The Effect of Using Padlet on Enhancing EFL Writing Performance

By

Farah Nasser Abdullah Algraini

Submitted to the department of English language and literature in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Master degree in Linguistics in Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University

Supervised by

Dr. Omar Na'eem Bani Abdelrahman

Rabi' I, 1436 – December, 2014

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In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful
This paper is entitled:

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This paper has been approved by the Department of English Language and Literature.

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Rabi' I, 1436 – December, 2014
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The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above-mentioned discipline.
Abstract
This study investigated the effect of using Padlet on enhancing female Saudi EFL learners’ writing performance. This research was conducted for five weeks at the English Language Department at Al-Muzahimyah College of Education in the first semester of the academic year 2014 – 2015. The population of this study was composed of the students who were studying in the fifth level; the sample of this study consisted of 24 students who were randomly selected. They were divided into two groups: control group and experimental group. The participants were pretested at the beginning of the study to make sure that they were homogenous. Afterwards, the experimental group received an intensive training and writing exercises through using Padlet and the control group was instructed through the traditional lecture-discussion instruction method. At the end of the experiment, the two groups were posttested using a writing skill post-test in order to evaluate their writing skills. The mean scores of the pre-test and the post-test for the two groups were calculated using the t-test. Besides, the findings of the study revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the means of two groups in favor of the experimental group which achieved better results in the post-test. Finally, the data analysis showed that Padlet was very effective in improving the participants’ writing skills.

Keywords: Padlet, writing, experimental, control, social networking sites
بحثت هذه الدراسة أثر استخدام موقع بادلت على تنمية المهارات الكتابية لدى الطالبات السعوديات في تخصص اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. وقد تم إجراء هذه الدراسة لمدة خمسة أسابيع في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في كلية التربية بالمزاحمية في الفصل الدراسي الأول من السنة الأكاديمية 2014 – 2015. كما تكون مجتمع الدراسة من طالبات كن يدرسن في المستوى الخامس وكان العدد النهائي لعينة الدراسة 24 طالبة تم اختيارهن عشوائيا (12 طالبة في المجموعة الضادبة و12 طالبة في المجموعة التجريبية). هذا وقد خضعت جميع المشاركات عند بدء الدراسة لامتحان قبلي للقدرة الكتابية للتأكد من كون متوسطهن متناسبة. بعد ذلك، تم تدريس المجموعة التجريبية من خلال تدريبها بشكل مكثف على القيام ببعض التمارين الكتابية باستخدام موقع بادلت، أما المجموعة الضادبة فتم تدريسها من خلال استعمال الطريقة التقليدية للمناقشة أثناء المحاضرة. بعد الانتهاء من التجربة، خضعت المجموعتان التجريبية والضادبة إلى اختباري ببدي من خلال استعمال اختبار آخر يقيس مستوى المهارة الكتابية لدى المجموعتين. وتم حساب المتوسطات الحسابية لعلامات الامتحانين القبلي والبديي باستخدام الاختبار الإحصائي (ت). وقد أظهرت النتائج وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين المجموعتين التجريبية والضادبة لصالح المجموعة التجريبية. وأخيرًا، أثبتت النتائج فاعلية موقع بادلت في تحسين مهارة الكتابة لدى الطالبات.
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my amazing mother Aljawrah Algraini and my precious father Nasser Algraini for their your unconditional love.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In this technological age, language teaching and learning strategies have moved beyond the boundaries of the walls of schools (Yunus & Salehi, 2012). The rapid development of technology and the revolution of information and communications have influenced teaching and learning methods. In other words, the traditional ways of language teaching and learning have been affected by various changes that have integrated technology in education as a new way of teaching methods. Several recent studies have proved that new technologies appear to be as an important factor in encouraging active learning and making students creative and able to solve problems (Grégoire, Bracewell & Laferrière, 1996). Sivin-Kachala & Bialo (2000) indicates that technology develops students’ self-concept and effects on their achievement positively. Watkins (2007) suggests that new technologies help in expanding the learning experiences of students in classrooms. Accordingly, educators try their best to offer opportunities for learners to build their own knowledge; as a result, those learners become responsible for their learning process and get a higher motivation level in which this can lead them to learn successfully.

Recently, the applications and tools of Web 2.0 technologies such as Facebook, YouTube, Blogs, WordPress and so on, have become very popular. These applications provide people with online virtual environments to communicate, collaborate and share their ideas and thoughts with each other (McCarthy, 2010). Obviously, most people nowadays know how to employ these tools in many several fields, especially in the educational field. Thus, it is easy to bring the digital communities into classrooms. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is the field
that investigates the role of technologies in language teaching and learning. The most obvious advantage of CALL is that it is based on the learner-centered approach. Moreover, it creates a low anxiety environment in which this environment motivates learners to learn independently (Farrah & Tusheyh, 2010). It has been suggested that using computers in an educational environment provide teachers and learners with authentic tools that help them to communicate and improve learners’ language skills (Vi, 2005).

However, there are many terms that are related to CALL. One of those terms is Computer Meditated Communication (CMC), which this study is concerned with. CMC helps people from different social and geographical backgrounds to easily communicate with each other. CMC greatly develops the ways of communication among people (Bansal et al., 2011). It enhances the collaborative learning and makes students more autonomous (Sun, 2009). It enthuses learners to be more confident of their ability to learn (Swaffar, 1998). Moreover, unlike face-to-face interaction, CMC provides students with equal opportunities to participate (Kern, 1995).

Basically, the main purpose of learning a foreign language is to be able to communicate with other people and help them to express their emotions and thoughts using that foreign language (Lee, 2002); therefore, the fundamental goal of teaching learners English language, which is considered the most international language in this world, is to improve learners’ English communication skills to be able to share their ideas and exchange information with the others in the real situations (Yang & Chen, 2007). Hence, educators notably are interested in shifting from using the traditional methods to using new technological methods which suit this generation in this digital world (Saengsook, 2006).
Writing is a channel that helps people to express their thoughts and feelings. Writing skill is a productive skill. It is considered as an important constituent of second/foreign language learning. Therefore, it is essential to focus on improving this significant skill. It has become so common to use a CMC environment to write because most people, presently, like to communicate through computers which penetrate into their daily life, particularly the life of young people (Fageeh, 2011). In a traditional classroom, the writing process is teacher-centered more than student-centered because students write about a particular topic receiving guidance from their teacher, and then the teacher revises their works. So, they receive feedback only from their teacher (Yang, Ko & Chung, 2005). On the other hand, a computer-based writing environment provides learners with a chance to communicate and interact with each other and with their teacher at the same time. Several studies have proved that using computers in the writing class enhance this skill and decrease the mistakes of learners (Grejda & Hannafin, 1992).

This study investigates the use of Padlet to examine its effect on the students' writing achievement when they write in English. Padlet is a free social-networking site in which people can argue or discuss about certain topics and easily use multimedia elements to enhance their words. They can upload images, videos, documents and PDFs, share links, comment on each other’s posts, make public or private walls and exchange information. It is an empty virtual wall which provides users with this good amount of features that facilitate communicating among people and stimulate them to express themselves. They do not need to be at their computers to participate in this site, they can use their smart phones, iPads, tablets or any other device that has an Internet connection. The most amazing feature of Padlet is that users do not need to register. They just go to this site and click on Build a Wall icon and create a wall to immediately start posting. Padlet is considered as a good tool for real-time collaboration in a virtual environment.
1.2 Statement of the Problem

This age is called the age of information and technology revolution. Technology has become an important aspect of our life, particularly in the educational field. Therefore, using traditional methods in English language teaching and learning makes students feel bored and lose their enthusiasm. It does not probably help in improving their English language proficiency. On the other hand, technology makes the educational environments joyful and interesting, and at the same time, students can be able to get benefits, develop themselves, increase their motivation and self-efficacy and improve their language learning skills.

However, EFL learners in Saudi Arabia are not efficient in the writing class because they do not get great benefits from the traditional method since they think that they should study just to pass their exam at the end of the semester. Consequently, the researcher suggests that it can be helpful to activate their interest in technology in enhancing their writing. In this study, Padlet has been chosen, in particular, because there is no any published study conducted on this website and because it may be the first study on Padlet in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, this research highlights this unfamiliar site and examines how much it is effective in improving learners’ writing performance through individual and collaborative activities.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of using Padlet on enhancing EFL writing performance in comparison with the traditional methods used by EFL instructors in the EFL classrooms.
1.4 Question of the Study

The current study is going to address the following question:

What is the effect of using Padlet on the achievement of the subjects in the writing skill of the experimental group that studied via Padlet method of teaching and the control group that studied in the traditional lecture-discussion instruction method?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study can be significant to EFL learners as it represents an attempt to participate in improving teaching writing in English language classrooms by offering a teaching strategy based on using Padlet in writing classrooms. This study also provides the experimental group with the overall benefits of peer interaction and collaborative writing via using Padlet. Meanwhile, this study can lead to the verification and testing of new methodologies in writing instruction. It can also be significant to EFL teachers and curriculum developers as it introduces them an easy way to incorporate the microcomputer represented in the use of Padlet into writing classrooms encouraging writing abilities and group work among EFL learners. It can also be helpful to the researchers who are interested in integrating technology in education because it provides them with current literature on another pedagogical online forum which helps its users to have new experiences that can aptly be transferred into their daily life. Finally, the researcher hopes that this study will have far-reaching conclusions which can be useful and practical for English instructors.

1.6 Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, below is a list of the operational definitions of the central terms that have been adopted in this research:
CALL – This acronym refers to the concept of Computer Assisted Language Learning. This concept refers to the use of the computer and its applications in the language learning process.

CMC – This abbreviation stands for the concept of Computer Mediated Communication. It describes the process which aims to use the computer for the purpose of communication.

Social networking sites (SNSs) have widely spread among people, particularly among teenagers (Yunus & Salehi, 2012). It enables people to create personal pages, either public which can be seen by all people or private profiles which can be seen only by the people who are allowed to do, to share their information with the others who have the same interests (Thomson, 2008) or to discuss particular topics and to express themselves.

Padlet – it is a virtual wall which has many features that facilitate communicating among people such as inserting photos and videos and enabling them to comment on others’ posts and share interests with others. It is like an online sheet paper which has different features that make the writing process joyful. These interesting features can motivate students to be interested in writing and develop their composition ability.

1.7 Limitations of the study

Despite the fact that this study has proved that Padlet could be effectively used to improve EFL writing performance, there were some limitations to this research:

1- The results of this study cannot be generalized because it took place only in one college. Thus, this research should be conducted on different colleges or schools to be possible to generalize the results in Saudi Arabia.
2- This experiment took place only in one semester. Therefore, if it had been lengthened, the results would have been different.

3- Some of the participants sometimes could not be connected online at the agreed time because they faced some problems in their Internet connection.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of the literature which supports the idea of using online platforms to promote the writing skill and a theoretical framework which this study depends on.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is considered as a base for this study which determines the language learning theories that this study shall draw on. These theories facilitate understanding the nature of the research. Social Constructivism, Collaborative Learning Theory and Interactionist Approach are the theories that have something in common with Padlet in the learning field. All of these theories provide learners with an appropriate learning environment that should be provided with the important elements of successful learning and teaching processes such as interaction, motivation, cooperation and enthusiasm. These theories are explained in the following pages (Meyer, 2009).

2.1.1 Social Constructivism Theory

Constructivism has emerged as an important theory in education in which this theory has a brilliant influence on pedagogy (Kaufman, 2004). Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky are two of the most important champions of the constructivist school (Brown, 2007). Kaufman (ibid) states that Piaget has defined learning as a constructional process in which a learner himself is the one who can construct his knowledge depending on a prior experience. According to the constructivists, learners can collaboratively build their knowledge through interaction with other people in different social, linguistic and cultural contexts (Sjøberg, 2007). The constructivists strongly believe that knowledge should not be easily given to learners, but rather it should be acquired
through learners’ previous experiences which mean something to them (Vygotsky, 1978); in other words, they believe that learners should not learn by providing them with information, they should learn through being engaged in an environment which motivates them to think and challenges them to solve problems (Cooperstein & Kocevar-Weidinger, 2004).

Vygotsky believes that knowledge is not fixed, but dynamic (Fageeh, 2011) and this is important for learners to be engaged in a social environment in order to construct their knowledge (Brown, 2007), after that, they become able to practice their experiences in the real world (Fageeh, 2011). Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes that several communities have a fundamental role in developing the learning process. He believes that knowledge can be gained when learners join the social communities. This theory is considered as a collaborative learning theory because culture and language have an effective role in communication (Brodahl, Hadjerrouit & Hansen, 2011).

This is exactly what Padlet can offer to the students. They communicate through Padlet and collaborate to do the activities that the instructor gives them. They can build their knowledge depending on their prior experiences in which they try to avoid their previous mistakes and develop their writing skills. Additionally, as mentioned above, the primary goal of learning a language is to be able to communicate and interact with other people who speak that target language. As a result, Padlet achieves this goal in which it provides the learners with a community that keeps them in contact with the others.

2.1.2 Collaborative Learning Theory

The second theory underlines using Padlet in the writing classroom is Collaborative Learning Theory. This theory emphasizes the group interaction. The essential element, which contributes
to the successful collaboration, is sharing among people (Fageeh, 2011). According to this theory, the role of the teacher becomes a facilitator rather than a leader of the class. The learners should work collaboratively to achieve the goal of the learning process. Padlet gives the learners several chances to collaborate in which they become capable of sharing their thoughts and feelings. Therefore, Padlet offers the learners not only a joyful environment, but also an effective environment in which they are able to exchange and share educative information.

2.1.3 Interactionist Approach

The champions of this approach believe that learners can learn through interaction with others. They believe that the learning process can be easier when they get input, which should be comprehensible, and then figure the meaning out through negotiation in order to produce output and give feedback. Learners become able to build their knowledge and their linguistic ability through interaction with others until they achieve the wanted level of comprehension (Yang, 2007). When applying this approach to Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), it is obvious that it can be applied through using Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) in which people nowadays like to communicate through synchronous or asynchronous text-based CMC environments either inside or outside the schools.

Many researchers have proved that applying the Interactionist Approach to CMC has achieved positive results when negotiating with each other because it facilitates communicating among the participants and improves their writing proficiency (Chun, in Magnan, 2008). Regarding Padlet, it provides opportunities to learners and their teachers to communicate whenever they want. When they interact with each other to do different tasks or to discuss a particular topic, unlike face-to-face interaction, they have time to think, to correct their mistakes
and to equally comment; that is, this can enhance their writing proficiency and composition ability.

Having looked at the previous theories, it can be concluded that using CMC, particularly Padlet that this study concerns with, to improve the writing performance is based on many language learning theories. Many key features, which Padlet offers to the learners, can help them to improve their writing skills. Collaboration, providing and receiving feedback, equal opportunities to participant, enough time to think and correct their mistakes, inserting photos, video clips, and other documents and exchanging information are essential characteristics that Padlet provides learners with.

2.2 Related Studies

At the beginning of this part, a meaningful piece of information about writing, the importance of writing and some ways to teach writing are introduced. Moreover, as the researcher of the study did not find any published research related to Padlet, several studies conducted on using social networking sites (SNSs) to enhance the writing skill have been used. This section shows the importance of using these websites in teaching and learning and discusses how much they are effective in improving students’ EFL writing performance.

2.2.1 Writing Skill

2.2.1.1 What is writing? Why is it important?

Writing is not only a way of expressing ideas and feelings and exchanging information or a way of using words to express oneself, but also it is a social activity in which people interact with their partners (Taki & Fardafshari, 2012). Writing is considered as a challenge which many foreign/second language learners face. It is an important component not only in education, but
also in life especially for those people who do not know how to express their feelings verbally, so they use words and letters to translate their feelings, ideas and thoughts. When anyone learns how to write very well, this helps him/her to produce an excellent plot and a logical argument. In addition, writing gives the reader a positive impression about the writer as a professional person and a good thinker because this writer enables the reader to live with him/her that experience he/she has written about just through words (Ibrahim, 2013).

2.2.1.2 Several Ways to Teach Writing

Hillocks (1986) conducted a meta-analysis study in which he concluded that the traditional grammar instruction was not efficient in enhancing the writing skill. Therefore, this classical method, which most teachers in these days use, has been proved that it does not work very well and not all students can get benefits from it. Grejda and Hannafin (1992) state that using computers to learn how to write help in reducing learners’ mistakes, and then this leads to improve the quality of writing in which it is easy for students to learn from their partners’ works. This is considered as a source of the learner’s self-confidence and autonomy especially that they can interact with each other whenever they want (Yang, Ko & Chung, 2005).

Graham and Perin (2007), in their meta-analysis of writing study which was conducted on 4th - 12th grades, concluded that the participants got a higher writing quality degree when they used words processors than when writing by pen and paper. Therefore, teachers have to recognize that it is necessary to add new interesting ways which attract students’ attention to how to write properly. One of these ways is getting benefits from using social networks in the educational field particularly these sites that meet learners’ needs and have a social interactive nature (Blattner & Fiori, 2009).
Currently, using a CMC environment to enhance writing skill has been common and popular because this kind of the educational environments has become an essential part in our life since people use computers to communicate with each other daily (Fageeh, 2011). Several studies have clearly shown that students become able to produce longer texts when they get engaged in technological educational environments than texts which are produced by hand. In addition, students have opportunities to revise what they write frequently. Hence, the quality of their writing becomes better (Zawitinski, 2012). Thus, some new language teachers who are interested in creating fascinating educational environments tend to use social networking sites in education. They try to discover effective methods which motivate students to learn and develop their writing skills enthusiastically (Ibrahim, 2013).

2.2.2 Effectiveness of Using SNSs on EFL Writing Performance

This part discusses the effect of using social networking sites (SNSs) on improving students’ writing skills in general since the researcher did not find any published studies conducted on Padlet.

2.2.2.1 Social Networking Sites (SNSs)

Boyd and Ellison (2007) define social networks as web-based tools that enable people to build a public or quasi-public profile within a particular system. Additionally, these tools make users capable of editing a list consisting of people who those users want to share their information with. Therefore, people join these social networks to interact, communicate and share people their thoughts, opinions and interests and try to find other individuals or groups who have the same attitudes and ideas.
According to Warnock (2009), it is important to teach writing online because the environment can entirely be textual. This environment can be guided for students to know how they become able to express themselves using their own words in which this technological communicational service offers opportunities for students to collaborate and interact with their teachers or with the other audience. Moreover, this online environment gives writing teachers a unique chance in which this kind of writing-centered online courses enable teachers and students to interact beyond the school walls and help them to create a friendly educational community through using technological tools, but actually this is not for all students because some of them prefer those discussions which occur inside the classroom (i.e. face-to-face interaction). However, using these tools can be helpful for shy students as those students become motivated to socially and professionally connect with others in which this reflects the real value of education.

Today’s students have become digital natives, thus educators have drawn their attention to use social networking sites as an alternative service for teaching and learning. Romero-Frías and Montaño (2010) observe that social networks can be a sufficient tool which leads students to construct their knowledge, develop their critical skills and exchange information. According to Goldford, Pregibon, Shrem and Zyko (2011), using SNSs for educational purposes can enrich students’ learning skills, establish a friendly classroom community and motivate learners to be great achievers. Moreover, Taranto, Dalbon and Gaetano (2011) state that classroom experiences should be shifted from the traditional methods to new technological methods because the world has got been connected by technology. Therefore, teachers and curriculum developers need to use Web 2.0 technologies and understand how to improve their digital literacy to facilitate making plans to develop curricula and classroom practices.
To sum up, Yunus, Salehi and Chenzi (2012) summarize the advantages of SNSs in five points. First, as today’s students are digital natives, it is easy for them to deal with SNSs because they are familiar with these sites. Second, SNSs help some learners in creating global community. This is considered a useful environment for shy students because it permits them to participate and share their interests, attitudes, feelings and opinions. Third, these online platforms make students responsible for their works because a large audience is going to read what they write. This leads students to be self-directed learners. Forth, it is an easy way for teachers and students to give and receive feedback. Finally, parents become able to view the work of their children.

On the other hand, teachers should take into consideration that some students prefer the traditional book-centered methods. Moreover, others cannot control themselves and do not concentrate on their learning process, but rather they spend more time on playing games and chatting with people. Another thing is that teachers cannot be sure that students’ posts are not their own writing. They can copy and paste these written pieces without thinking (i).

2.3 Chapter summary

This chapter sheds a light on the most important theories that this study relies on. It presents how SNSs can achieve the goal of these theories and how it can meet the learners’ needs. The literature review demonstrated many advantages behind using SNSs to improve the writing skill. These include the most important advantages which are the textual environment of these sites, their motivating factors, reducing anxiety, and providing people with time and opportunities to think and correct their mistakes.
Furthermore, the literature review was very helpful in many ways. Firstly, it provided the researcher with a deeper insight into the role of SNSs in enhancing the writing skill. Secondly, it assisted the researcher to design the instruments of the study. Finally, it helped the researcher to discuss the results of the study. However, as can be seen, there was not any published study conducted on Padlet. The researcher hoped that this study provided the educational field with a new literature related to a new technological tool which had not been examined.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the design adopted in this study, the population and sample of the study, the research instruments, the procedure, data collection and statistical analysis.

3.1 Population and Sample of the Study

The research was conducted for five weeks in the English Language Department at Al-Muzahimyah College of Education and the data had been collected during the first semester of the academic year 2014 – 2015. The population of this study comprised of the students who were enrolled in the fifth level and their final number was 55 students and the average of their age was between 20 – 21 years old. All of the students in this section were orally informed about the experiment. All of the participants in this study were not forced to participate, but rather they chose to participate voluntarily. The total number of the participants was 24 students. The sample was divided into two groups: the experimental group that used Padlet to improve their writing skills and the control group that was taught traditionally. Twelve students were chosen randomly for each group.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used an experimental design. This research included the writing skill pre-test, the implementation of the experiment on the treatment group and then the post-test to investigate the effect of Padlet on improving EFL learners’ writing skills. It included the manipulation of two independent variables, which were the gender variable (all of the participants were females) and the method variable (Padlet communication and the traditional lecture-discussion
instruction), and one dependent variable, which was the achievement of the students in the pre-test and the post-test after using Padlet to improve the writing skill.

3.3 Instruments of the Study

In order to answer the research question and to assess the achievement of the participants, two instruments were used in this study: the pre-test (see appendix I) and the post-test (see appendix II). The participants’ papers were corrected by two English teachers according to the following rubrics: grammar, spelling, content, words choice and vocabulary, punctuations, capitalization, organization of their ideas and their writing style.

3.3.1 The Pre-Test

At the beginning of the experiment, the participants were examined by the researcher using the same standardized pre-test to evaluate their writing skills before the implementation of the experiment to make sure that they were equivalent. The sample answered the pre-test questions during the given time in which the two groups were given the same amount of time and instructions. The first question was taken from Sample Test Questions: A Guide for Students and Parents which is adopted by ACT Compass (2014) as it is clear in appendix II and the second question was designed by the researcher. It consisted of 7 multiple-choice questions in which the participants were asked to choose the correct answers to make the passage correct. It also consists of 2 topics in which the participants were asked to write about each topic in one paragraph.
3.3.2 The Post-test

At the end of the experiment, the participants were given the post-test. They were also given the same amount of instructions and time which was 30 minutes. The first question of the post-test was taken from a test designed by Camus (n.d.) in which the participants were asked to choose the correct answers to make the passage correct. The second question was taken from a test designed by Shoebottom (2014) in which the participants were asked to correct the sentences. In the last question, which was designed by the researcher, the participants were asked to write about the topic in two paragraphs.

3.3.3 Validity of the Pre-Test and the Post-Test

The researcher gave the pre-test and the post-test to a panel of EFL raters consisting of eight university professors to validate these tests (see appendix III). Based on the EFL professors’ comments and suggestions, the researcher fixed whatever needed to be fixed. Therefore, the validity of the two tests was accomplished.

3.3.4 Reliability of the Pre-Test and the Post-Test

The researcher estimated the reliability of the pre-test and the post-test using Pearson Correlation Coefficient in which the researcher tested a group of 14 students, who were studying in the fifth level and did not participate in the experiment. They chose to take the two tests voluntarily. The results showed that the pre-test was reliable at the degree of 0.82 and the post-test was reliable at the degree of 0.85.
3.4 Procedure

1- Before implementing the experiment, the researcher took a permission to carry out this study at Al-Muzahimyah College of Education from the vice president for postgraduate studies and scientific research of Shaqra University. The researcher gave the vice president an outline about this study, what its aim was, the design of this study and how it could be conducted. The permission was given (see appendix IV).

2- Twelve participants were randomly assigned to the control group receiving a traditional lecture-discussion instruction and twelve participants were randomly assigned to the experimental group in which this group was practicing the writing skill through using Padlet. The researcher clarified to the both groups that their grades in the college would not be affected whether they participate or not.

3- In order to ensure that the both groups were equivalent, the pre-test was given to them at the beginning of the experiment (see appendix I).

4- After that, the researcher prepared the study tool which was a new Padlet wall before every session. In the first session, the participants of the experimental group were given introductory tutorials and guidelines on how to use Padlet. Then in every session the students were given different topics to discuss and practice their writing skills. They were asked about several grammatical rules. They received an extensive training on correcting ungrammatical sentences and correcting each other’s mistakes. The researcher played a role as a facilitator and a guider to the participants. The intervention was oriented only for the experimental group and no intervention for the control group. The experimental group and the researcher met on Padlet twice a week for two hours to learn English enthusiastically.
5- At the end, the post-test was conducted on the both groups to investigate the effect of Padlet on the participants’ writing performance (see appendix II).

6- The data was collected through applying the pre-test and the post-test to the all participants and the results of the two tests were analyzed by using the statistical package for social science (SPSS).

**3.5 Statistical Analysis**

The researcher used Pearson Correlation Coefficient to analyze the data of the pilot study. Means, standard deviations, T-values and P-values were utilized to analyze the data of the study employing the SPSS program.
CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter includes the statistical data that was analyzed using SPSS. This data was collected through the instruments of this study represented by the pre-test and the post-test to examine whether Padlet can be a sufficient tool that improves the writing skill or not.

4.1 Results of the Participants in the Pre-Test

At the beginning of the experiment of this study, the researcher used the pre-test in order to investigate the equivalence of the writing skill among the participants. The results of the pre-test of the both groups, the control group and the experimental group, concerning the mean scores, are tabulated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T. Value</th>
<th>P. Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>0.522</td>
<td>0.607</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: The T-Value of the difference in the mean scores between the experimental group and the control group on the pre-test

Table 4.1 shows that the mean score of the control group was 6.88 with a standard deviation of 2.16 and the mean score of the experimental group was 6.50 with a standard deviation of 1.23. The table also shows that there is no any significant difference between the mean scores of the both groups with the significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ as it can be seen to be 0.607. Hence, this result has proved that the participants of the experimental group and of the control group were equivalent before conducting the experiment. In addition, all of the participants were specialized
in English language to be English teachers and all of them were studying in the fifth level and they were almost similar concerning their social and economic status. Therefore, the change of the English writing performance would be attributed to the effect of using Padlet.

4.2 Results of the Participants in the Post-test

After conducting the experiment, the researcher administrated a post-test to the both groups in order to evaluate their English writing performance. The results of the post-test of the both groups, the control group and the experimental group, are tabulated below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>T. Value</th>
<th>P. Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control Group</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.23</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>5.600</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Group</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.92</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>5.600</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 The T-Value of the difference in the mean scores between the experimental group and the control group on the post-test

As can be seen from table 4.2, the results of the post-test show that the difference in the mean scores between the control group and the experimental group was statistically different with the significance level of $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ($t = 5.600, p = 0.001$). Therefore, it can be suggested that the results of the experimental group in the post-test were better than the results of the control group. Thus, the question of this study has been answered.

4.3 Chapter Summary

The data analysis showed that there were no significant differences between the mean scores of the pre-test of the control group and the experimental group, but there were significant differences between the results of the post-test of the both groups. For the control group, there
was no obvious difference between their results in the pre-test and the post-test whereas the results of the experimental group in the pre-test and the post-test were statistically significant.
CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes discussion of the results of this study, conclusion, recommendations, pedagogical implications suggested to instructors and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Discussion

This study was set out to answer the question of the research which is “What is the effect of using Padlet on the achievement of the subjects in the writing skills of the experimental group that studied via Padlet method of teaching and the control group that studied in the traditional lecture-discussion instruction method?” Therefore, this study investigated whether Padlet could be used as an effective tool to improve English writing performance or not.

By comparing the mean scores of the control group and the experimental group in the pre-test and the post-test, the results revealed that there were statistically significant differences between the achievement of the both groups due to the Padlet method. Before conducting the experiment, the scores of all participants in the pre-test were almost similar. The mean score of the control group was 6.88 and the mean score of the experimental group was 6.50, and after conducting the experiment, it was clear that the achievement of the experimental group, which was taught according to the Padlet method, was better than the achievement of the control group, which was taught according to the traditional lecture-discussion instruction method in which the mean score of the control group was 7.23 whereas the mean score of the experimental group was 11.92. This was a clear evidence that Padlet affected in the students’ writing proficiency positively. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study was accepted.
This result supports the value of using social networking sites, particularly Padlet, in which this kind of websites has proved its effectiveness on enhancing writing performance. Padlet gives learners equal chances to build their knowledge, and to be more self-confident and responsible for their learning process. It was clear that the participants of the experimental group noticed their mistakes and tried to correct each other too. Therefore, this led them to build their own knowledge without any help given by the researcher. Furthermore, their sense of responsibility for their learning process was obviously increased in which they were serious and ready when the researcher asked them to discuss some topics. This result is in harmony with several views raised by different researchers such as Warnock (2009), Romero-Frías and Montaño (2010) and Yunus, Salehi and Chenzi (2012).

Obviously, the students of the experimental group got benefits from using Padlet to develop their writing skills in which they were able to easily learn some new vocabulary, to correct ungrammatical sentences and to enhance their writing style. This is attributed to the platform used in this study which is accessed with a huge amount of writing activities. In support of this interpretation, the preceding result is in line with the findings of Hillocks’ meta-analysis study (1986) in which he claims that the traditional grammar instruction is not efficient in enhancing the writing skill. Thus, educators should shift from using the traditional methods to integrating SNSs into the teaching and learning processes (Saengsook, 2006), particularly the Padlet method that attracts learners, makes them enjoy learning and leads them to be happy and excited about doing tasks through Padlet.

By comparing the mean scores of the both groups, the effect of Padlet on the participants’ writing achievement was clear. The mean score of the control group revealed that there was little progress, but it did not have any statistical significance between the scores of the pre-test and the
This means that the control group that was instructed by the traditional lecture-discussion instruction method, got little progress in their writing proficiency compared to the experimental group.

Furthermore, using Padlet contributed to creating a friendly educational environment in which none of the participants felt angry, offended or insulted when their mistakes were corrected by their classmates. The participants had a facility that gave them several opportunities for self-learning that made them independent on the teacher. In support of this interpretation, Goldford, Pregibon, Shrem and Zyko (2011) indicate that using SNSs for educational purposes can be considered as an effective way that enriches students’ learning skills, creates a friendly classroom community and motivates learners to achieve their goals. In addition, this is in harmony with what is reported by Yunus, Salehi and Chenzi (2012). They indicate that SNSs help students to contact with their teachers. They can communicate with each other so freely.

Finally, it can be concluded that EFL learners’ writing performance can be improved a lot through using Padlet compared with the traditional method used by EFL teachers. Those learners will be definitely able to use English language more properly and effectively, especially in this age where the main goal of learning English language in Saudi Arabia is to prepare them to be successful when communicating in all walks of life.

5.2 Conclusion

This study investigated the effect of using Padlet on enhancing EFL writing performance in the English Language Department at Al-Muzahimyah College of Education. It shed a light on how Padlet could enhance the writing skill. In the light of this study, it was a clear sign that Padlet was very effective in which there were obvious differences in the results of the
participants in the pre-test and the post-test. It was clear that using Padlet improved the writing skills of the participants of the experimental group in which the experimental group achieved better results in the post-test than the control group. Padlet helped many of the participants to be more metacognitively aware of their English writing process. Thus, the results of this study showed that Padlet could be utilized as a service for improving the writing skill outside of the classrooms.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that EFL instructors can integrate Padlet in their teaching process because it has been proved that Padlet can be considered as a sufficient educational tool which helps in facilitating communication among people in which this leads them to practice their writing skills freely. Besides, Saudi Ministry of Higher Education is recommended to provide the universities and colleges with Internet services to facilitate integrating Padlet into the teaching process.

5.4 Pedagogical Implications

Depending on the findings of this study, the research provides EFL teachers and instructors with the following suggestions:

1- Using activities that meet the students’ needs contribute to building their personalities.

2- Providing students with several opportunities to communicate and express their ideas and thoughts promotes their self-confidence and autonomy.

3- Using different new teaching methods such as integrating technology into the teaching process is very helpful to students.
5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the results of this study, the researcher recommends the following:

1- Investigating the effect of using Padlet on improving writing skills of the students of the intermediate or secondary schools is recommended.

2- Similar studies should be carried out on using Padlet to enhance the reading skill or the listening skill.

3- This research can be replicated in other colleges in Saudi Arabia on other levels to investigate whether the results will be the same or not.

5- This study can be conducted in the males' colleges to examine whether gender has an effect on the results or not.
References


EFFECT OF PADLET ON WRITING PERFORMANCE


APPENDIX I

Writing Skill Pre-test

Q1: The following text contains several errors and each error is numbered. Read the text carefully, and then choose the most appropriate alternative segments that are listed below to make this text completely correct.

Bangladesh economy is based primarily on small-scale enterprises run by self-employed men and women. These small-business owners, who make a living as shopkeepers or providers of services, face a problem common to proprietors everywhere: lack of access to credit, particularly among the early start-up phase of an enterprise. Credit, which allows people to obtain the resources and equipment they need to make his business productive, is often unavailable to those who possess little collateral. Thus, many people which benefits from credit are denied access to it.

The Grameen Bank, founded in 1976 by economist Muhammad Yunis, who studied economies at highly regarded university, provides a unique alternative via loans to prospective business owners, which are given only to those who fall below a certain level of asserts. Instead of putting up collateral, Grameen customers are accountable to one another, congregating in small groups that meet as a week.

If one member will fail to repay a loan, the entire group is unable to obtain credit in the future; thus, group members have a strong incentive to succeed and support others in the group. In the last twenty years, the Grameen Bank has lent two billion dollars, and his customers have repaid 97 percent of their loans. Such results have led to the creation of similar programs.

Item 1.
A. Bangladesh's economy is based primarily on small-scale
B. Bangladesh's economy's is based primarily on small-scale
C. Bangladesh's economies' are based primarily on small-scale
D. Bangladesh's economys' is based primarily on small-scale
E. Bangladesh's economies' is based primarily on small-scale

Item 2.
A. particularly among the early start-up phase of an enterprise.
B. particularly between the early start-up phase of an enterprise.
C. particularly below the early start-up phase of an enterprise.
D. particularly during the early start-up phase of an enterprise.
E. particularly now the early start-up phase of an enterprise.

**Item 3.**
A. people which would benefit from credit
B. people whom would benefit from credit
C. people whose would benefit from credit
D. people who’s would benefit from credit
E. people who would benefit from credit

**Item 4.**
A. are denied access to it.
B. are denying access to it.
C. deny access to it.
D. denied access to it.
E. there is access denied to it.

**Item 5.**
A. small groups that meet as a week.
B. small groups that meet every weekly.
C. small weekly groups that meet.
D. small groups that meet weekly.
E. small groups weekly each meet.

**Item 6.**
A. If one member will fail to repay a loan, the entire group is unable to obtain credit
B. If one member fails to repay a loan, the entire group is unable to obtain credit
C. If one member do fail to repay a loan, the entire group is unable to obtain credit
D. If one member is fail to repay a loan, the entire group is unable to obtain credit
E. If one member failing to repay a loan, the entire group is unable to obtain credit
Item 7.
A. and his customers have repaid 97 percent of their loans.
B. and their customers have repaid 97 percent of their loans.
C. and its customers have repaid 97 percent of their loans.
D. and itself’s customers have repaid 97 percent of their loans.
E. and our customers have repaid 97 percent of their loans.

Q2: Write only a paragraph on each of the following topics:

a- The best place you have visited before.

b- Your dreams that you want to come true.

Note:


2. The 2nd question is going to be evaluated according to many rubrics. They are grammar (2 point), spelling (1 point), content (1 point), words choice and vocabulary (1 point) and organization or how the paragraphs are designed (2 point).
APPENDIX II

Writing Skill Post-test

Q1: The following text contains several errors and each error is numbered. Read the text carefully, and then choose the most appropriate alternative segments that are listed below to make this text completely correct.

In some street\(^1\), there is a two-way traffic for cars, but others are one-way streets. Streets\(^2\) goes across rivers on bridges which span them. Pedestrians walk on the pavement; whenever they want to cross they\(^3\) had better used zebra crossings or they\(^4\) will got into trouble with the police. Drivers\(^5\) must stopped their cars at once whenever they\(^6\) seen people on pedestrian crossings, so as to gave them right of way. Traffic in cities is controlled by means of traffic lights and by policemen in order to prevent traffic jams or congestion.

**Item 1.**

a. In some street,
b. In somes street,
c. In some streets,
d. In somes streets,
e. In somes streets,

**Item 2.**

a. Streets goes
b. Street go
c. Streets go
d. Streets gone
e. Street gone

**Item 3.**

a. they had better used
b. they had better been used
c. they had better using
d. they had better use
e. they had better is using

**Item 4.**

a. they will got
b. they will get
c. they will are getting
d. they will must get  
e. they will gotten

**Item 5.**

a. Drivers must stopped  
b. Drivers must are stopping  
c. Drivers must stopping  
d. Drivers must been stopped  
e. Drivers must stop

**Item 6.**

a. they seen people  
b. they see people  
c. they have see people  
d. they seeing people  
e. they are saw people

**Item 7.**

a. as to gave them  
b. as to have gave them  
c. as to give them  
d. as to them give  
e. as to them gave

---

**Q2:** There are mistakes of spelling, punctuation and capitalization in this text. Can you correct them all?

the name of this scool is FIS. There are more than one tousand students hear from all over The werld. meny students do not no English. So thay have ESL lessens. do you like you're new school.

**Q3:** Write about yourself in 2 paragraphs:

(What you like and hate. Your family. Your ambition. Your hobbies. What you think about English language)
Note:


2. The 2nd question is taken from http://esl.fis.edu/learners/writing/colors/blue04.htm. The researcher changed some items to suite the research too.

3. The 3rd question is going to be evaluated according to many rubrics. They are grammar (1 point), spelling (1 point), content (1 point), words choice and vocabulary (1 point) and organization or how the paragraphs are designed (1 point).
Appendix III

The Raters of the Instruments of the Study

1. Dr. Zuhair Zaghlool

2. Dr. Azmi Adel

3. Dr. Nasser Freihat

4. Dr. Yasser Jum'ah

5. Dr. Mohammad Hamdan

6. Dr. Al Mua'tassim Al Daraiseh

7. Dr. Bakri Al Azam
Appendix IV

The Letter of the Vice President for Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research of Shaqra University to Al Imam University

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Ministry of Higher Education
Shaqra University
Vice Presidency for Graduate Studies and Scientific Research
Vice President’s Office

المشروع:

سعادة عميد الدراسات العليا بجامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

إشارةً إلى الطلبه المقدم من المواطنة / فرح بن ناصر القرنيي، والتي تدرس مرحلة الماجستير في جامعة الملك فهد، وتخصص اللغويات وترغب في تطبيق دراستها على طالبات طرفية التربوية بالزواجية.

عليه تقدم سعادتك بموافقتنا على طلبها.

وتقبلوا سعادتك خالص التحية والتقدير.

وكيل الجامعة للدراسات العليا والبحث العلمي الكلف

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