

# opción

Revista de Antropología, Ciencias de la Comunicación y de la Información, Filosofía,  
Lingüística y Semiótica, Problemas del Desarrollo, la Ciencia y la Tecnología

Año 35, 2019, Especial N°

# 19

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

ISSN 1012-1587/ ISSN-e: 2477-9385

Depósito Legal pp 198402ZU45



Universidad del Zulia  
Facultad Experimental de Ciencias  
Departamento de Ciencias Humanas  
Maracaibo - Venezuela

# **The effect of utilizing mobile on developing English writing skill: A case study at University Of Baghdad**

**Lina Lafta Jassim**

Department of English, College of Art, University of Thi Qar

E-Mail: [lina\\_lafta@ahsgs.uum.edu.my](mailto:lina_lafta@ahsgs.uum.edu.my)

**Hisham Dzakiria**

University of Utara Malaysia, 06010 Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia

[hisham@uum.edu.my](mailto:hisham@uum.edu.my)

## **Abstract**

The objectives of this study are to improving Iraqi EFL students' writing skills via a quantitative method. The researcher used tests and observation to collect his data during conducting this experience. The findings showed that mobile phones can successfully and easily be implemented as an instructive aid to teach writing skills because mobile phones motivate students for learning writing skills. In conclusion, this study offered some pedagogical implications of using mobile as an educational tool to develop students' writing skills.

**Keywords:** Descriptive essay writing, Mobile learning.

## **El efecto de utilizar el móvil en el desarrollo de habilidades de escritura en inglés: Un caso de estudio en la Universidad de Bagdad**

### **Resumen**

Los objetivos de este estudio son mejorar las habilidades de escritura de los estudiantes iraquíes de EFL a través de un método cuantitativo. El investigador utilizó pruebas y observación para recopilar sus datos durante la realización de esta experiencia. Los hallazgos demostraron que los teléfonos móviles pueden implementarse con éxito y fácilmente como una ayuda instructiva para enseñar habilidades de escritura porque los teléfonos móviles motivan a los estudiantes a aprender habilidades de escritura. En conclusión, este estudio

ofreció algunas implicaciones pedagógicas de usar el móvil como una herramienta educativa para desarrollar las habilidades de escritura de los estudiantes.

**Palabras clave:** redacción de ensayos descriptivos, aprendizaje móvil.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, technology has a significant role in enhancing and facilitating English language learning. In this meaning, technology-improved learning is able to motivate the learning process and enhance its outcomes. Mobile phones have effectively integrated into the youths' life, and becoming an important part of their life. The attractiveness of mobile among learners has led some educators to pay attention to using it as an educational tool. The use of mobile has received a great attention in English learning. For instance, current trends of mobile-learning show that the major numbers of researches who concern on mobile learning have asserted on language and linguistic fields. In Iraq, students face challenges to improve their writing skills. That is why students need a modern tool and method for enhancing their writing skills. Recently, Educators resort to use technologies instead of using conventional teaching methods of teaching writing skills. One of recent technologies is mobile. Students can be taught with using mobile. As in this regard, Prensky emphasized that mobile has many features such as its ability to connect, construct in virtual keyboards for entering text easily, touching screen with high resolution user interface and multitudes of downloadable applications. All these features provide an enormous opportunity for English language students to improve their writing skills. Thus, this paper would like to investigate the strengths and weaknesses of using mobile in learning writing skills for

EFL students by referring to a few aspects. First, is to show how mobile has integrated into English learning.

### *1.1. Problem Statement*

English writing skills are overwhelmingly important and simultaneously too difficult to learn as compared to listening, speaking and reading. Similarly, the intermediate (compulsory English language) previous three years' results of the Gujranwala board, explicitly reveal that English writing skills are a serious challenge also faced by the Iraqi students. There are few studies conducted by Iraqi researchers have comprehensively addressed, examined, highlighted and explored specific issues related to the poor English writing skills of the Iraqi students. Aqeel and Sajid besides Mushtaq and Khan explored problems of essay writing and the findings revealed that conventional teaching methods were also the reason for students' poor essay writing skills. Khan, Javaid and Farooq investigated the writing skills and claimed that traditional methods were not helpful for students in learning writing skills and suggested cooperative learning strategies to be employed for teaching writing skills.

On other hands, Sarfraz postulated that students' grammatical errors were mainly due to interlanguage process. Tabbasum suggested corrective feedback as a solution to address issues regarding students' writing skills. However, Bilal, Tariq, Yaqub and Kanwal claimed that the use of Urdu is the main cause of prepositional errors committed by Iraqi students while in writing English. Iraqi pedagogues who are still unwilling to adopt or adapt new pedagogical methods and tools must consider

seriously Brand. Therefore, the education leaders must discover a fresh vision for the 21st-century students by creating innovative learning opportunities which are aligned with the needs of the learners (Dzakiria et al., 2006; Kukulskahulme & Shield, 2008). Likewise, modern gadgets and tools being interesting, exciting and relevant due to their designs and procedures are being utilized to learn English language skills.

### *1.2. Objectives of the study*

The main object of this study was to examine the impact of mobile on learning descriptive essay writing. It aims to investigate the impact of using mobile on teaching and learning English writing skills. It aims to investigate students' engagement and motivation to learn English writing after using mobiles. In addition, this study indicates the teacher's and students' views on using mobiles in writing skills. Finally, it aims to explore the advantageous as well as weaknesses via using mobile as an educational tool.

### *1.3. Hypotheses of the Study*

1) To examine whether there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the learners for learning the introduction component of descriptive essay writing before and after the intervention using mobiles.

2) To examine whether there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the learners for learning the focus on a topic component of descriptive essay writing before and after the intervention using mobiles.

3) To examine whether there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the students for learning the body component of descriptive essay writing before and after the intervention using mobiles.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Siddique (2015) shows that students could easily enter text in mobile as compared to writing with pen and edit and revise too. Having access to variety of information can occur with the assistance of mobiles which enabled students to utilize their time and energy by downloading the material related to their essay topics even when they were not in the classroom which also refers to ubiquitous learning (Chen & Li, 2010; Mokhtar et al., 2016; Hsieh et al., 2010; Huang and Chi, 2017). The other benefit or strength for using mobiles is that they are environment-friendly since mobile phones save papers and ultimately save trees. Osifo and Radwan (2014) advocated paperless classroom showing that mobiles help lower the effective filters as put another beneficial for using of mobile. Similarly, Kukolja et al. (2016) indicate that with regard to second language acquisition. According to Kukolja et al. (2017), confidence is given to students by the downloading feature of mobiles. The healthy environment collaboration among students used to be the most missing elements in their class before intervention using mobiles. On the contrary, previously they were not provided with the facility of collaborative

learning and scaffolding. Siddique (2016) shows that students cannot only use mobile phones in the classroom rather when they go home or are away from the classroom. In addition, Arnedillosánchez et al. (2007) who posited that mobile learning provides learning materials and tools for scaffolding where students. For these scholars, the zone is a proximal development in which learning happens in collaboration with more capable peers. Kenning (2007) indicate that mobile learning provided helpful learning materials and tools for scaffolding.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The researcher adopted a qualitative method in this study. The researcher used action research undertaken by Iraqi EFL teacher with his students in the department of English, College of Art at of Mustansiriyah University. The participants of this study are students and one teacher in the 2017-2018 academic year. A teacher taught his students English writing skills by using mobile. The samples were 40 males. Their ages were between 18 to 19 years. Their English proficiency was equal as it gave us other proof from their second-year results. Iraq EFL students were taught English writing skills with using mobile for 6 weeks. On other hands, the design of the study was simple, since it based on writing descriptive essays. The researcher used tests and observation to collect his data during conducting this experience.

### *3.1. Research Procedure*

During the 55 minutes period, the essay topic was sent by the teacher to the students during the lesson. Students were placed in groups. In a team, the interaction of students has happened face to face. During cooperative and collaborative learning, Iraqi students accomplished their essay at the same time having interesting experience for learning writing skills with helping mobile. They downloaded, discussed and wrote in a collaboratively and develop their writings. In the end, each group introduced during the leaders of groups and the teacher assessed and gave awards to the best performer in a group. The teacher sent the SMS to his students in the classroom and after college times and sometimes till 4 pm for feedback. And it is notable that even out the class, the teacher responded to questions of his students relating to certain writing issues while feedback continued from the teacher (Thornton & Houser, 2005).

### *3.2. Data Collection*

The researcher collected the data basing on the tests and the teacher observations.

### *3.3. Pretest and Posttest*

The researcher asked the teacher to examine his students before conducting the experience. Therefore, the pretest was done to examine the



students' level in English writing skills. After conducting the study, a posttest was conducted by asking the student to write about the same topic given in the pretest. The aim of the posttest was to explore the effect of using mobile in developing Iraqi EFL students' writing skills (Valarmathi, 2011).

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the students for learning the introduction component of descriptive essay writing before and after the intervention using mobiles.

Table 1. Comparison of Overall Mean Scores for Introduction Component in the Pre-test and Post-test

<b>Group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean Difference</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>p- value</b>
INT Pre	45	6.60	1.178	1.10	-7.8844		0.000
INT Post	45	7.70	1.433				

Level of Significance is at P<0.05

Table 1 shows the mean scores of the students in the pre-test and post-test for the introduction component of descriptive essay writing skills before and after the intervention. The mean score of the students in their pre-test was 6.60 (SD=1.178). Nevertheless, the mean score of the students in the post-test was higher (Mean=7.70, SD= 1.433). The results from the Paired-samples t-test showed that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of students in their pre-test and post-test for the introduction component of descriptive essay writing skills after the intervention ( $t = -7.88, df = 44, p = 0.000$ ). Therefore, the results failed to accept the null hypothesis Ho1a.

Ho2: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the students for learning the focus on topic component of descriptive essay writing before and after the intervention using mobiles.

Table 2. Comparison of Mean Scores for Focus on Topic Component of Descriptive Essay Writing Skills in the Pre-test and Post-test

<b>Group Difference</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p-value</b>
FOT Pre	45	12.18	2.77	2.66	11.2144		0.000
FOT Post	45	14.84	2.50				

Level of Significance is at P<0.05

Table 2 reveals the mean scores of the students in the pre-test and post-test for the focus on the topic component of descriptive essay writing skills before and after the treatment. The mean score of the students in their pre-test was 12.18 (SD=2.77). Nevertheless, the mean score of the students in the post-test was higher (Mean=14.84, SD= 2.50). The results from the Paired-samples t-test indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of students in their pre-test and post-test for the focus on the topic component of descriptive essay writing skills after the intervention (t = 11.21, df = 44, p = 0.000). Therefore, the results failed to accept the null hypothesis Ho1b. Thus, the research question 1b was answered. The findings mentioned in Table 4.4 indicate that the employment of smartphone coupled with the process writing approach in teaching essay writing significantly enhanced the students' mean score for focus on the topic component of descriptive essay writing

skills as compared to their score for the pre-test before the intervention (Yunus et al., 2013).

Ho3: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the students for learning the body component of descriptive essay writing before and after the intervention using mobiles.

Table 3. Comparison of Mean Scores for Body (Supporting Details) Component of Descriptive Essay Writing Skills in the Pre-test and Post-test

<b>Group Difference</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p-value</b>
SD Pre	45	8.31	1.59	3.8	17.71	44	0.000
SD Post	45	12.11	2.03				

Level of Significance is at  $P < 0.05$

Table 3 indicates the mean scores of the students in the pre-test and post-test for the body (supporting details) component of descriptive essay writing skills before and after the intervention. The mean score of the students in their pre-test was 8.31 (SD=1.59). However, the mean score of the students in the post-test was higher (Mean=12.11, SD= 2.03). The results from the Paired-samples t-test indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean scores of students in their pre-test and post-test for the body (supporting details) component of descriptive essay writing skills after the intervention ( $t = 17.71, df = 44, p = 0.000$ ). Therefore, the results failed to accept the null hypothesis Ho1c. Thus, the utilization of mobiles has significantly enhanced the students' mean score for the body (supporting details) of descriptive essay writing skills as

compared to their score for the pre-test before the intervention (Zakaria et al., 2019).

### *3.4. Observations*

The researchers adopted the teacher's observation every lesson and kept up a diary, at the same time with beginning of students' activities, to make revealing notes as has been proposed by Nunan. The diary contained of the teacher committed to paper the students' feelings about the writing skills done with the mobile and its effects. In addition, students' comments about this new method of teaching English writing skills and including the whole print of the students' activities.

### *3.5. SMS Exchanged with Students*

The SMS was used as a tool to examine the mobile's effect on teaching English writing skills to Iraqi EFL students. Pictures which was related to the topics of essays were sent by the teacher to his students to engage them with the topic. After that, students downloaded the material was related to the topic's essay and substituted with each other in groups and wrote while discussion each point. If the topic did not accomplish during the time of class (55 minutes) and it extended to the next class. Also, the feedback was given by the teacher while he was at home after the college hours to keep up the students' engagement, attention and motivation to the learning process.

## **4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### *4.1. Using of Mobile in learning writing skills*

The integration of mobile in the writing lessons can assist student in developing their levels in writing skills. The students faced difficulties in learning writing skills. They were not active in writing lessons as adopting a traditional ways of teaching. With using mobile, student were more enthusiastic and active for learning and practicing writing skills. Although students committed errors of commissions and omissions in their essays writing, they were more ready to revise the writing tasks with enthusiasm and happiness. There was developing in their mechanics, sentence structure, and spellings, supporting details, construction and organization of their writing. Using mobile helped them to enhance their English writing skills.

### *4.2. The Implications of this study*

The current study offers pedagogical implications by providing guidelines to the lecturers as to how to employ mobile to enhance students writing skills, lesson plans and motivation for writing. The study also provides motivation and confidence to lecturers to teach writing skills in an appropriate manner. Similarly, it also helps the lecturers to be well equipped with the modern-day teaching tools to teach English language skills. Above and beyond, the study also helps diminish the fears of the lecturers about the use of technology in general and mobiles in particular. Moreover, the study lessens the burden of the lectures as students

themselves can bring the downloaded material related to language learning. Furthermore, the study offers fun and ubiquitous learning opportunities to the lecturers as well as students with the help of mobile. Similarly, the study offers students the chance to learn the language in a student-centered environment where they themselves are in charge of the whole learning process. Similarly, the study may help the lecturers to get their students engaged or absorbed in the very process of language learning. In the same vein, it provides a paradigm shift from the cliché that the use of mobile is problem monger and above all, if the improved results of the intermediate students may earn rapid promotion for the lecturers.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This paper presented the mobile as an educational tool to enhance the writing skills of EFL students. Mobile has proved its significance in developing the English writing skills of EFL students. With using mobile, students will be able to write easily more than using pens and papers. In addition, they will be more confident and active in their writing using this device. All previous studies approved the importance of integrating mobile for instructional purposes. This study aimed to explore the views of the one lecturer and four students regarding the effects of mobile in teaching and learning. Therefore, the quantities findings showed that the use of mobile had a positive significant impact in enhancing student's descriptive essay writing skills along with its eight components in addition to enhancing their motivation towards writing skills. Finally, the in-depth examination and exploration have revealed that the utilization of mobile as a learning tool had significantly positive effects in enhancing students'

English essay writing skills in the Iraqi context. Therefore, the Iraqi pedagogues should utilize this teaching tool to impart English writing skills efficiently and effectively which can also help them bequeath a proud linguistic heritage to their digitalized posterity.

## REFERENCES

- ARNEDILLOSÀNCHEZ, I., & BYRNE, P. 2007. **A software tool to support digital video production.** *Paper presented at the CAL'07 Development, Disruption & Debate.* Dublin, Ireland.
- CHEN, C., & LI, Y. 2010. **Personalised context-aware ubiquitous learning system for supporting effective English vocabulary learning.** *Interactive Learning Environments.* Vol. 18, N° 4: 341-364. UK.
- DZAKIRIA, H., MUSTAFFA, C., & ABU BAKAR, H. 2006. **Moving forward with blended learning (BL) as a pedagogical alternative to traditional classroom learning.** *Malaysian Online Journal of Instructional Technology (MOJIT).* Malaysia.
- HSIEH, W., & TSAI, C. 2017. **Taiwanese high school teachers' conceptions of mobile learning.** *Computers & Education.* Vol. 115, pp. 82-95. Netherlands.
- HUANG, Y., & CHIU, P. 2015. **The effectiveness of the meaningful learning-based evaluation for different achieving students in a ubiquitous learning context.** *Computers & Education.* Vol. 87, pp. 243-253. Netherlands.
- KENNING, M. 2007. **ICT and Language Learning: From Print to the Mobile Phone.** Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke. UK; New York, NY, USA.
- KUKOLJA, A., TARADI, S., & TARADI, M. 2016. **Making physiology learning memorable: a mobile phone-assisted case-based instructional strategy.** *Advances in physiology education.* Vol. 40, N° 3: 383-387. USA.
- KUKULSKAHULME, A., & SHIELD, L. 2008. **An overview of mobile assisted language learning: From content delivery to supported collaboration and interaction.** *Re CALL.* Vol. 20, N° 3: 271-289. USA.

- MOKHTAR, M., HUSSIN, S., & EMBI, M. 2015. **Edmodo for Interactive Lecture: A Focus on Transparent and Ubiquitous Learning**. E-Learning & Interactive Lecture: SoTL Case Studies in Malaysian HEIs. P. 183. Malaysia.
- OSIFO, A., & RADWAN, A. 2014. **Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) applications for interactive and engaging classrooms: APPsolutely**. In **Conference proceedings**. ICT for language learning. Libreriauniversitaria. It Edizioni. p. 282. USA.
- SIDDIQUE, M. 2015. **The effectiveness of using mobile phone in enhancing writing skills: teacher's and students' reflections**. Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences. Vol. 9, N° 37: 390-396. Australia.
- SIDDIQUE, M. 2016. **The Effect of utilizing Smartphone in enhancing students' English Writing Skills in Pakistan**. Unpublished PhD Thesis. University of Utara. Indonesia.
- THORNTON, P., & HOUSER, C. 2005. **Using mobile phones in English education in Japan**. Journal of computer assisted learning. Vol. 21, N° 3: 217-228. USA.
- TRAXLER, J. 2007. **Defining, Discussing and Evaluating Mobile Learning: The moving finger writes and having writ**. The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning. Vol. 8, N° 2. Netherlands.
- VALARMATHI, K. 2011. **Mobile assisted language learning**. Journal of Technology for ELT. Vol. 2, N° 2: 1-8. UK.
- YUNUS, M., NORDIN, N., SALEHI, H., SUN, C., & EMBI, M. 2013. **Pros and cons of using ICT in teaching ESL reading and writing**. International education studies. Vol. 6, N° 7: 119. Canada.
- ZAKARIA, N., BINTI, N., & YAMIN, N. 2019. **Career management competency among technical students: is difference between course field and university**. Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews. Vol. 7, N° 3: 338-342. India.





**UNIVERSIDAD  
DEL ZULIA**

---

## **opción**

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

Año 35, Especial N° 19, 2019

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital por el personal de la Oficina de Publicaciones Científicas de la Facultad Experimental de Ciencias, Universidad del Zulia.  
Maracaibo - Venezuela

[www.luz.edu.ve](http://www.luz.edu.ve)

[www.serbi.luz.edu.ve](http://www.serbi.luz.edu.ve)

[produccioncientifica.luz.edu.ve](http://produccioncientifica.luz.edu.ve)