EFFECTIVENESS OF LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN DEVELOPING ESSAY WRITING SKILLS AS A FORM OF CREATIVE WRITING FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to use the available tools in Learning Management Systems (LMS) environments in developing essay writing skills among the students of College of Science and Humanities Studies in Jubail, Saudi Arabia. This was done by constructing a digital content in the literary essay based on developing essay skills as a form of creative writing skills on the Blackboard platform. The participants of this study were 31 female undergraduate students from second year, Early Childhood Department. A list of essay skills was prepared as a form of creative writing to achieve the objectives of the study, and an Essay Writing Skills test was also prepared. This study adopted a quasi-experimental research design with one group (pre-post research design) to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between the independent variable (LMS) and the dependent variable (Essay writing skills). The results showed that the effectiveness of the designed unit had positive effects in developing essay writing skills in general and its sub-skills (Form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, and writing the conclusion) in particular with significant differences between pre-posttests in favor of the post- test. The study recommended using the teaching tools available within LMS environments to develop essay writing as a form of creative writing skills at all level of education in general, and at the undergraduate level in particular.

Contribution/Originality: The study contributes to developing a new approach using a new technology to develop writing skills, essay writing skills in particular in higher education. The study identifies the effectiveness of using LMS to develop writing skills in five areas. This encourages universities and higher education institutes to replace the traditional ways to teach writing skills by modern technologies.

1. INTRODUCTION

The process of language learning has a great importance, because it is a tool for expressing thought and communication between society members, through which history is monitored and recorded, knowing the developments that affected it and the building of civilizations. Without language, nations lose their civilization and heritage. A language has four skills, which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills work in complementarity and interdependence with each other and do not work separately; accordingly, attention should not be given to one skill without the other, or to focus on one at the expense of others (Awad, 2012; Shehata, 2011).

The importance of writing is one of the most important means of human communication with others, in which man transcends the limits of time and place. It is a means of preserving and developing the nation's cultural and social heritage (Shehata, 2010). It also gains its importance from linguistic activity that provides students with rich opportunities to express their emotions and feelings in an elegant way, and provoke their intellectual, linguistic and pictorial energy to convey the intended meaning to the reader (Abdel- Bari, 2013).

Writing is one of the most important linguistic activities, and it has great benefit to students at all educational stages. The learner – in his writing – can revise, modify, add, and delete, so that the writings come out in a distinct form in terms of form and content, taking into account the richness of ideas, their diversity, and their distinction. This richness, diversity, and difference distinguish all people in their nature, as it is one of the basic features of creativity (Al-Hudaibi, 2012).

Teaching a language requires empowering learners with a number of language skills that will achieve their learning objectives, such as creative writing skills; which represents one of the linguistic production skills. These skills can enable the learner to achieve his different objectives, use its linguistic effectively, and produce new linguistic situations even if he has not gone through them before (Al-Harbi, 2015). Creative writing provides these students with many opportunities that enable them to use the language elegantly (Abdel- Bari, 2013). Creative essay writing is also one of the important arts that our educational system neglects; it is a productive skill and considered as one of the educational goals, which Arabic language courses are seeking to achieve. It means expressing an idea, or a literary manner affecting the receiver, and evoking his emotion as a result of using rhetorical images and devices that give the style beauty and splendor (Abdullah, 2001).

Additionally, an essay is one of the most common literary forms and it is described as a prose art and a form of literature. In its construction of an essay, the writer is required to know how to write, he should be well versed in knowledge, diversified in culture, perceptive in insight, careful observation, and delicate in taste, so that he knows how to attract the reader and affect his attention order for his essay to be well-textured, interesting in presentation, strong, and coherent (Sayed, 2015).

Despite the different attempts done to improve students' writing level in teaching and learning, whether by setting goals to improve this level or by writing educational books about writing skills, studies have shown the weaknesses of students writing in general and creative writing in particular, as well as their shortcomings in writing a coherent and integrated topic (Al-Asadi, 2019; Maden, 2012; Yutthosak 2011). The current and future generation – who grew up in Google, Wikipedia, and Wi-Fi technologies that are a part of their environment – is the "digital generation" has its own characteristics and qualities in learning., This generation has an innate connection to the Internet, where they use it to communicate, understand, learn and search (Tapscott, 2015).

This generation – often called "digital natives " – learn from their peers in a virtual society, in which their ideas and opinions are important. Their model of learning contradicts the traditional model (Prensky, 2001). Therefore, global trends indicate the need to reconsider the educational process, use technology to know students, design appropriate educational programs to their speed and abilities, develop leaning strategies, methods, and evaluation system to match the characteristics of this generation, and to enhance individual learning needs and their discovery skills (Pacansky-Brock, 2013; Tapscott, 2015).

Since learning management systems (LMS), with their capabilities, help in developing curricula and methods of learning and assessment, it has been widely adopted in higher education (Mtebe, 2015). Examples of learning management platforms are Canvas, Moodle and the most famous of them is the Blackboard (Ghilay, 2019). The current research aimed at constructing a list of essay writing skills as a form of creative writing, and to construct a digital content within "the blackboard" LMS to measure the efficiency of LMS in developing essay writing skills as a form of creative writing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

First: Creative Writing and its Importance

Writing is a field for discovering students' innovative abilities, and it encourages them to express their feelings and meanings. It is a mental process in which the learner transforms his stock of knowledge into a written text . Creative writing plays a major role in making students have fun, developing their talents, and reducing their stress and psychological disturbance. Through it, the learner is allowed to express his feelings and thoughts; which makes the learner feel comfortable and psychologically balanced (Al-Ahmadi, 2014), it helps to improve different ways of thinking, and works as a tool that gives the learner a sense of comfort and pleasure (Pawliczak, 2015). It provides a strong opportunity for self-expression, openness to ideas and developing imagination (Demille & Kallio, 2014). It is expressed in a style based on the beauty of form, emotional impact, strength of meaning, originality of the idea, accuracy of construction and illustration, and clarity and authenticity (Galhoum, 2008). It is a form of written language to convey an idea to the reader, and it aims to present a set of main ideas, give information about the text and convey the reader with these ideas (Asri, 2015).

The literature review of this research agreed on the importance of creative writing. It is one of the most important linguistic activities carried out by human beings to express feelings and emotions to others in a literary manner characterized by fluency, flexibility, originality, and clarity. It has a major role in achieving psychological and social adjustment, as well as achieving pleasure for the individual (Al-Samman, 2011). It also develops students' literary taste and thinking talent, trains them in a delicate sense, and helps them to choose well the linguistic vocabulary expressing the different meanings, as well as being a revealing tool for the linguistically gifted and talented students (Abdel- Bari, 2013).

The criteria for creative writing are determined by the novelty and the depth of the ideas presented, flexibility in presenting ideas, using imagination to build mental images in the reader's imagination, originality when comparing ideas with other ideas, integration in building the elements of the topic, and using syntactic structures easily (Ashour & Miqdadi, 2005).

Second: The Essay as a Form of Creative Writing

Essay writing as one of the forms of creative writing is an important art that is neglected by our educational system. It represents one of the educational goals that the Arabic language courses seek to achieve. It means expressing an idea or an attitude in a literary style that affects the reader, and provokes his emotion as a result of the use of rhetorical images and the rhetorical devices that give the style beauty and splendor (Abdullah, 2001). It is known as an expression of the self, feelings, and emotions in a language that is predominantly graphical and rhetorical, (Younis, 2004). According to El-Naqa (2001) it is the expression in which the writer unloads his feelings, emotions, individual experiences, new and innovative ideas in an elegant, beautiful and interesting linguistic style. The written expression used in the essay expresses the individual's ability to write with strength, clarity, good presentation and accuracy to express what is going through his mind, and what is going on with his feelings, in a sequence, harmony and coherence of the idea and style (Mujawar, 1999). It is also defined as a prose literary art that consists of a group of paragraphs that deals with a specific topic, or one central idea, expressing the writer's point of view, and aims to persuade readers to accept an idea or provoke their emotions, and it is composed of introduction, body and conclusion (Al-Mutlaq & Mokabla, 2016).

In light of what mentioned above, an essay is therefore a literary text that revolves around a specific idea that expresses the learner's point of view on this idea trying to use his ideas, emotional images, feelings, and imagination in order to convince the reader of his point of view. It consists of the introduction, the content of the essay, building and organizing its paragraphs properly, and the conclusions .Its importance lies in the fact that it is an expression of self and feelings, and a tool for conveying ideas to others in an attractive and exciting way to make an impact on the reader and the listener (Younis, 2004). It represents an important form to present the writer's point of view in order

to convince the reader about it Haddad (2002). It is also an element of human communication and social interaction (Al-Qarni, 2012; Al-Zahrani, 2017).

Essay writing skills are classified as creative writing skills in terms of fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, planning, formation, content, style. and in the skills of : language presenting the components of the topic, content, producing the general form of the topic, generating ideas ,their diversity and supporting with evidence, and generating new meanings skills (Al-Mutlaq & Mokabla, 2016; Al-Samman., 2011; Al-Sous & AL-Tawalbeh, 2010; Hafez & Attia, 2006; Khasawneh, 2008). Many studies have recommended the necessity of developing students' writing skills such as Taha and Al-Zahrani (2020); Al-Sarraf and Khayal (2018); Magheb (2018); Omar, Sanji, and Makkawi (2017); Al-Mutlaq and Mokabla (2016); Al-Jishi (2010).

The essay has artistic features that are characterized by a short or medium size, and gives a presentation of one idea in a simplified style away from complexity, and in a clear language that suits all environments, cultures, and tastes, and avoids the qualities of transcendence over the readers, or strangeness and exaggeration in style (Abu Al-Asba', 2002). One of its features is that it depends on a large extent on its style, ingenuity in style is a strong reason for the pleasure that the reader finds in reading it. It depends on the value of its writer's ideas - the ideas are not everything - the literary work does not only depend on the correctness of the ideas mentally and practically, but also depends on the way they are presented and manifested, it should be wonderful literary form (Kafafi, 2005).

The essay allows its writer to show clearly his personality, and allows him to make the topic he deals with in writing his preoccupation with thinking about its elements, the coordination between these elements, and in his position on the ideas contained in the topic. The essay is divided into the subjective essay and the objective essay. In the objective essay, the writer's personality is hidden behind his subject, and attention is directed to his topic and idea, the writer sees in this case that clarifying the topic, explaining the ideas in a revealing phrase, and presenting sentences in a smooth manner, satisfy the reader's mind, idea, and pleasure for his feelings. Objective essay is divided into six types: critical, philosophical, political, historical, social science, journalistic, Objective subjective and psychological reflective essays. Among its types also are the scientific and economic essays. Subjective essay emanates from the writer himself, or the surrounding community; it is a depiction of the nature of the relationship between the creator and his society, it is divided into nine types: personal, social, descriptive, impressionistic, biography, reflective, satirical, radio and construction essays (Al-Harbi, 2015).

The subjective essay revolves around a specific subjective idea deals with a topic that the writer collects its elements and arranges it in an emotional picture, in which the writer's personality, cognitive capabilities and emotional flow appear. Its types include: the subjective essay, in which the writer deals with his subjective experiences, his impressions, observations, and ideas, the descriptive essay, in which the writer attempts to portray the nature, and the reflective Essay, it deals with the reflections of the human soul. The writer, in his essay, may combine subjectivity and objectivity, and when he presents an issue or phenomenon, he depends on treating its objective elements with a subjective character of his own.

Third: The Stages of Essay Writing as a Form of Creative Writing

The literature indicates that the process of building the essay takes place in three main stages, which are Preparation Stage, Writing Stage and Review Stage (Al-Harbi, 2015; Al-Zahrani, 2017; Sayed, 2015).

- *Preparation Stage*

At this stage, the process of preparing the essay to be written takes place, and it is considered the most important stage as it represents a strong basis for the essay, and the other stages are built upon it. This stage requires the following:

1- Understanding what is required in the essay and determining its main area. This is done by determining the objective of the essay, its length, the deadline for its submission, the form of delivery (paper or electronic), the

type of the Essay, and making a list of the main points that the essay should include. It can be modified and added, when starting to write.

2- Understanding the target audience in terms of their level of knowledge as this affects the style of writing, and the way words are chosen.

3- Choosing the topic of the essay, so that the following elements should be available: Arousing the reader's interest in addressing a topic that has not been previously written about, or has not been discussed from a certain angle previously, the ability to search about, and sufficient information and references are available about it.

4- Conducting the necessary research and resorting to various sources of information, including newspapers, books, reliable websites, and others; to find the details and information needed to build the essay. Here, it is not only sufficient to search for information related to the ideas that were identified when choosing a topic, but also to search for contradictory ideas and points of view.

5- Elaborating the objective of the Essay by defining the purpose of the essay, or what is known as the Thesis Statement, which represents the main pillar on which this essay will be built. When Elaborating the purpose of the essay, the following must be adhered to: Briefly summarize the argument in one or two sentences, present a statement or sentence (claim) that requires further analysis, and provide evidence (which will be written in the essay later) that supports each idea.

6- Outline the essay: The essay outline serves as a road map for how to write the it. It is a systematic and logical arrangement for the sequence of ideas, and how to put them in the essay.

- *Writing Stage*

It comes after the preparation stage, and is characterized by being less difficult and smoother. The following is a set of practical steps for writing each part of the article.

1. Writing the Introduction: The introduction has a great importance in attracting the reader's attention and giving him a general idea about the topic. It occupies 10-20% of the total essay. It usually involves answering three main questions: "What?", what is the subject of the essay about? "Why?", why was this particular topic chosen? Here, brief answers are provided about the new information that will be mentioned in the essay, or the important issues that will be discussed, and "how?" How will the article be? Here, tips are given on the topics to be discussed, and the main elements of the article, arranged in chronological order.

2. Writing the content of the essay: The content of the essay is one of the greatest obstacles that students usually face, but after completing the first stage (the preparation stage); A clear outline of the essay should be prepared. The outline of the essay can be used to arrange ideas. The length of the essay depends on its nature and type, but it usually occupies 60 to 80% of the essay.

3. Constructing the paragraphs properly: Each paragraph includes only one main idea, or one controversial issue. The first sentence explains the main idea of the paragraph, and it forms a platform for moving from the previous idea to the new idea, and the sentences that follow the topic sentence should be proofs and evidence to support the main idea, in addition to examples, data, and everything that contributes to explain and clarify this idea for the reader.

4. Organizing the content of the essay: it is a process of arranging the elements of the written material and organizing its components in a coherent form according to a specific format, taking into account the sequence of ideas according to their importance, and the output content to the reader.

5. Writing the conclusion: In it, all the ideas of the essay are summarized, and how these ideas confirm and support the main objective mentioned in the introduction.

- *Review Stage*

The Review stage necessitates checking each paragraph to ensure the integrity of the essay; that it is should be free from typographical, grammatical, or linguistic errors, to get rid of excessive padding, and weak sentences. It is

to be ensured that it complies with all conditions, it is logically arranged, its paragraphs are interconnected and each of them contains one main idea, and all its paragraphs are consistent with the main objective of the essay that was mentioned in the introduction, and that each sentence in one paragraph is consistent to the sentence of the main topic. At this stage, the essay should be read aloud, as it is easy to discover errors, and the essay must be checked by a colleague.

Fourth: Learning Management Systems (LMS)

E-learning environments are the space or the platform that allows the student to view electronic content, interact with him, and communicate with the teacher inside and outside the classroom. These environments also provide appropriate tools to present the various activities, and the necessary evaluation for the learners' performance. It also enables synchronous and asynchronous communication through more efficient tools that is suitable for the nature of the second generation of e-learning. It enables the teacher to publish the educational content, develop educational activities and tasks, and communicate with learners by using written texts, audio, images, video, live conversations, the e-board, Application Sharing, File transfer, and achieving students" effective participation discussion and dialogue arenas (Michele & Florence, 2010).

E-learning management systems are defined as a software application that depends on the Internet, and works to manage the teaching and the learning processes electronically through an integrated software system responsible for managing the e-learning process (Al-Salloum & Radwan, 2013). It is also defined as a set of digital educational tools that enable the teacher to manage the learning process, direct it towards learning his students in some pedagogical ways that put them in interactive learning environments via the Internet. It supports and enhances the educational process and works as a complementary to classroom teaching, so that the teacher puts the educational material in it, including information, activities, assignments, tests, learning resources, enhancers, and others. It also contains dialogue rooms for the learners to communicate with each other and with their teacher, through which the teacher can set times to meet with his students, and other electronic services that support the educational process (Sawafta & Radwan, 2014).

In light of the technological development that has occurred, LMS has become a widely relied upon means in university education and training. Most universities around the world have used LMS to provide their programs through e-learning management systems (Jones, Morales, & Knezek, 2005). E-learning management systems include Content Management system, Learning and Content Management System, and Learning Management System (Abazi-Bexheti, 2008; Samsudeen & Mohamed, 2019). According to Salem (2004) LMS are one of the most important components of e-learning, as it is an integrated system responsible for managing the educational process via the Internet, and this system includes admission and registration, course and assignment management, student learning follow-up, and test management.

LMS provides a suitable environment for learners to communicate and interact. It also contains open source learning activities, and provides many facilities for the teacher and the student, such as: individual and group educational activities, and providing feedback. Among the advantages of learning management systems is that it is considered interactive educational applications that are characterized by a variety of educational tools (Al-Salloum & Radwan, 2013). It embodies abstract concepts through presenting these concepts by using videos and graphics (Sherif & Al-Dawlat, 2018). The accessibility of the educational content anywhere and anytime (Sherif & Al-Dawlat, 2018), and building interactive learning environments (Weston, Kosko, Amador, & Estapa, 2018).

It includes tools that help exchange ideas and opinions between teachers and students, facilitate reaching to the teacher easily (Heggart & Yoo, 2018), and communication between the teacher and the learner, it acts as a support for traditional teaching (Al-Khalifa, 2008). It also provide flexibility, interactivity, tests and learner control (Kim & Lee, 2008), It contains tools for evaluating the learners' performance and helps the teacher to use different ways of building information and ways of distributing and categorizing it Moreno, Cavazotte, and Alves (2017). It facilitate

group discussions, file transfer, assignments delivery and student assessment (Bove & Conklin, 2020). It presents online learning material, and Multiple communication tools for the learner to communicate with a faculty member, and to provide tools for evaluating students and determining their achievement levels, feedback and immediate reinforcement, and easy browsing of the learning content in different ways using multimedia (Taha & Al-Zahrani, 2020).

The Blackboard Learning System is one of the LMSs, and the strength of this system lies in providing many options for the user to choose from them what suits his needs, and it provides tools that allow the learner to interact with the colleagues, practice the activities, and carry out the tasks required. It provides a support for different file formats and file transferring. The system provides a guide explaining the use of those tools, and provides a number of functions, such as providing interactive tools for the learner, displaying the learning content in different forms, and achieving different ways of communication between the teacher and learning, such as messages, discussion board, and virtual classes (Al-Salloum & Radwan, 2013).

Many studies have indicated the importance of using LMS in university education (Adeyinka, 2012; Emelyanova & Voronina, 2014; Ghilay, 2017). The study of EL-Sharif (2019) indicated that students have positive attitudes towards using LMS in university education, and recommended converting university courses into electronic courses. Kurata, Bano, and Marcelo (2018) and Ghilay (2017) found that LMS contribute in finding the comfort of learning because they are interactive and environments easy to access.

Sawafta and Radwan (2014) also found that using the five learning cycle strategy based on e-learning management system "Blackboard" affects students' achievement at the university. Abdel-Wahab (2015) indicated that the effectiveness of using e-learning management systems in developing knowledge, skills and motivation towards achievement among faculty of Education students. Abdel-Baqi, Mahmoud, Abdel-Hamid, and Shehata (2019) found that using learning strategies in e-learning management systems has an impact on developing personal learning environments building skills.

The study of Chaw and Tang (2018) indicated also to the factors that helped the common use of LMS. Mwalumbwe and Mtebe (2017) showed that discussion forums, peer interaction and educational activities are the most important factors that helped in raising students' academic achievement. The other factors that Francis et al. (2019) points out is the increased interaction between learners and the early and direct feedback.

Some previous studies have also indicated the effectiveness of LMS on developing writing skills in general (Francis et al., 2019; Topacio, 2018) and creative writing skills in particular. Al-Melhi (2021) conducted a study with undergraduate students in order to find out the effectiveness of using LMS on developing creative writing skills in English for non-native speakers, and found that LMS the "blackboard" helped in developing students creative writing skills, and the discussion boards and blogs inside the blackboard were among the most important factors that helped raise the scientific achievement of creative writing skills.

Despite the diversity of the studies that dealt with LMS in university education in terms of determining the importance of using them in the learning process, developing learners' knowledge, skills and emotional aspects, increasing interaction between learners, and in building personal learning environments, as well as in terms of knowing the factors that enhance the use of learning systems, the current study seeks to know the effectiveness of using LMS in developing essay writing skills as a form of creative writing for undergraduate students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which Agree with the study of Al-Melhi (2021); Topacio (2018); Francis et al. (2019).

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

31. Research objectives

This research aims at:

1- Determining a list of essay writing skills as a form of the creative writing skills for undergraduate students.

2- Constructing a proposed unit based on using LMS to develop essay writing skills for undergraduate students in Saudi Arabia.

3- Studying the effectiveness of LMS in developing essay writing skills for undergraduate students in Saudi Arabia.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES.

4.1. The sub-research questions were framed as follows

1. What are the essay writing skills as a form of creative writing that should be available to undergraduate students?

2. What is the effectiveness of using LMS in developing essay writing skills as a whole for undergraduate students in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

3. What is the effectiveness of using LMS in developing the essay writing skills (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, and writing the conclusion) for undergraduate students in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

4.2. Research Hypotheses

1. There is no statistically significant difference at the level $(0.01 \geq \alpha)$ between mean scores of the treatment group students (which studies the proposed unit based on using (LMS) in the pre - post application of essay writing skills test as a whole.

2. There is no statistically significant difference at the level $(0.01 \geq \alpha)$ between mean scores of the treatment group students (which studies the proposed unit based on using LMS) in the pre - post application of essay writing skills test (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, writing the conclusion).

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

5.1. Research Methodology

This research adopted a quasi-experimental design for one group to determine the effectiveness of the independent variable (LMS) on the dependent variables (essay writing skills).

5.2. Research Population and Sample

The research population consisted of (270) female undergraduate students registered in the second year of the Early Childhood department in the academic year 2020-2021. (31) Female students were randomly selected, and their ages ranged from 21-23 years.

5.3. Preparation of Research Treatment Materials and Tools

First: A list of essay writing skills:

To answer the first question of the research: "What are the essay writing skills as a form of creative writing that should be available to undergraduate students? The following procedures were taken:

- Determining the objective of preparing the list: It was to determine the essay writing skills as one of the forms of creative writing that should be available to undergraduate students, which can be developed through a proposed unit based on using LMS.

- Preparing the initial form of the list: A list of the appropriate essay writing skills was prepared for undergraduate students, by reviewing related research, previous studies, and Arabic and foreign literature related to creative writing in general, and essay writing in particular. It included five main skills (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, and writing the conclusion) which included twenty-five sub-skills.

- Presenting the list to the jury members: After preparing the list in its initial form, it was administered to a panel of experts in the field of curricula and methods of teaching Arabic language, to express their opinion in terms of its relevance to undergraduate students, the extent to which each sub-skill belongs to the main skill, the clarity of each skill linguistically, and to delete, modify or add skills. In light of the jury members' comments, the list was revised.

- Reliability of the list: The reliability of the lists was verified by applying Cooper's equation to calculate the percentage of agreement among the jury members, where the percentage of agreement on essay writing skills among them was (0.92%), as Cooper determined the level of reliability in terms of the following percentage: lower than (70%) represents a low reliability coefficient, from (84%-71%) represents an intermediate reliability coefficient, and from (85%) or more represents a high reliability coefficient. So (0.92%) represents a high reliability rate, which is an indicator for the reliability of the list.

- The final form of the list: In light of the mentioned above, the list of essay writing skills in its final form consists of five main skills: form skills, includes (8) sub- skills, language skills includes (8) sub-skills, writing the introduction skills includes (3) sub-skills, presentation skills includes (5) sub-skills and writing the conclusion skills includes (1) sub-skill. Table 1 shows a list of essay writing skills for the undergraduate level.

Second: Constructing a proposed educational unit based on LMS.

The scientific content of the educational unit was prepared; it included three topics, each topic included general goals and specific objectives. These topics were: expression, essay writing and essay types. Videos, PowerPoint presentations and text files were used in the educational unit.

Table 1. A list of creative writing skills for the undergraduate level.

No.	Essay Writing Skills	No.	
	First: Form skill	6.	Arrange sentences and their coherence at the level of each paragraph
1.	Using punctuation correctly	7.	Abbreviation without meaning.
2.	Following the paragraph system.	8.	No tedious verbiage.
3.	Paying attention to the margins and spaces between sentences.	No.	**Third:** Writing the introduction skills
4.	Justifying lines ends	1.	Writing an interesting and expressive introduction about the topic, and attracting the reader to the topic.
5.	Leaving extra space between each paragraph.	2.	Writing different introductions, including: questions, and exclamation methods.
6.	Leaving a half-centimeter space at the beginning of each paragraph.	3.	The introduction ends with a sentence that defines the topic.
7.	The clarity of the handwriting and the cleanliness of writing from crosses out.	No.	**Fourth:** Presentation skills
8.	Putting the letter dots in their places.	1.	Defining main and sub-ideas.
No.	**Second:** Language skills	2.	Arranging ideas logically.
1.	Choosing the right words.	3.	Supporting ideas with new examples and various illustrations
2.	Correct formulation of sentences.	4.	Commitment to the topic, and focus on the basic demands.
3.	Completing sentence parts.	5.	Using appropriate quotation from the Holy Quran and the hadiths of the Prophet.
4.	Selecting tenses.	No.	**Fifth:** Writing the conclusion skills
5.	Using evocative and effective words.	1.	Writing a conclusion that includes a summary of the presented ideas.

After presenting the most important foundations and criteria that should be taken into account when designing a unit in the literary essay based on LMS, the unit was constructed on the criteria of "Quality Matters" the sixth

version on the Blackboard platform (as an accredited platform in Saudi universities). It was constructed in terms of goals, content, methods of teaching, activities, teaching aids, and evaluation tools and methods that were used to achieve the unit's goals.

The unit goals (general and specific objectives) were presented on the main page, and were divided into three topics. Each topic appeared in a separate link and it was available weekly to the students. Each topic began by presenting the objectives to be achieved by the end of the topic. Before presenting the educational material, a question was asked in the discussion board that was related to what would be presented in order to explore the new learning topic; providing an icon to explain the scientific material. Open source enrichment materials were available at the end of the presentation, and a question was presented in the discussion board.

Regarding the questions that were asked in the discussion board or forums, each topic was designed to contain a set of activities ranging from five to nine activities according to Bloom's levels, starting from the cognitive level recall: "Define the essay in your style?" to the evaluation level "Choose an essay on industry in Saudi Arabia through the Internet, and determine the extent of the writer's commitment to the conditions of a good conclusion"? Finally, each student was asked to participate in these activities, and the answers were evaluated by the colleagues and by researchers.

Most of the tools available on the Blackboard that help students to discuss, debate and brainstorm were enabled, such as: blogs, discussion boards and e-mail. The students were divided into small groups inside the blackboard platform consisting of 3 to 4 students in each group, . allowing groups to transfer and exchange files related to the learning topics and the related tasks. The unit study was based on self-learning. The role of the researchers was to raise the scientific content and follow up the activities of the students within the learning environment, direct the students and answer their inquiries through the discussion forum or the blogs available within the Blackboard.

Third: Essay writing skills test:

The objective of this test was to measure the essay writing skills to be improved among college of Science and Humanities Studies students in Jubail. The test content was determined in five different topics; each student was free to choose one of the topics to write on. The content of the test contained a set of questions that measured five main essay writing skills (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, and writing the conclusion). A grade scale was prepared for evaluating the students through a triple scale (excellent, good, needs improvement).

After preparing the test and formulating its vocabulary in its initial form, it was presented to a group of jury members to ensure its validity. It was also applied to a pilot sample consisted of (25) students from college of science and humanities in Jubail, In order to verify the appropriateness of the test to the essay writing skills, and the clarity of its instructions. The reliability coefficient of the test using the Couder-Richardson method (21) was also calculated, it was (0.95), which is a high value that allows applying the test to the study sample. The time of the test was calculated as (55) minutes.

5.4. Pre –Application of the Research Tool

The research tool was applied previously to the treatment group in the academic year (2020-2021), before the educational material was presented.

5.5. Presentation of the Treatment Material to the Research Group

A unit in the literary essay was designed on LMS, based on "Quality Matters" standards, and contained the objectives, content, teaching methods, activities, teaching aids, evaluation tools and methods that were used to achieve the unit's objectives. The unit goals (general and specific objectives) were presented on the main page, and were divided into three topics. Each topic appeared in a separate link and it is available to the students weekly. Each topic began by presenting the objectives to be achieved by the end of the topic. Before presenting the educational

material, a question was asked in the discussion board that related to what will be presented in order to explore the new learning topic; providing with an icon to explain the scientific material. Open source enrichment materials were available at the end of the presentation, and a question was presented in the discussion board.

5.6. Post-Application of the Search Tools

After teaching the proposed unit in literary essay writing by using the learning management systems for the treatment group, the post application of the research tool was applied, and the results of this application were monitored.

6. RESEARCH RESULTS

6.1. Effectiveness of Using LMS in Developing Creative Writing Skills

The first hypothesis stated "There is no statistically significant difference at the level $(0.01 \geq \alpha)$ between mean scores of the treatment group students (which studies the proposed unit based on using (LMS) in the pre - post application of creative writing skills test as a whole". The hypothesis was tested by using the (T) test for the related groups to calculate the significance of the differences between mean scores of the two applications, the pre and post applications, in the essay writing skills as shown in the following Table 2.

Table 2. The results of the pre - post application of the treatment group in creative writing skills test as a whole.

Essay writing skills	Application	N.	Mean	St. deviation	"t" value	Sig. (2-tailed)	η2	"d" value	Effect size
Essay writing Skills as a whole	Pre	31	3.77	1.45	17.29	0.00	0.91	6.33	High
	Post	31	8.52	0.77					

Note: t= t- test , " Eta η2" to measure the size of the effect of the independent variable, d= Cohen's d effect size.

The results of Table 2 indicate that the value of t- test "t" is statistically significant at the level (0.01) and this indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between mean scores of the treatment group students (while studying the proposed unit based on using LMS) in the pre – post application of essay writing skills test as a whole in favor of the post application, then the first null hypothesis of the research cannot be accepted and the directed alternative hypothesis is accepted, which is "There is a statistically significant difference at the level $(0.01 \geq \alpha)$ between mean scores of the treatment group students (which studying the proposed unit based on using LMS) in the pre – post application of creative writing skills as a whole in favor of the post application". It is also clear from the previous table that the effect of using LMS in creative writing skills test as a whole is high, as the value of the Eta square "η2" for the total score of the test is (0.91), and the value of the effect size (d) is (6.33) which is greater than (0.8), and this value confirms that there is a significant impact of LMS in developing creative writing skills for undergraduate students in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The effectiveness of using LMS in developing the creative writing skills (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, and writing the conclusion) is among undergraduate students in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

To answer the research question which states: "What is the effectiveness of using LMS in developing the creative writing skills (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, and writing the conclusion) for undergraduate students in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?" The second hypothesis: "There is no statistically significant difference at the level $(0.01 \geq \alpha)$ between mean scores of the treatment group students (which studies the proposed unit based on using LMS) in the pre - post application of creative writing skills test (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, writing the conclusion) was tested by using the (T) test for the related groups to calculate the significance of the differences between mean scores of the two applications, the pre and post applications, in each skill of the creative writing skills; as shown in the following Table 3.

Table 3. The results of the pre- post application of the treatment group in each skill of the creative writing skills test (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, and writing the conclusion).

Creative writing skills	Application	N	Mean	St. deviation	"t" value	Sig. (2-tailed)	Eta-square η2	"d" value	Effect size
Form skills	Pre	31	0.57	0.50	8.45	0.00	0.70	3.04	High
	Post	31	1.63	0.49					
Language skills	Pre	31	0.84	0.37	4.35	0.00	0.38	1.56	High
	Post	31	1.23	0.43					
Writing the introduction skills	Pre	31	0.48	0.51	9.45	0.00	0.74	3.44	High
	Post	31	1.68	0.48					
Presentation skills	Pre	31	1.74	0.63	1.88	0.00	0.11	0.70	Inter-mediate
	Post	31	1.97	0.180					
Writing the conclusion skills	Pre	31	0.130	0.340	30.57	0.000	0.97	11.58	High
	Post	31	2.00	0.000					

Note: t= t- test , Eta"η2" to measure the size of the effect of the independent variable, d= Cohen's d effect size.

The results in Table 3 indicate that the value of "t" is statistically significant at the level (0.01) and this indicates that there are statistically significant differences between mean scores of the treatment group students (which studying the proposed unit based on using LMS) in the pre – post application of creative writing skills (form, language, writing the introduction, the presentation, and writing the conclusion)" in favor of the post - application, and then the second null hypothesis of the research hypotheses cannot be accepted and the alternative directed hypothesis is accepted, which is: "There is a statistically significant difference at the level (0.01 ≥ α) between mean scores of the treatment group students (which is studying the proposed unit based on using learning management systems) application of creative writing skills (form, language, writing the introduction, the presentation, and writing the conclusion)" in favor of the post -application ".

It is also clear from the above table that the effect size of using LMS in developing the form skill is high, as the value of the Eta Square"η2" for the total score of the test is (0.70), and the value of the effect size (d) is (3.04). The effect size of using LMS in developing the language is high, as the value of the Eta Square "η2" for the total score of the test is (0.38), and the value of the effect size (d) is (1.56). The effect size of using LMS in developing writing the introduction skills is high, as the value of the Eta Square"η2" for the total score of the test is (0.74), and the value of the effect size (d) is (3.44). The effect size of using LMS in developing the presentation skills is intermediate, as the value of the Eta square"η2" for the total score of the test is (0.11), and the value of the effect size (d) is (0.70). While the effect size of using LMS in developing writing the conclusion skill is high, as the value of the Eta square"η2" for the total score of the test is (0.97), and the effect size (d) value id (11.58). These values confirm that there is a significant impact of LMS in developing creative writing skills (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, writing the conclusion) for undergraduate students in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

8. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

The results of the research indicated that there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-post application favoring the post- application of creative writing skills test as a whole and in writing each skill separately (form, language, writing the introduction, the presentation, and writing the conclusion). It supports the effectiveness of using LMS in developing creative writing skills, creative writing in particular. This result agrees with the results of Al-Melhi (2021); Topacio (2018); Francis et al. (2019) which emphasized the effectiveness of LMS on developing creative writing skills.

These results also agree with what studies have indicated in general about the importance of using learning management systems on students' cognitive, skillful, and emotional performance such as Sawafta and Radwan (2014); Abdel-Wahab (2015); Abdel-Baqi et al. (2019). It also agrees with what Tapscott (2015) suggested of the

importance of using modern strategies and methods to change from the traditional method and using modern techniques that help in using discussion method ,asking questions and encouraging students to cooperate.

This can be attributed to the fact that LMS can be employed in university education (Adeyinka, 2012; Emelyanova & Voronina, 2014; Ghilay, 2017). As it works to form positive attitudes towards learning by using LMS (EL-Sharif, 2019), and the learner feels comfortable with learning as a result of transferring the learning content into electronic content (Ghilay, 2017; Kurata et al., 2018).

The development of creative writing skills (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, and writing the conclusion) can also be explained by the fact that LMS provide an appropriate environment for students to communicate, and interact. It includes open source learning activities, individual and group learning activities, providing feedback, facilitating access to the educational content included in the proposed unit, and easy navigation to it in different ways using multimedia, group discussions, files transfer, sending tasks, students evaluation and using tools helping in exchanging ideas and opinions between teachers and students, and providing feedback and immediate reinforcement (Al-Salloum & Radwan, 2013; Bove & Conklin, 2020; Heggart & Yoo, 2018; Kim & Lee, 2008; Sherif & Al-Dawlat, 2018; Taha & Al-Zahrani, 2020; Weston et al., 2018).

Developing creative writing skills as a whole and its sub-skills (form, language, writing the introduction, presentation, and writing the conclusion) can be attributed to the use of the Blackboard Learning System, which is one of the LMS. It provided many learning options for the students to choose from them that suits their needs .It also provided the tools that allow students to interact with others, practice activities, do the required tasks, provide support for students to exchange learning files, in addition to provide them with interactive tools, displaying learning content in different forms, and achieve different ways of communication, such as messages, communication boards, and virtual classrooms, (Al-Salloum & Radwan, 2013). This enhances the students' feeling of comfort and enjoyment, reducing tension, expressing feelings and ideas freely, and providing them with a strong opportunity for self-expression, openness to ideas and the development of imagination. This is consistent with the role played by creative writing (Al-Ahmadi, 2014; Demille & Kallio, 2014; Pawliczak, 2015).

This result enhances the effectiveness of using the Blackboard Learning System as one of the LMS in enhancing students' ability to express their thoughts, feelings and emotions toward a particular topic with free linguistic errors writing, and with the largest possible number of fluency, flexibility, and originality. It is the expressive ability of creative writing, (Al-Zahrani, 2017). When practicing educational activities on the blackboard system, it releases thinking and imagination and increases its motivation to clearly express the ideas in the form of literary educational outcomes (writing an essay) based on the beauty of form, emotional impact, strength of meaning, originality of the idea, accuracy of construction and imagery, and clarity and originality (Galhoum, 2008). In addition, it enhances students' transfer what is on their minds to others by presenting a set of main ideas and giving information in a distinct literary style that reveals their experiences, emotions, and feelings (Al- Bataynah, 2014; Asri, 2015).

These results differ from many studies which indicated that students suffer from a clear weakness in practicing creative writing skills in general and creative writing skills in particular. This weakness was represented in bringing the weakness in the logical sequence of ideas, the inability to convince the reader with evidence, and the difficulty in using graphic images and language effectively. In addition, they were not trained correctly and effectively in the processes of planning, writing and reviewing during their writing (Al- Mahmoud, 2008; Al-Hashimi, 2010; Al-Jishi, 2010; Al-Salami, 2011; Al-Hashimi and Fakhri, 2011; Al-Saqa, 2012).

This can explain the effectiveness of the proposed teaching unit based on learning LMS that dealt with topics of expression, creative writing and essay types by using videos, PowerPoint presentations and text files in the unit by using questions in the discussion board that related to what was presented in order to explore the new learning topic; providing an icon to explain the scientific material. Using open source enrichment materials at the end of the presentation, writing questions in the discussion board, using many activities according to Bloom's levels,

participating in these activities, and evaluating the answer by colleagues. As well as using most of the available tools on the blackboard that help students to discuss, communicate and use brainstorming technique such as blogs, discussion boards and email, and allowing students to participate and exchange files related to the learning topics and the tasks related to it.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In order to shift from traditional learning to an appropriate transformation of the characteristics of the technology generation, the current research recommends developing the curricula at the undergraduate level by using modern methods and tools that provide students with means to communicate and interact, such as: discussion boards and blogs. The results revealed that using LMS has a significant role in developing writing skills, and this is due to the characteristics of these systems in having communication tools with the teacher and peers, and the availability of educational material for the learners.

The current research also recommends the necessity of using e-learning management systems to train students to use their learning strategies in building literary essays and develop the skills related to it, and the importance of preparing training programs for students in Saudi universities, in order to learn the art of literary essay writing, and develop attitudes towards it, and develop creative writing skills when constructing the early childhood department courses. The most important strategies that enhance the development of these skills should be included inside these courses. In the light of these results, the current research suggests studying the impact of organizing learning content techniques in LMS on developing Saudi universities students' creative writing skills, and developing faculty of education students' creative writing using personal learning environments in the light of their favorite learning techniques.

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