

Impact of Google Earth and ePals Models on Perceptions, Research and Oral Presentation Skills

Hassan Diab

American University of Beirut
Vice President for REP
P.O.Box 11-0236, Beirut, Lebanon

Ghada Awada

American University of Beirut
P.O. Box 11-0236, Beirut, Lebanon

Abstract

The article reports the findings of a study that investigated the relative effectiveness of the Google Earth and ePals tools in enhancing geographical research and speaking skills of learners enrolled in Study Skills class in a university in Lebanon and on increasing their levels of motivation for conducting research and delivering presentations. The study is based on the assumptions that the integration of Google Earth and ePals provides an excellent opportunity for teachers to improve students' presentation and research skills. Another assumption is that female learners will report a more significant progress than their male counterparts. The study used the pretest- posttest control design. Descriptive statistics were computed, and a series of independent sample and paired samples t-tests and a content analysis of the qualitative data reporting the participants' perceptions of their Google Earth and ePals experience were undertaken. The results of the study indicated that the use of Google Earth and ePals significantly improved the geographical research and oral presentation skills as well as their perceptions towards learning. However, no significant difference in the achievements of males and females was indicated. Implications and further research to examine the interaction of the treatment effects with other contextual variables were reported.

Keywords: ePals, Google Earth, presentation proficiency, technology