Advantages Of Integrating Padlet As A Pre-Writing Strategy

Faiza Rostam Affendi, Joanna Bunga Noah, Fatin Kamilia Mohd Arif, Melor Md Yunus

Abstract—This paper aims to investigate the advantages of Padlet as a pre-writing strategy among secondary school students. A mixed method approach approach was applied in order to investigate the advantages Padlet carries as a pre-writing strategy. The findings revealed that the respondents’ feedback on the advantages of Padlet as a pre-writing strategy is positive and the advantages include meaningful learning activities and it enhances cognitive experiences. This research is useful for teachers who are teaching writing as the advantages that Padlet offers can make the process of writing more effective and engaging in which it conforms to 21st Century Teaching and Learning.

Index Terms—ESL writing, Learning innovation, Padlet, Technology, Writing strategy, 21st century classroom

1 INTRODUCTION

The advancement of technology worldwide is making its way into all sectors and this include the educational sector. The process of teaching and learning is no longer ‘chalk and talk’ as technology is being implemented in the classroom and this includes English classroom. However, ESL learners in Malaysia are still struggling to master language skills despite all these technology advancements. Several studies revealed that writing skill is the most difficult skill to master compared to the other three language skills as it has intricate components [1], [2], [3], [4]. In addition to that, students are also deprived from various pre-writing strategies that motivate them to write. In this 21st century, teachers are ought to provide students with engaging approaches that will not only aid the students in writing but to motivate them along the writing process. Mok [5] accentuated on the importance of teaching approaches applied by teachers in the classroom as teaching approaches play significant roles in assisting the students. One of the approaches that can be implemented in the classroom is the integration of technologies as Tolstoukhova et al. [6] believed that students in this generation are in favour of technologies and when technologies are integrated in the lesson, they become motivated to learn. Also, the integration of technologies in the classroom encourages autonomous learning among the students as they can structure their work depending on their own preferences [7] [8] [6]. Apart from that, studies have found that new teaching approaches such as mobile learning and gamification is very beneficial in elevating students’ language learning especially writing skill [9], [10], [11]. Also, it is important for teachers to keep improvising their lessons in order to encourage students to learn and one of the ways this could be done is through a social media platform as the students love it [12]. Padlet is a free application that is used to create online bulletin board that allows its user to search for all types of information on any topics that they are interested in. These information displayed on the bulletin board can be shared to other people in the forms of images, videos and links also other information can be added by people that have the link of the board. Students and teachers have to be proficient in using this kind of learning tool as it is considered a need in today’s classroom [13]. Besides, online learning platforms carry great advantages that benefit the students in the classroom [14] [15]. Hence, this paper aims to investigate the advantages of Padlet as a pre-writing strategy among secondary school students.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Malaysian Standards-Based Secondary Curriculum aspires to cultivate students with 21st Century Skills that focus on thinking skills and life skills through practices. Besides that, it intends to make sure students have the qualities that can help them to compete globally which includes their ability to think creatively and critically, to cooperate and communicate effectively [16]. In line with the 21st Century Skills, the usage of online platform such as Padlet can contribute to students’ collaborative learning experience as students are cooperating with their classmates when they are brainstorming for ideas through Padlet. Not to forget, in order for them to collaborate and work together, students have to communicate effectively. Generally, collaborative learning is all about students working together and it definitely shifts away from teacher-centred approach [17]. Besides, collaborative learning involves both social and intellectual and it encourages students to connect with other students and their learning. In addition to that, the integration of Padlet as a pre-writing strategy promotes authentic learning as according to Lombardi [18], students can be provided with more authentic learning experience through the emergence of new technological platforms. Additionally, students become more motivated when they are engaged in authentic learning. Hence, it is best to implement technology and the usage of ICT in the classroom since students already have positive attitudes towards it. According to Hussin [15], with all these developments in education sector, educators need to be prepared with revolutionised pedagogical approaches that include the implementation of ever-evolving technology. In this 21st Century, it is only fair to make changes in the classroom and cater to students’ needs through the inclusion of online learning options. In short, teachers need to be able to keep up with the education revolution by updating their methodologies to meet the evolving learning preference of students [15].

Faiza Rostam Affendi (faizarostam95@gmail.com)
Joanna Bunga Noah (joannabnoah@gmail.com)
Fatin Kamilia Mohd Arif (fatinkamilia.mohdarif@gmail.com)
Melor Md Yunus (melor@ukm.edu.my)
3 METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate the advantages of using Padlet as a pre-writing strategy, this research used a mixed-method approach to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from different sources [20]. The quantitative instrument used were questionnaires. Interviews and document analysis were used to gather qualitative data. The study was carried out in a secondary school in Selangor, Malaysia to Form One students. Purposive sampling was used to choose the 30 respondents to answer the survey questionnaire. Afterwards, 5 respondents were selected to be interviewed and their essays were analysed. The integration of Padlet was conducted over a span of three weeks during English classes. In all the classes, Padlet was used as the innovative learning tool to aid students’ writing process. The questionnaire items were designed in order to find out the advantages of using Padlet as a pre-writing strategy. The questionnaire consisted of 10 items and were placed on a 3-point Likert scale (1 = “disagree”, 2 = “neutral”, 3 = “disagree”). The data was analysed via descriptive statistics. In order to further supplement the quantitative data, individual semi-structured interviews were carried out to 5 respondents. The interview questions were based upon the research question. The documents related to this research are the students’ essays before and after using Padlet as a pre-writing strategy. In order to conclude this study, all data gathered have been triangulated. This further strengthens the study through multiple methods of data collection and analysis [21].

4 RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In general, the respondents’ feedback on the advantages of Padlet as a pre-writing strategy is positive. Other than being able to write better, the respondents also gained other skills along with it. Padlet does help students to gain new knowledge and collaborate with classmates [22] thus honing personal development at the same time. From Table 1, majority of the respondents agree with the items. Most respondents acknowledge Padlet for its advantageous benefits. The advantages discovered through this research are:

1. Meaningful learning activities: visual mapping, vocabulary enhancement and gaining new knowledge.
2. Converging and enhancing cognitive experiences: thoughts organisation and longer retention power.

Meaningful Learning Activities

From item 1, 86.6% (n=26) of the respondents agreed that adding visuals and related images on Padlet enabled them to organise their thoughts better. Developing ideas in pre-writing stage with the aid of visual mapping via Padlet can increase the students’ motivation to write better [23]. From item 2, 73.3% (n=22) of the respondents learnt new vocabulary from using Padlet and from item 8, 93.3% (n=28) of the respondents obtained a lot of useful information and knowledge. This shows that Padlet not only helped students with writing better but also with vocabulary enhancement and gaining new knowledge. Padlet has a “web search” feature that allows students to gain information while participating in the activity, thus enabling them to obtain new knowledge. This promotes self-learning and learner’s independence [24]. From the document analysis, the researchers have found that the students’ essays improved after the integration of Padlet. The main improvement to be seen is the length of the essay. After using visual mapping on Padlet, it helped the students’ generate ideas and are able to write longer and fuller sentences thus increasing the essays’ length. This result coincides with a research by Abdullah et. al [23] that proves the usage of innovation in pre-writing can increase students’ essay performance. Teachers should implement pre-writing in English classes and with vast innovation nowadays, it aids the lessons and enables for more meaningful learning activities.

Converging and enhancing cognitive experiences

From item 6, 93.3% (n=28) of the respondents find it easier to complete their essays after participating in Padlet activities. Respondent One (R1) stated that “using Padlet makes writing easier, faster and fun”. This can be related back to the fact that generating ideas via visual mapping on Padlet helped increase students’ ability to write better and faster all while enjoying the process too. From item 7, 76.7% (n=23) of the respondents could better remember the points they needed to include in their essay after the Padlet activities. This result is parallel to a previous research by Mohd Arif et. al [11] that proves that the usage of technology and innovation in classrooms can enable students to recall important points. Lastly, from item 9, 83.3% (n=25) of the respondents were able to stay focused longer on writing while using Padlet as compared to normal lessons. This can be further supported by R2 who said “Padlet is not boring so I can finish writing”. R4 also mentioned “Padlet
makes me interested to join the activity”. Here it can be seen that the usage of Padlet was able to gain students’ interest thus enabling them to stay focused longer and be invested in their writing process. All in all, the innovation of Padlet as a pre-writing strategy can converge and enhance students’ cognitive experience when it comes to writing.

6 CONCLUSION

Pre-writing might have been overlooked by teachers but that should stop. Especially with English as a second language in Malaysia’s school setting, pre-writing is a very important step in order to generate ideas and produce quality essays. This research can conclude that the integration of Padlet is a great advantage to pre-writing lessons. Therefore, teachers can implement innovations like Padlet in their classes. This will also motivate students in learning the language and their personal development too. Integrating innovation and technology to aid lessons are also in line with 21st Century Teaching and Learning.

REFERENCES