Chapter 4

The Effectiveness of Weblogs on Writing Tendency

H. Gülhan Orhan-Karsak

Kirklareli University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

Writing, whether integrated technology or not, is an essential skill for today graduates. And motivating and improving students’ life skills by Web 2.0 tools-integrated writing activities may be an effective way. Because of this, the aim of this chapter is to investigate the effect of weblog environment, which is used for writing, on writing tendency. A quantitative research design was used for this research. In this context, the “pretest-posttest control group design” was applied as an experimental research. Fourteen students who are at the fifth grade level in a public school participated in this research, seven in the experiment group and seven in the control group. While the experiment group worked on a weblog, the control group worked on a face-to-face environment. A writing tendency scale was applied as pre-test and post-test. The results are discussed in terms of findings.

INTRODUCTION

Writing skills have many definitions made by different authors in the literature. According to many authors writing skills are the regulation of emotions, thoughts, wishes, dreams and experiences in writing (Karasoy et al., 2007; Erkul, 2004; Demirel, 2002; Coşkun, 2007; Özkırımlı, 1994; Paul & Elder, 2003). The importance of writing skills, in general, can be explained by both personal and social needs. It is not only writers who are involved in writing to be remembered with their emotions and thoughts, but also the scientists describe their discoveries in writing and like those working in various professions feel obliged to write to serve the society by fulfilling their duties (Kantemir, 1995; Bayramçılar et. al., 1990). Therefore, writing also assumes social responsibility. The effort to write, both personal and social, expands the world of emotion and thought. It gives people a place and respected personality in the society (Karageçi, 2006). Santangelo et al. (2007) emphasizes the importance of writing by stating that writing is an extremely powerful tool today because it establishes a connection between time and

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-3383-3.ch004
distance, collecting and preserving information, presenting information on a newly organized or expanding subject and providing a flexible environment for artistic, spiritual, political issues and self-expression. However, he states that writing is a difficult task and that mostly even expert writers complain about the complexity of planning, editing, evaluation and the review stages that is required for a good writing.

Most of the instructors, from primary education teachers to teaching staff in higher education, mention that the students do not have sufficient writing skills based on assignments and examination papers and the development of writing skills is difficult to get for that reason. As Karatay (2011) emphasizes, writing skill is an intrinsically complex process that originates from its core structure. However, in writing activities in schools, writing skills develop slowly or do not develop as necessary due to reasons such as poor follow-up of self-assessment, teacher and peer review, feedback and correction stages; negative experiences in these stages and in addition to that excessive class sizes or problems related to teacher-based practice. As mentioned by Baş and Şahin (2013), these difficulties hinder the students’ pleasure in writing, their willingness to write and their desire for writing in lifetime. In this context, it is very important to give students the tendency to write at an early age, to popularize writing and to increase their writing performance.

It can be said that in order to develop writing skills, it is a necessity that students’ tendencies regarding writing skills be determined and developed in a positive way and to focus on writing activities not only on cognitive dimension but also on affective and psychomotor dimension (Bağcı, 2011; Çeçen & Deniz, 2015). In order to give positive writing tendency, first of all, teachers believe that writing is a developing skill and make students feel this belief through learning activities positively affect student's attitude towards writing and mentally make them a part of the process. Considering the writing performance of the student and enriching the writing with different activities is an important factor in increasing the writing tendency (Sever & Memiş, 2013).

As writing is a complex skill, students often experience difficulties within the context of writing, in expressing content and in mechanical elements such as spelling and punctuation. Applying blogs would be an appropriate solution to overcome these. Because blogs will support students in all stages of writing process and will help them to overcome their deficiencies (Evmenova et. al., 2010). In this context, the blog which has been mentioned as one of the web 2.0 tools in recent years took its place in writing studies. Different researchers (Chen et. al., 2005; Chen et. al., 2011; Du & Wagner, 2007; Orakçı, Durnalı & Efe, 2018; Franklin-Matkowski, 2007; Jones, 2006; Kelly & Safford, 2009; Koçoğlu, 2009; Olander, 2007; Richardson, 2006; Sun, 2010) emphasize that blogs can be used in language development, especially writing activities, students will enjoy writing blogs, blogs will increase their writing tendency and blog writing improves their writing performance. Considering the characteristics of the blogs which are the opportunity to create personal content and page design, to make comment, to make archive, to get instant feedbacks, to import/export picture, audio or video, to share links, to give permission to the add-ons, to have quick typewrite opportunity in the keyboard (Martindale & Wiley, 2005), it can be thought that students will increase their writing tendency positively when blogs are used in writing activities at early ages such as primary and secondary school. Similarly, Zheng, Yim and Warschauer (2017) instructional affordances of social media as blog can facilitate students’ exchange of ideas and sharing of knowledge, develop their academic identities as authentic writers, strengthen their awareness of audience and authorship, enhance their confidence in and motivation for writing, and ultimately promote their writing skills and language development. However, it is seen that the participants of the studies in the literature generally consist of high school and university students (Blankenship, 2007; Franklin-Matkowski, 2007; Miller, 2011; Sun, 2010). Goldberg, Russel and Cook (2003) also state that computer-writing studies
Related Content

Designing Counter-Narratives: Constructing Culturally Responsive Curriculum Online
[www.igi-global.com/article/designing-counter-narratives/164973?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/designing-counter-narratives/164973?camid=4v1a)

Improving Distance Student Retention Through Satisfaction and Authentic Experiences
[www.igi-global.com/article/improving-distance-student-retention-through-satisfaction-and-authentic-experiences/204984?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/improving-distance-student-retention-through-satisfaction-and-authentic-experiences/204984?camid=4v1a)

Where Time Goes: The Role of Online Technology During Leisure Time Learning
[www.igi-global.com/article/time-goes-role-online-technology/65737?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/article/time-goes-role-online-technology/65737?camid=4v1a)

Vision and Strategy for Developing a Successful Online Degree Program on a Shoestring Budget
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/vision-strategy-developing-successful-online/75276?camid=4v1a](www.igi-global.com/chapter/vision-strategy-developing-successful-online/75276?camid=4v1a)