The Efficacy of Blended Learning in Enhancing Lebanese Grade 9 Students' Competence in Writing

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HOW TO CITE:
Joseph Georges Samia (2026). The Efficacy of Blended Learning in Enhancing Lebanese Grade 9 Students' Competence in Writing. International Journal of Special Education, 41(17s), 102-112

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ABSTRACT:
Using Blended Learning in the educational setting is proving to be promising since it has the credit of combining face-to-face instruction with online instruction, and this enriches the instructional settings by providing further innovative teaching and learning opportunities. The present study investigated the efficacy of using blended learning in comparison to the traditional method of instruction in developing the writing skills of the ninth-grade students in two Lebanese secondary public schools. The sample of the study consists of 66 students who were divided in an experimental group (32) and a control group (34). The ADDIE design of instruction was designed and employed on Google Classroom to address the needs of the students and the objectives of the Lebanese curriculum; various online resources were designed only for the participants in the experimental group, while the control group had face -to -face instruction with a student-centered approach. The experiment lasted for 8 months during the scholastic year (2023/2024). A pre-test and post-essay writing test was used to measure the effectiveness of blended learning in enhancing essay writing skills. Results showed that there were significant differences in favor of the experimental group.

Keywords: blended learning, efficiency, writing skills

Introduction

Writing has been always been a challenge to learners of a second language whether at school or university (Fitzgerald, et al. 2016). The root causes of such low English proficiency have mainly been attributed to the way English is taught which according to Geta and Olango (2016) is quite often taught in a teacher-centered and less student-centered environment; hence, the students become passive, dependent and less self-initiated to learn.

Lebanese students are no exception; English isn't their native language and the national book "Themes", issued by the Centre for Educational Research and Development in Lebanon, that is used in public schools lacks scope and sequence in addition to the scarcity of cooperative learning activities and study skills it includes (Ghaith and Awada, 2014) (as cited in Awada & Diab, 2016). Furthermore, the lack of the resources, language labs, and internet access at schools which give the students the opportunity to practice and develop their writing skills exacerbate the problem (Awada & Diab, 2016). Thus, blended learning as a strategy with the various multi-media components could help students become more effective communicators through writing (Geta & Olango, 2016). Findings from several studies (Dousti & Amirian, 2023; Milad, 2017; Sheet, 2018) revealed

that blended learning enables learners to work at their own pace, provide them with the proper resource, enough practice in addition to online forum discussion since class time is not enough. Consequently, the face-to- face class will then be dedicated to providing feedback and further practicing. Unfortunately, blended learning as a method of instruction hasn't been widely examined in the Lebanese context in general and in public schools in particular (Sheet, 2018). The root cause of this lies in the fact that most public schools in Lebanon lack the facilities and Lebanese learners in public schools are deprived of the opportunity to use or practice English outside the classroom (Awada & Diab, 2016). That is why the textbooks and the teacher become the main providers of knowledge. The study is considered significant because it fulfills several main goals:

first, the study deals with writing which is an important skill at school, university, and later on in life. Second, the study is implemented in public schools with Grade 9 students in particular. Third, it would provide a way to bridge the gaps of the book "Themes" by providing online supplementary material. Fourth, it would help solve the problem of time constraint which has its impact on the students' achievement. Fifth, it would shed light on a teaching method that could enhance students' motivation and autonomy and address individual needs, and it would be a call for the teachers to change their medium of instruction

In brief, the aim of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of using blended learning in comparison to traditional method of instruction on the writing performance of the Lebanese grade nine students in public schools. The study addresses the following research question:

1- What is the effect of implementing the blended learning strategy on the overall writing performance of grade nine students in secondary public schools?

The study advances the following hypothesis:

1-Hypothesis 1 (H1): The students who are using blended learning will score higher on the overall writing performance than the students who will be using the traditional method.

Literature Review

The ultimate goal of teaching a foreign language is to enable its learners to use the target language effectively through adopting a wide range of available strategies and techniques for teaching language skills. This part will discuss blended learning and its effect in addition to its ADDIE design; it will also shed light on teaching writing and its guiding principles and will end with the theoretical framework.

Blended learning in EFL Writing Instruction

According to Kim (2010), the recent progress in the field of technology and the spread of the Internet and computers in the learning process gave the learners the opportunity to practice online collaborative writing activities beyond the walls of the classroom. The various technological tools pave the way for learners to share information with other learners, construct meaning, exchange knowledge in all the stages of the writing process regardless of time and place; online comments and contributions are often made behind the scenes and this can reduce anxiety and emotional pressure which learners may encounter when sharing feedback verbally in a traditional face-to-face classroom. As a result, an atmosphere of team work prevails with less pressure to provide direct responses.

Several studies (Cui & Hu, 2018; Lam, et al., 2018; Milad, 2017; Sheet, 2018) that addressed using blended learning strategy in teaching writing for non-native speakers of English revealed the positive effect of blended learning as it fosters an interactive learning environment in addition to its positive impact on the writing skill of the learners. Besides, it boosts the students' motivation and increases their interest in writing; Moreover, blended learning boosted learners' confidence and enabled them to become autonomous to write (Milad, 2017). Furthermore, students who were subjected to blended learning also performed better than those in a traditional classroom setting in the overall writing tests, writing self-efficacy, word-choice and sentence length (Altameemy, 2019). Thus, choosing the suitable teaching method is pivotal to get the aspired results.

The ADDIE Design

Selecting the appropriate teaching and learning strategies paves the way for effective teaching; according to Nicholls and Nicholls (1978), the curriculum is a learning opportunity prepared by the educators to their learners; Thus, it is pivotal to prepare the teaching module by choosing the right material, activities, and lessons to meet the teaching objectives. Researches investigating the relationship between online and face-to-face teaching and learning found that student learning outcomes were better when there are student interactions, a favorable workload, a quality of online teaching and resources. Blended learning, which is an educational approach that mixes online and face-to face learning and teaching, can be labeled as an alternative way of education that enables learners and teachers alike to use online material and activities to fulfill their educational goals (Altameemy, 2019). Staker and Horn (2012) differentiated four main models of blended learning and they are: Rotation Model, Flex Model, Self-Blend Model, and Enriched-Virtual Model; furthermore, they divided the Rotation Model into four sub-models respectively and they are: Station Rotation Model, Lab Rotation Model, Flipped-Classroom Model, and Individual Rotation Model. Sahoo and Bhattacharya (2021) believe that the most effective learning "is based on the teacher's model due to the quality of the learners' content and understanding. The instructor has been granted greater liberty to use any model by position and speed" (p. 201) and this is represented in the ADDIE design which is used in this study; the ADDIE based model of blended learning is a design that is applicable to a variety of modes of instruction. It is not originally a type of blended learning but can be used in blended learning and can be combined with models of blended learning; for example, it can be combined with the Flex model to provide learners with a well-structured approach that addresses their needs and pace.

Although the source of the ADDIE design is not clearly known, it is considered one of the most known instructional design models (Sheet, 2018). The ADDIE based model of blended learning is made up of five main phases and they are as follows: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. According to Dick et al., (2009), systematic designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating the teaching process are the bedrock of effective teaching and learning.

Writing Performance and Instructional Approaches

Writing can be considered the corner stone in language learning since it necessitates the knowledge and mastering of the other three language skills namely reading, listening and speaking. According to Brown (2000), writing involves a process of thinking, drafting, and revising that requires specialized skills that can't be developed naturally; hence, students need a lot of practices to master the writing skill in order to produce a good text. Furthermore, writing skills requires the mastering of other aspects, such as cognitive, metacognitive and collaborative skills. Besides, the teacher should be knowledgeable of the different writing theories since the teachers' play an essential role in the educational context (Beiki, 2022).

Writing to most learners of English as a foreign language is the most complex if it is compared to other language skills such as listening and reading (Alrouji, 2020); this complexity lies in the fact that writing incorporates thought and knowledge to create meaning; besides, the formulation of feelings and thoughts in coherent well-structured texts needs time (Sulisworo et al., 2016). Furthermore, the written text should have unified well-sequenced parts that have topic sentences followed by supporting details. Moreover, writing is a complex cognitive activity and the writers are required to control the content, format, structure, and other related linguistic components at the level of the sentence (Brown, 2000). Thus, the basic recipe of acquiring academic writing skills is practice and formal instructional conditions (Giridharan, & Robson, 2011). Mastering the writing skills paves the way for the students to express their feeling, thoughts, knowledge efficiently through accurately written messages (Sulisworo et al., 2016).

According to Tang (2006), some principles need to be applied to develop the writing skills among

learners which include raising the students' awareness to the importance of writing in language learning and showing the importance of having ideas in the sense that students "work out their ideas"; furthermore, students should read before they write since learners need to get familiarized about the topic and rhetorical structure before they start to write; moreover, it is the responsibility of the teachers to teach the writing process to the students; the interaction with the teacher or peers at this stage is vital to improve the writing skills and enable learners to make their choices about reading and be responsible for their own learning task, writing as process, and developing cooperation; in a nut shell, it is indispensable for instructors to create a learner-centered classroom with active communication since writing is a verbal communication.

Becoming a proficient writer needs certain skills such as vocabulary, proper use of grammar, the ability to structure good sentences, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling to enable learners to compose good writing (Ramasamy & Abdul Aziz, 2018). This requires both instruction and practice which according to Richards (1990) make writing rather a difficult task. Furthermore, mastering some writing genres can be challenging and here the "expert" intervention is required that is why the presence of the instructor is indispensable during the writing process to guide the learners to address the writing tasks in the target language. Moreover, direct instruction is sometimes needed to enable learners to "notice" language variation. This leads us to investigate the various theories that deal with direct instruction, explicit teaching, noticing and constructivism and find the role of such theories in blended learning. The various technological tools used in the field of education through online learning materials are delivered through learning platforms or what is called "Virtual Learning Environments" (VLEs), and are usually run by educators who choose instructional content and this leads us to direct instruction theory of learning or "teacher-led" instruction (Sulisworo, et al., 2016). It can't be denied that such theory was subjected to criticism since it promotes rote memorization; however, studies and researches (Mayer & Moreno, 2007; Orlich et al., 2013) showed direct instruction promotes the students' cognitive and metacognitive skills and takes into consideration the time the learners need to process and transfer their knowledge, organize it and construct it. According to the cognitivists, learners work at their own pace using the learning strategies they acquired to get engaged in active learning and problem solving (Harasim, 2012). According to Altenaichinger (2003), learners need to build up their general knowledge of the language they want to understand and use; after practicing and experiencing the language, it will be easy for the learners to make use of their knowledge very quickly without even recognizing that. Step by step, their usage of the language becomes automatic; thus, learners move on to focus on the other parts of the language. Therefore, prior knowledge is essential to the learning process since the learners make use of it to construct and use memorization-learning strategies.

The instructional content is also essential at this stage since it should integrate strategies to help learners notice new characteristics to achieve the objective (Orlich et al., 2013). Schmidt (1995) believes that when the learners' attention to new language feature is aroused, language learning is better enabled. The "Noticing Hypothesis" suggested by Schmidt indicates that noticing raises consciousness and transforms "input" to "intake" which is essential to promote learning. The conscious language awareness is then brought to practice when the learners incorporate their knowledge with others and share their learning with their peers in a cooperative learning environment in class together with their teachers (Orlich et.al, 2013).

Furthermore, scaffolding and illustrations are beneficial for learners since they reinforce their learning and this leads to the pattern referred to PPP- "Present-Practice-Produce" or RER- "Rule-Example-Rule" (Schmidt, 1995) which is useful for blended learning method of instruction. For instance, the use of videos to present rules or provide illustrations in blended learning will enable learners to become more productive since students' different senses are engaged at their own pace and this enhances the probability of retention

of information in the "long-term memory" Slavin (2012).

Commentary. The above brief literature review revealed that most of the researches have concentrated on the efficiency of using blended learning on developing the writing skills of the students (Cui & Hu, 2018; Milad, 2017; Sheet, 2018); the current study aligns with the aforementioned studies, but it differs in the context as the sample is made up of 66 Lebanese students who differ in nature, culture, and ability. Furthermore, the study takes place in two Lebanese secondary public schools with grade 9 students and aims at investigating the efficiency of blended learning on the students' essay writing achievement with the following methodology.

Methodology

the present study utilized a quasi-experimental nonequivalent pretest–posttest control group design in which four intact Grade 9 sections were randomly assigned to experimental and control conditions.

The Participants and Their Characteristics

The study took place in two of the four secondary public schools in Saida, South Lebanon, one for girls and one is mixed. Convenient sampling was employed to examine the effect of using blended method of instruction on EFL learners' essay writing achievement. The selection of the groups was based on random selection and carried out by the schools' administrations. The 66 students in both groups are equivalent in age (102-112) and background; they mainly belong to the low and middle working classes as the registration files of school showed. The majority of the students are Lebanese with some Syrians and Palestinians and their native language is Arabic.

The participants were divided into two separate groups. The control group was subjected to the conventional teaching. The experimental group and was subjected to blended learning using google classroom as instruction platform.

Online Teaching Material

The online material for the experimental groups was designed by the researcher in collaboration with the instructors and the coordinators at the two schools to develop students' writing skills, meet the students' characteristics and needs in addition to the curricular objectives set by the Lebanese ministry of education. The online material is prepared for the experimental group according to ADDIE's instructional design and it aims at filling the gaps with complementary activities to enhance the students' writing achievement. It consists of activities related to the student's book and multi-media resources with interactive online activities. Furthermore, it includes a discussion forum where the students are asked to add their share and contributions on certain writing tasks; the students are expected to post their comments asynchronously and these comments or contributions are evaluated according to their efficacy and frequency. The online material or activities give the students the opportunity to work at their own pace to boost their writing skills. It is worth noting that the uploaded material covers two main essay types: narrative and informative essays such as advantage/disadvantage and cause/ effect as they are the focus of the study. The material enables the students to become familiar with the structure, types of paragraphs, the organization and features of such essays and other writing skills such as using transitions correctly, punctuation marks and language accuracy.

Finally, the access to the online material is guaranteed to the experimental group through the internet anytime they want at home or wherever they find convenient. As the experimental group was exposed to an online kit prepared by the teachers and the researcher to further develop their writing skills, the control group received the same objectives in the conventional method of teaching. In other words, both groups received the same lessons but with different teaching tools. The control group received the traditional face- to- face method of instruction, while the experimental group receives blended method of instruction that is the same objectives were done online through videos, PowerPoint presentations, interactive links, discussion forum and the like. It is worth mentioning that the students in both groups received the regular English language instruction

for six hours weekly for approximately 8 months. The quantitative data is collected through the pretest and posttest. It is crucial to mention here that the teachers in both groups had similar qualifications and a long teaching experience to ensure comparability. Moreover, the teachers of the experimental group received training in blended learning delivery through a workshop and ongoing support provided by the researcher to ensure consistency and fidelity during implementation.

The students were informed about the study by the teachers and signed a consent participation form; a permission was also taken from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Furthermore, the participants were ensured that their information was considered confidential and they were told that the information was collected for research purposes.

Research Design and Instruments

This study investigated the efficacy of using blended learning on the writing achievement of grade 9 students. It is a quasi-experimental, quantitative study that employs a pretest and posttest to answer the research question. Thus, the method of instruction is the independent variable in this study. However, the dependent variable is the students' total writing achievement scores, measured through various aspects of writing performance (e.g., content, organization, language or accuracy...) which were analyzed both holistically and analytically using an analytic scoring rubric. The rubric assessed three main components: content, organization, and language accuracy in addition to other subcomponents yielding a total possible score of 40. To ensure scoring consistency, all the scripts were corrected by two teachers using the analytic rubric. Furthermore, the pre-test score is the covariate. The pre- and posttest were constructed based on curricular requirements of grade 9 and made up of a narrative writing prompt (essay); the same procedure was adopted for both groups; all participants in the study were expected to use paper and pen to write their responses to the writing prompt in class where the students had to write a narrative essay.

3.4 Procedure

After the 45-minute pretest, blended learning instruction was assigned to the experimental group over a period of 8 months using google classroom which functioned as the platform to post the material; the online material was prepared by the teachers following ADDIE instructional design which covered a wide range of online components such as interactive grammar exercises, model essays, and instructional videos and discussion forums in addition to the regular face-to-face instruction in the classroom setting; it is worth mentioning that in the discussion forums the students were required to contribute to a variety of posts that focused on correcting common grammatical errors, reformulations and everything related to mechanics and punctuation. Similarly, the students had to comment on their peer contributions posted in the forum to promote interaction and provide feedback. On the other hand, the control group received traditional classroom instruction without the online component but covering the same objectives over the same period. After the intervention period, the same 45-minute test (posttest) was administered and the essays of both groups were corrected according to the rubric that covered the content, organization and the language components and the grade was allotted accordingly. It is worth mentioning that the students wrote their pretest and post-test essay writing exam by hand on single-lined papers in the classroom.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

The validity of the online material employed was ensured through the coordinators at the schools without ignoring the fact that all the content had to align with the objectives of the Lebanese curriculum as issued by the ministry of education and higher education. Therefore, the content was evaluated based on the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of the instruments. Furthermore, the ADDIE design gave way to any needed modifications throughout the intervention period based on the feedback of the instructors involved.

Furthermore, reliability is also ensured in the scoring process, two instructors evaluated and corrected the pre and posttests independently

using the correction rubric. It is worth noting that inter-rater agreement was examined, and any discrepancies were discussed and resolved with the involvement of the researcher to reach a final consensus.

Data Analysis

ANCOVA was used to assess the effect of instructional method, i.e., blended vs. traditional, on the students' overall writing achievement, while accounting for the pre-test scores as a covariate. This analysis allowed for the control of baseline writing proficiency and isolated the effect of the teaching method. Further, the following requirements for the appropriate inclusion of covariate(s) and assumptions for the ANCOVA test were checked out.

First, the covariate should be independent from the experimental manipulation, i.e. experimental conditions should not differ on covariate scores. Second, the covariate is correlated with the dependent variable. Third, the usual ANOVA assumptions—homogeneity of variance, normality, and independence of scores—hold for ANCOVA as well. Fourth, there should be homogeneity of regression slopes, i.e., the relationship between the dependent variable and the covariate should be similar for all experimental groups, so that the regression lines are parallel. Fifth, the relationship between a covariate and the dependent variable must be linear.

Results

As mentioned above, the ANCOVA test was used and the requirements for the appropriate inclusion of covariate(s) and the assumptions for ANCOVA are presented below.

Assumption checks

A preliminary analysis indicated that ANCOVA assumptions were met. The results showed that p-values for both tests in both groups are greater than .05, indicating no significant deviation from normality in the conventional and blended groups and the pretest scores were comparable across groups. Furthermore, pretest scores were significantly correlated with posttest scores and inspection of residuals indicated approximate normality. Moreover, the results of Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances revealed that the p-value is 0.110, which is greater than the common threshold of 0.05. This is an indicator that the error variances between the experimental group and the control group are equal. Therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variances is not violated.

The ANCOVA Results

As can be seen in Table 1, the covariate (pretest score) was significantly related to the dependent variable (posttest score) ($F(1, 63) = 26.327$, $p<.05$). In addition, the table shows that the main effect of instructional method was significant when the effects of the covariate are partialled out $F(1,63) = 38.382$, $p<.05$). Partial eta-squared ($\eta p2$) effect sizes for the covariate (.295) and the instructional method (.379) were large.

Table 1. ANCOVA Results

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects						
Dependent Variable: Total100Post2						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	4582.301 a	2	2291.150	28.769	.000	.477
Intercept	9953.857	1	9953.857	124.986	.000	.665
Total100Pre2	2096.650	1	2096.650	26.327	.000	.295

Instruction Method	3056.718	1	3056.718	38.382	.000	.379
Error	5017.320	63	79.640			
Total	236815.625	66				
Corrected Total	9599.621	65				
a. R Squared = .477 (Adjusted R Squared = .461)						

Estimated Marginal Means

Table 2 showed the Estimated Marginal Means of posttest scores (Total100Post2) which represented the scores the students would be expected to achieve if their pretest scores were equal. This helps to provide a clearer comparison between the two groups by removing the effect of any differences in pretest performance.

The adjusted mean posttest score of the control group is 52.018 which falls within the confidence interval of [48.947, 55.088]. However, the adjusted mean posttest score of the experimental group is 65.747 and also falls within the confidence interval for the blended group is [62.581, 88.913], meaning there is 95% certainty. The adjusted mean for the experimental group (65.747) is much higher than that of the control group (52.018). This indicates that students who experienced blended learning performed significantly better on the posttest compared to those who received conventional instruction.

Table 2. the Estimated Marginal Means of posttest scores

Instruction Method				
Dependent Variable: Total100Post2				
			95% Confidence Interval	
Instruction Method	Mean	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Conventional	52.02a	1.54	48.95	55.08
Blended	65.75a	1.58	62.58	68.91
a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Total100Pre2 = 42.3485.				

Summary of the ANCOVA Results

A one-way between-subjects analysis of covariance was carried out to assess the impact of method of instruction (blended vs. conventional) on overall writing performance. Checks were carried out to confirm normality of dependent variable in both groups, homogeneity of regression slopes and linear relationship between covariate and dependent variable. None of the assumptions was violated. The between-subjects factor comprised the two groups. The covariate comprised overall writing performance prior to the experimental manipulation took place, and this was significantly related to the post overall writing performance: $F(1, 63) = 26.327$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta 2 = .295$. Adjusting for this covariate resulted in a significant effect of the between-subjects factor group: $F(1, 63) = 38.382$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta 2 = .379$. The adjusted mean of post overall writing score for those exposed to the blended method was 65.747 compared with 52.018 for the control group.

Discussion

The results provided evidence about the efficacy of blended learning in developing the students'

writing. Statistically speaking, the experimental group showed significant improvement indicating that the blended learning strategy had a substantial impact on the writing performance with a higher mean score of 65 in comparison to 52.4 in the control group. This aligns with previous studies (e.g. AlTameemy, 2019; Milad, 2017; and Sheet, 2018) and proves that the combination of face-to-face interaction with online tools and digital resources engaged the students more throughout the learning process; thus, the students were given the chance to practice more and have more formal instruction conditions through the utilization of more focused writing tasks and videos in addition to the ones employed in class which are the basic recipe of acquiring academic writing skills (Giridharan, & Robson, 2011). Such a rich learning environment with a variety of technological tools and stimulations could have played a role in motivating the learners and consequently raised their awareness to the importance of writing in language learning and showing them the importance of having the students work out their ideas (Tang, 2006). Another crucial principle is the intervention of peers or a teacher at this stage since it paves the way for the learners to take the responsibility of their own learning process in addition to the role of the instructor in creating a learner-centered and communicative classroom by employing material that addresses the learners needs and learning styles; besides, discussion forums in blended learning increases the learners' motivation and interest in learning and helps learners "notice" new characteristics which stimulates language learning process (Schmidt, 1995).

Theoretically, the active participation and interaction among learners and also teachers in both face-to-face classes and in virtual environment is linked to the constructivist approach to blended learning; it is the core of Vygotsky's (1978) theory of constructivism where the learners actively participate in the construction of meaning in a social context in a student-centered classroom. Moreover, the students in blended learning class are expected to take lead, function properly and self-regulate their learning to achieve the objectives. They are required to monitor their achievement regularly, choose the right strategy to meet the objectives, and be ready for self-assessment; such metacognitive strategies are crucial for the learners to succeed in the online learning environment and consequently achieve better results. This can also be related to the Information Processing Theory (IPT) which according to Schunk (2020) is a complicated process that converts new information or knowledge into the long-term memory and link it to the already existing information in the working memory.

In brief, the study was only conducted in two secondary public schools with grade 9 students. Although Future research should consider a wider population in different classes, the results obtained proved that blended learning provided students with the opportunity to engage more in their learning process; the students had the opportunity to interact with the learning material as independent learners and apply what is learnt in new situations. Moreover, even if the online

material was self-prepared by the teachers and were not part of the book, the material fulfilled the objectives and increased participants' interaction and developed their problem-solving skills; it enhanced self-evaluation tools and improved their informational search which are not found in the traditional classes. Furthermore, the online material provided enabled the students to co-operate with their colleagues in a safe learning atmosphere free from criticism where they were able to express themselves positively and received help from high achievers especially in the discussion forum. This resulted in positive interaction with the instructor as well as other students. This result agreed with previous studies that proved that blended learning enhanced unskilled students' interest and motivation and boosted the written achievement of the learners (Alrouji, 2020; Altameemy 2019; Milad, 2017; Sheet, 2018).

Conclusion

This study investigated the effect of blended learning on grade 9 students' overall writing achievement at two secondary public schools in south of Lebanon. Results showed that blended

learning positively affected the students' writing performance; this aligns with previous researches done which indicated that blended learning enabled the students to become more autonomous and active rather than remaining passive in a direct or conventional teaching environment. Blended learning provided meaningful and student-centered online learning environment which is statistically reflected in the significant progress of the experimental group in terms of the writing components in comparison to their peers in the control group. such an environment boosted the confidence and encouraged the students to practice and improve their writing at their own pace free from classroom pressure. The bottom line, blended learning provided a flexible combination of the online learning activities with face-to-face traditional learning activities which foster individual differences among students in learning habit and styles.

The findings of the current study showed the vitality of integrating technology in the process of teacher preparation and that blended learning could be the base of future teacher training programs.

Similarly, the efficiency of blended learning should be investigated in other subjects and other language skills such as speaking, listening, reading, spelling, grammar, and vocabulary. Furthermore, it is also recommended to extend the employment of blended to students in other levels and classes.

Acknowledgement

The author would like to express his gratitude to Prof. Mohammed Sukariyah for his expert guidance and patience. His mentorship is fundamental in shaping the research in all its details. Special thanks are also extended to the teachers and students who participated in this study for their cooperation and engagement. The author also acknowledges the support of Saint Joseph University of Beirut staff for their support and for creating intellectually stimulating and heart-warming environment. Not to forget colleagues and educational institutions that facilitated the implementation of this research.

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Joseph Georges Samia: A PhD student in Teaching English as a Foreign Language and brings over 25 years of experience in English language teaching. He has extensive expertise in blended learning and its impact on students' writing achievement. He has taught in several institutions and universities like Amideast, Cnam Liban and the Lebanese University. His research interests include blended learning, EFL writing, student motivation, and technology-enhanced instruction. He has also participated in international educational projects that promote cultural exchange and collaborative learning. In addition to English, he speaks German and is committed to fostering innovative teaching practices in diverse learning environments.

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