skills can be attributed to the independent variable (the internet tool (LMS)with team-based learning program.

The increase in the student teachers' level in writing skills after applying the internet tool with TBL program was due to using various tasks,

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activities, stages online assessment, and self-evaluation of the internet tool with TBL program for practicing writing skills such as activities that promote problem solving and collaborate interactive discussion. Most of the students liked internet tool LMS with TBL activities because they helped them sharpen their thinking, work together, work as a team and, gave them the chance to be self-dependent learners. Moreover, many students reported that the internet tool with TBL activities were engaging.

### **Discussion**

This study investigates common English writing skills among regular undergraduate EFL student teachers writing skills, adherence to writing stages, frequency of writing outside the university lectures, and preferred writing strategies. The findings revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups under investigation, favoring the experimental group. The experimental group demonstrated improved writing skills following the post-administration of tests. This improvement can be attributed to the impact of the experimental treatment, which utilized the suggested program based on internet tool LMS with Team-Based Learning. Internet tool with TBL activities facilitated authentic interactions in writing, allowing students to write different type of paragraphs and practice English language competencies. The findings reveal a diverse background of English proficiency among students. This absence highlights a significant gap in achieving the highest level of language mastery within the sampled students.

According to Alghamdi and Mostafa (2022), El Sharkawy (2020), Muhammad, et al. (2022), demonstrate the high effects of using internet tool LMS in enhancing students writing skills. Lee, S., & Kim, Y. (2022) demonstrate the use of digital platforms significantly improves students' writing skills in higher education. Also, use digital feedback and online collaboration can improve writing quality.

According to Elder, Bright and Bennett (2007), outstanding proficiency typically requires extensive exposure to varied language contexts and authentic language use opportunities, aspects that may be limited in conventional educational settings. Additionally, revising classroom schedules to allow adequate writing time and promoting structured writing processes are crucial steps toward enhancing writing skills and overall academic success. According to Faroji, Ma'mur and Zohriah (2024), fostering a supportive educational environment promotes writing as a lifelong skill.

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**Conclusions:**

Based on these findings, recommendations include ongoing professional development for educators, curriculum enhancements to integrate more authentic writing opportunities, policy considerations for flexible scheduling, and further research through longitudinal studies to explore writing skills progression and effective instructional strategies. In conclusion, addressing the diverse linguistic abilities, writing challenges, and instructional preferences identified in this study requires a multifaceted approach. Thus, teachers should be able to design online activities with group work that allows learners to share their thoughts (Nonthamand, 2020). By integrating theoretical insights with practical strategies, educators can create a supportive learning environment that empowers students to develop and excel in their writing skills effectively.

**Recommendations**

Based on the research's findings, the following recommendations are proposed for English lecturer, teachers, students, course designers, and EFL researchers:

- Incorporating internet tools, such as LMS Moodle, and team-based learning approach should be prioritized in university learning environment.
- English lecturer should foster active teams work participation in interactive tasks and activities inside and outside the lecture and classroom management.
- Emphasizing innovative current issues on teaching and learning language use in classrooms should be a top priority.
- University institutions should train EFL teachers and lecturer in modern technological approaches, especially internet tools with TBL, to enhance students' receptive and productive skills.
- English language lecturer, need to be prepared to enable EFL students to get more an advantage of ICT applies.
- Collaborating and cooperating learning, peer feedback, self-assessment, self-monitoring, and team work, should be implemented inside the lecture.
- New approaches, techniques, and strategies for improving listening and speaking skills should be explored and implemented.

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