Exploring Students' Perceptions of Padlet as a Digital Tool for Writing in EFL Higher Education

Ika Wahyuni Lestari
Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta
ikawahyuni_11@umy.ac.id

Abstract
Grounded in sociocultural theory and the process-oriented approach to writing, this study investigates university students' attitudes toward Padlet as a tool for supporting English writing in higher education. Data were gathered from 26 students in an Indonesian English Language Education program through online questionnaires combining Likert-scale and open-ended items. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were applied. Findings indicate that students perceived Padlet as accessible, easy to use, and motivating, reporting that it increased their attention to grammar and vocabulary, enhanced accuracy, and encouraged regular writing practice. Qualitative results highlighted four main contributions of Padlet activities: fostering awareness of accuracy, improving language mastery, creating a collaborative and enjoyable learning atmosphere, and promoting sustained writing engagement. These findings suggest that Padlet can serve as a mediational tool for socially supported and process-oriented writing instruction. The study contributes to international discussions on technology-enhanced language learning by providing evidence from an EFL higher-education context and underscores the pedagogical potential of digital platforms to integrate collaboration, motivation, and skill development in writing instruction.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Padlet, Process-oriented writing, Sociocultural theory, Technology-enhanced learning

INTRODUCTION

Writing is essential in language learning. It serves as a means of communication and a reflection of one's language competence (Al-Jumaily, 2014; Sudirman et al., 2020). Many students find writing challenging to master and tiring to learn (Jong & Kim Hua, 2021) as writing requires the use of specialized abilities for thinking, drafting, and revising (Brown, 2001). To help students learn and improve their writing skills, teachers should take into account some specific strategies to be applied in writing lessons, such as writing techniques, including teaching students some stages in writing, collaborative writing by working together to produce written texts, and word processing, relating to the use of computers and technological tools to accomplish writing tasks (Gillespie & Graham, 2011). Applying effective techniques in teaching writing skills will facilitate students improve their writing skills.

Recent educational technology developments have significantly impacted many fields of education, including English Language Teaching. Through technological assistance in language teaching and learning, it is believed that digital technology has held a pivotal role leading to new pedagogy (Bećirović et al., 2021; Lestari, 2021; Sert &

Boynueğri, 2017; Suryanto et al., 2024). This notion of new pedagogy is closely related to the application of technology-based instructions through the use of educational technological tools at schools (Shah, 2022) resulting in a more rewarding and engaging learning experience (Jadhav et al., 2022). As for teaching writing skills, integrating technology in the classroom has transformed teaching and learning methods, including how teaching writing skills can be conducted. New pedagogy in writing skills has brought writing instruction from a mere production of written products to the emphasis on the shifting focus of teaching writing skills, which is on the process of writing (Agustini et al., 2024; Jong & Kim Hua, 2021; Paradita et al., 2025). Specific strategies and tools should be taken into account in developing students' writing skills, one of which is through microblogging (Kharis, Dameria, et al., 2020).

Padlet (https://padlet.com) is one of the Web 2.0 tools that serves as an online microblogging platform. Microblogging refers to a type of blog or blogging activities which enables its users to compose and publish a text and allow other users publicly or in a separate group to read it (Kharis, Ebner, et al., 2020). Padlet works as an online sticky note which enables teachers and students to post their notes on the virtual wall (Chen, 2021; Dianati et al., 2020; Jong & Kim Hua, 2021). Through this virtual wall, students can project their work to be accessed by their teacher and their peers. Padlet can also encourage collaboration through responses (Boateng & Nyamekye, 2022; Dianati et al., 2020; Mardi et al., 2021) students and teachers can give to other students' works. In addition, Padlet allows teachers and students to embed additional sources such as documents, videos, links, photos ass a complement to words they post

on the Padlet wall (Ahmad et al., 2022; Boateng & Nyamekye, 2022; Chen, 2021; Kharis, Dameria, et al., 2020; Nadeem, 2019), to encourage collaboration through responses (Boateng & Nyamekye, 2022; Dianati et al., 2020; Mardi et al., 2021; Waltermeyer et al., 2021), to give feedback (Jong & Kim Hua, 2021; Soares et al., 2020; Waltermeyer et al., 2021), and to assess students' learning (Nadeem, 2019). These studies emphasized the potential use of Padlet in learning.

The study is grounded in Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which highlights that learning occurs through interaction and mediation of tools. In the context of English writing instruction as the context of the study, Padlet is viewed as a digital platform which serves as a tool to facilitate students' English writing development and to encourage collaboration among them, where they co-construct learning through various collaborative writing activities on the platform. Additionally, this study also draws on process-oriented writing approach which emphasizes the recursive nature of writing that involves repetitive planning, drafting, writing, and revising. Padlet aligns with this approach as it offers opportunities for students to experience those stages in a collaborative digital space. These two frameworks facilitate understanding that Padlet could serve as a tool which supports socially mediated and process-oriented aspects of writing.

Plethora of prior studies have been conducted to investigate how Padlet was used as a digital tool to facilitate students to improve their writing skills. Jong and Kim Hua (2021) assessed the use of Padlet as an assessment tool in writing class for primary school students in Malaysian context. Using questionnaires, interview, and observation, the study reported that students showed a

positive attitude towards using Padlet as an online assessment tool for writing assessment. Nonetheless, some challenges such as poor internet network and limited ICT skills were reported. Similarly, Arif et al. (2020) conducted a study in Malaysian context to investigate students' views on the use of Padlet as a writing tool for secondary school students in Malaysia. Questionnaire-based findings revealed that majority of the students perceived that Padlet was beneficial to be used as a tool for prewriting stage whereby they could brainstorm their ideas prior to the writing. In another study, Affendi et al. (2020) conducted a mixed method study to investigate the use of Padlet as a pre-writing strategy for teaching writing to secondary school students, reporting that it improved students` cognitive experiences, engegement, and writing performance. Hikmah et al. (2022) conducted an experimental study with high school students in Indonesia to investigate the impacts of podcasts and Padlet on students' productive English skills. The study found that students who were taught using Padlet showed a statistically significant improvement on their writing skills compared to those taught conventionally using a lecturing teaching method.

Prior studies have investigated the use of Padlet in higher education, revealing its potential to enhance students' writing performance, motivation, and engagement. For instance, research has shown that integrating Padlet into university writing courses fosters collaborative learning, supports idea generation, and improves linguistic complexity and accuracy (Albán Defilippi et al., 2020; Meletiadou, 2021). Moreover, students often perceive Padlet as an engaging and supportive tool that enhances their digital literacy and positive attitudes toward learning (Awaludin et al., 2017; Kharis et al., 2020). However, findings are not universally consistent, as some studies reported limited direct effects on writing achievement, suggesting that Padlet's effectiveness may depend on pedagogical implementation and learner context.

Despite the widely reported pedagogical benefits of Padlet, several studies have also highlighted notable challenges associated with its classroom implementation. Technical constraints such as limited internet connectivity, inadequate access to digital devices, and insufficient IT support often hinder its effectiveness (Arif et al., 2020; Meletiadou, 2021). In addition, pedagogical issues—including reduced collaboration, lack of meaningful interaction, and limited feedback opportunities—may diminish learners' engagement and the overall quality of the writing process (Dianati et al., 2020; Nadeem, 2019; Park et al., 2022). These findings suggest that while Padlet offers valuable opportunities for collaborative and process-oriented writing, its pedagogical potential depends heavily on reliable technological infrastructure and effective instructional design.

Although prior studies have extensively examined Padlet's pedagogical benefits and challenges in educational context, those studies focused heavily on the technical aspects of the tool and students' general perceptions toward the tools. Nonetheless, there remains a dearth of studies exploring students' experiences utilizing Padlet as a learning platform for collaborative English writing development in a tertiary level. Thus, this study aims to fill the gap by exploring university students' attitudes and experiences towards the use of Padlet and its contribution to the development of their writing skills. In the context of the study, the English language education department of Sun University (EDSU, pseudonym), Padlet has been used as a digital tool in many courses to

encourage students' participation through sharing ideas on the virtual walls. Padlet is also introduced in a compulsory course about digital technology in education, through which students learn how to utilize Padlet in English language teaching. Although Padlet has been used in many courses, there has been a dearth of studies conducted to explore how students view the use of Padlet, particularly in its contribution to English writing skills.

Based on the gaps identified in this study which emphasized on the dearth of studies investigating how Padlet is perceived by students, particularly in relation to English writing learning process and the phenomenon of wide use of Padlet in the context of the study which requires further investigation, the present study sought to explore how students perceived the use of Padlet as a tool to facilitate English writing learning process under two research questions:

1. How are students' attitudes towards the use of Padlet as a tool to facilitate English language learning?
2. How do students view the contribution of Padlet as a tool to improve their writing skills?

METHODOLOGY

Context and Participants of the Study

This exploratory study was conducted at the English Language Education Department of Sun University (EDSU, pseudonym) in Indonesia. digital technology integration, including the use of Padlet, has been a common instructional practice. A course on digital technology integration offered in the second year equips students with both pedagogical and practical knowledge of digital tools such as Padlet, making them familiar with its use in instructional contexts.

The participants of the study were students who attended an elective course at EDSU. During the teaching and learning process in this course, Padlet was used to elicit students' ideas and thoughts and to provide comments on other students' posts. The participants were 26 students in total consisted of 8 male students (30.8%) and 18 female students (69.2%). They were in a relatively similar age range: 21 students (80.8%) were 19-21 years old, and 5 students (19.2%) were more than 22 years old. As the course was an elective one, students from different cohorts joined the course. There were 24 third-year students (92.3%) and 2 final-year students (7.7%). The sample size was deemed adequate for this exploratory design due to the practicality and voluntary participation of the participants, consistent with Creswell (2012). Ethical consideration was maintained through voluntary-based participation, obtained informed consents prior to data collection, and anonymity of the participants and setting.

Instrumentation and Data Collections

The instrument used in the study was a questionnaire which consists of two different types: a close-ended questionnaire and an open-ended questionnaire. The close-ended questionnaire was administered to measure students' attitudes on the use of Padlet in academic ESL/ELT writing, adapted from Awaludin et al. (2017). The questionnaire was relevant to be used in the present study since the questionnaire was developed to assess students' attitudes on the use of Padlet for English writing skills in a university context, which is similar to the context of the present study. The questionnaire measuring students' attitudes originally consisted of 22 items; no items were omitted in this study. Nonetheless, some changes were made to suit the context of the study. Since the study was in the Indonesian context, the items

were translated from English to the Indonesian language. Back translation was administered to assure the quality of the translated items and maintain the original meanings. The responses of the items were also modified. Originally, Awaludin et al. (2017) provided 2-point Likert scale; meanwhile, the present study used a 5-point Likert scale as the response options to offer more flexibility for the participants to choose the option which is the closest to their attitudes.

The second type of questionnaire, the open-ended one, was administered to collect data on participants' perceptions on the use of Padlet as a tool to enhance their writing skills. The open-ended questionnaire explores their experiences, particularly in relation to how their learning English writing skills using Padlet contributed to the improvement of the participants' writing skills. The modified questionnaire was checked for its validity and reliability prior to its use to collect data. An expert checked the modified questionnaire for its readability to see whether the instructions and the items were clearly written. Some minor changes were made in the modified questionnaire to make it clearer. As for the reliability, the reliability checking using Cronbach Alpha showed that the modified questionnaire was highly reliable (α=0.98). The modified questionnaire was then distributed online through Google Form to the students joining the course. While the questionnaires provided valuable insights into students' perceptions, the reliance on self-reported data represents a methodological limitation that may affect the objectivity of the findings.

Data Analysis
The data obtained through the close-ended questionnaire were analysed descriptively by finding the mean, frequency, and standard deviation. To interpret the attitudes of the students as reported in the study, the results were interpreted as positive attitudes (M=3.01-5.00) and negative attitudes (M=1.00-3.00). These thresholds were determined using Sturges' formula (Sturges, 1926; Daniel & Cross, 2018), which calculates class intervals based on the range and number of intervals in a data set (w = R/k). Applying this formula produced an interval width (w = 2.00), resulting in the categorical interpretation of the mean scores used to classify students' attitudes toward the use of Padlet.

Meanwhile, the data obtained from the open-ended questionnaire were analysed inductively using thematic coding analysis adhering to Braun and Clarke (2006) by a sole researcher. The data were read through several times and categorised based on similar codes. At last, the themes were made based on the codes and reported as the findings of the study.

RESULTS
Students' Attitudes on the Use of Padlet as a Tool to Improve Writing Skills
The quantitative results in Table 1 indicate that the students generally perceived Padlet positively as a tool facilitating learning of English writing skills learning. Most participants found it easy to use, enjoyable, and accessible. Although a few students found it time-consuming, the majority of them reported interest and comfort in learning writing through Padlet.

Table 1. Students' attitudes towards the use of Padlet

Items	M	SD
1. I am glad that I have my own English Padlet.	4.04	0.72

	M	SD
2. I feel it is quite easy to create and publish my own Padlet.	4.16	0.73
3. I think I have no difficulty in using my Padlet.	4.08	0.98
4. I feel comfortable using the Padlet.	4.28	0.53
5. Writing on Padlet was enjoyable and interesting.	4.28	0.6
6. I think the learner Padlet is a waste of time.	1.88	1.07
7. It is fast and convenient to update information on the Padlet.	4.20	0.69

The results in Table 2 show that the students expressed mixed attitudes toward the collaborative features of Padlet. They reported joy in posting their writings, reading their peers' works, and receiving comments, although only a few responses were received. Nonetheless, some students found it challenging to provide feedback for their peers` work.

Table 2. Collaborative aspects of Padlet activities

Items	M	SD
8. I like posting many articles and photos or clips of films on the Padlet.	3.04	1.04
9. I like to invite my classmates to read my postings.	2.72	1.15
10. Reading the comments and entries of my peers on the Padlet helped me to learn and improve my own writing.	3.92	0.89
11. I like making comments on my classmates'	3.04	1.11

	M	SD
posts.		
12. Responding to the comments received on my postings improves my writing.	3.92	0.89
13. I found it difficult to comment on the postings of my peers.	2.32	0.97
14. I like having classmates make comments on my posts.	4.16	0.61

The results in Table 3 indicate that students perceived that Padlet contributed to their writing improvement, particularly improved awareness of grammar and vocabulary by practicing writing and reviewing others` work. However, they also showed remained cautious about errors, suggesting variability in writing confidence.

Table 3. The use of Padlet as a tool to learn writing skills

Items	M	SD
15. I am more careful with my writing when involved with the Padlet activities.	4.08	0.69
16. In general, I feel that my English grammar has somewhat improved since I involved with the Padlet activities.	3.88	0.77
17. I learn more new words when reading my friends' postings.	4.04	0.66
18. I think it is a good idea to use Padlet to practice writing skills in English.	4.08	0.69
19. I don't like to check my writing when I write on paper.	2.64	1.13
20. I always check my sentences before I post	4.12	0.82

my writing on the Padlet.		
21. When I write on the Padlet, I don't worry about mistakes.	3.16	0.97
22. I am more active in checking up meaning of difficult words in the dictionary when involved with the Padlet activities.	3.84	0.92

The Contribution of Padlet Activities to Improve Writing Skills

The findings of the open-ended questionnaires showed how engaging in Padlet writing activities contributed to the improvement of the participants' writing skills.

Raising Awareness on Writing Accuracy

Students 11 and 15 explained how writing on Padlet helped them improve their writing skills.

> *Padlet helps me improve my writing skills as when I post my writing, it will be read and commented by my classmates. So, I have to be more careful and meticulous in writing. That help me improve my writing eventually. (St.11)*

> *Learning writing skills using Padlet helps me a lot because when writing using Padlet, I have to be careful and read before posting to minimize grammatical mistakes. It is done repeatedly and finally that improves my writing skills (St.15).*

The excerpts demonstrated that when writing on Padlet, students tended to be more careful in writing as they were fully aware that their writing would be read by others; thus, they tried their best in writing. This practice finally helped them improve their writing skills.

Improving Language Mastery

The participants reported that Padlet helped them improve their language mastery, which eventually helped them improve their writing skills.

> *When I write English on Padlet, I should check the grammar and vocabulary I used there, and that trained me a lot in writing. (St.3)*

> *Padlet enrich my vocabulary and add knowledge on grammar based on posts by my lecturer and my classmates. (St.8)*

> *I get used to using structure in English and vocabulary. (St.4) Learning using Padlet helps me improve my English because I can write as well as read my classmates' writings and that helps me learn some new vocabulary. (St.14)*

The participants perceived that writing on Padlet helped them improve their grammar and enriched their vocabulary. It can be achieved when they read their lecturer's and their peers' writings from which they learnt some grammar and new vocabulary.

Creating Fun and Collaborative Learning Atmosphere

The participants reported that learning writing skills through Padlet made fun learning and encouraged collaboration among students.

> *Writing on Padlet does not make me feel bored. (St.6)*

When using Padlet, it is like playing game with my friends, so it does not bore me and it's interesting (St.20).

Interaction among students on Padlet motivates me to comment on my peers' posts using English and that trains my English writing skills. (St.13)

Through engaging and fun Padlet writing activities, the students reported that they were motivated to comment on their peers' Padlet posts and finally it trained them more to write.

Encouraging Writing Practices
The participants reported that writing activities using Padlet allowed them to have more writing practices.

With Padlet, I can improve my writing skills in English as I can keep on practicing writing English sentences based on the topics given by my lecturer. (St.9)

It helps me write sentences and paragraphs in English. (St.5)

With Padlet, I can explore my ideas on what to write based on the topic given by my lecturer. (St.12)

At first, I used Padlet, I was excited because it helped me take notes using some features on Padlet. And it helps me improve my writing skills (St.23).

Writing is a skill that should be trained and requires long process. Engaging in Padlet writing activities allowed them to practice more and made them get used to composing sentences and paragraphs in English through the various features Padlet offers. These practices eventually contributed to the improvement of the students' writing skills.

DISCUSSIONS
The study showed that the students had a positive attitude towards the use of Padlet in general. They felt comfortable using it and found Padlet easy to use and interesting. Prior studies on Padlet also showed that many students showed positive attitudes on the use of Padlet (Awaludin et al., 2017; Chen, 2021; Kharis, Ebner, et al., 2020; Soares et al., 2020). In relation to the use of Padlet as a tool for collaborative learning and collaborative writing, half of the students agreed on it. The results showed that Padlet writing activities encouraged students to comment on others' writings and respond to others' comments on their own writing. These reciprocal commenting activities trained their writing, and as it is done repeatedly, it helped them improve their writing. These results resonate with those of prior studies (Albán Defilippi et al., 2020; Boateng & Nyamekye, 2022; Dianati et al., 2020; Mardi et al., 2021; Waltermeyer et al., 2021) who pointed out that Padlet promotes collaborative writing through responses students made towards other students' posts or writings.

The results also indicated that engaging in Padlet writing activities helped students improve their writing skills. By reading other students' posts or writings, they learn new vocabulary and grammar, and they become more aware on preparing and checking their writing before posting it on Padlet wall. This shows that the students are getting familiar with the stages of writing. The results are in line with Arif et al. (2020) and Affendi et al. (2020) who stated that Padlet activities were

beneficial to be used as a pre-writing activity.

A key contribution of the present study lies in how Padlet activities improved students' awareness of writing as a process rather than solely as a product. The students have awareness that their writing will be read by their teachers and classmates, so they are more careful in posting their writings on the Padlet virtual wall (Chen, 2021; Dianati et al., 2020; Jong & Kim Hua, 2021). Through writing activities on Padlet, the students stated that they got more opportunities to practice writing more, and it familiarized them with composing sentences and paragraphs in English. Dianati et al., (2020) also asserted that Padlet promoted autonomous learning. With the possibility of being accessed outside lesson hours, students have a bigger opportunity to practice their writing independently.

The findings indicated that the students indirectly applied planning and monitoring for their writing, and it may train their metacognitive skills. This finding corroborates Soares et al. (2020) who found out that Padlet could promote learning and improve students' metacognitive skills. By writing on Padlet and reading others' Padlet posts, the students reported that they learnt grammar and new vocabulary. A study by Meletiadou, (2021) also showed that the use of e-portfolio through Padlet enhanced students' writing performance and motivations. Students showed improved ability to compose more complex sentences with better grammar and richer vocabulary. In addition, learning writing skills through Padlet was reported to create a fun learning atmosphere, since the learning process was more relaxing and collaborative. Ahmad et al. (2022) claimed that Padlet can also help students reduce their anxiety in learning. It is in line with the results of the study, which

showed that the students felt like playing games when learning writing skills using Padlet.

The findings also show limitations that should be taken into account when using Padlet as a tool to facilitate students' English writing development. While students embraced receiving feedback from their peers, they expressed reluctance in providing it, confirming Park et al. (2022)'s findings. This issue may hamper collaboration and writing improvement. Additionally, students also expressed concerns over writing errors and technical issues, as found in prior studies (Arif et al., 2020; Dianati et al., 2020; Meletiadou, 2021; Nadeem, 2019). These findings underscore the need to carefully design tasks and activities when using Padlet in English writing pedagogy.

CONCLUSIONS

This study provides empirical evidence that Padlet can serve as a valuable tool for enhancing students' engagement and accuracy in English writing while fostering a more collaborative and motivating learning environment. By promoting interactive peer exchange and process-oriented practice, Padlet supports students' development in vocabulary, grammar, and writing fluency.

For further pedagogical implementation, it is noteworthy to take into account the findings that suggest Padlet integration in English writing learning is effective when it focuses on process-oriented writing instruction, facilitated by collaborative activities. Hence, teachers are encouraged to design collaborative, process-focused writing activities that leverage Padlet's affordances to stimulate interaction and sustained engagement. Such integration aligns with sociocultural learning theory (Vygotsky, 1978), emphasizing knowledge construction through social interaction, and with process

writing pedagogy, which views writing as a recursive, reflective process facilitated by feedback and revision. Taking these aspects into account when integrating Padlet in teaching writing skills may contribute to better Padlet integrations and students' writing skills.

Despite its valuable findings, the study recommends a larger-scale performance-based investigation to triangulate the present study's findings. Mixed-methods and longitudinal studies are recommended to further examine how sustained Padlet integration affects learners' writing development and engagement over time. Additionally, comparative studies contrasting Padlet-based instruction with traditional classroom writing approaches could also deepen understanding of its pedagogical effectiveness. Positioned within the broader field of technology-enhanced language learning, the study enriches global discussions on how digital platforms can transform writing pedagogy, particularly in EFL higher education contexts.

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