



THE EFFECT OF USING PADLET ON ELEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS' PERSONAL LETTER WRITING SKILLS

by

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Abstract:

This research was conducted in response to the ongoing challenges faced by students in learning English writing skills in non-English-speaking countries, particularly in making writing engaging and effective. The study focuses on the use of Padlet as a digital tool to improve students' personal letter-writing skills. The purpose of this research is to determine whether Padlet significantly improves students' writing scores and affects their overall writing abilities. A quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test control group was employed. The participants were grade XI students of SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan, divided into an experimental class using Padlet and a control class using the conventional method. The research used writing tests as the main instrument, assessed through five aspects: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests, then analyzed using t-tests to determine statistical significance. The findings show that students taught using Padlet scored higher in all aspects of writing, indicating a significant improvement and positive effect on their writing skills. It can be concluded that Padlet is an effective medium for enhancing writing quality and student engagement. This research suggests that teachers should consider integrating interactive digital tools, such as Padlet, into writing instruction to overcome challenges and boost students' motivation and performance.

Keywords: padlet, writing skill, personal letter

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini dilakukan sebagai tanggapan atas tantangan berkelanjutan yang dihadapi siswa dalam mempelajari keterampilan menulis bahasa Inggris di negara-negara yang tidak berbahasa Inggris, terutama dalam membuat tulisan menarik dan efektif. Studi ini berfokus pada penggunaan Padlet sebagai alat digital untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menulis surat pribadi

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siswa. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menentukan apakah Padlet secara signifikan meningkatkan skor menulis siswa dan memengaruhi kemampuan menulis mereka secara keseluruhan. Desain kuasi-eksperimental dengan kelompok kontrol pra-tes dan pasca-uji digunakan. Para peserta adalah siswa kelas XI SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan, dibagi menjadi kelas eksperimen menggunakan metode Padlet dan kelas kontrol konvensional. Penelitian menggunakan tes menulis sebagai instrumen utama, dinilai melalui lima aspek: konten, organisasi, kosakata, tata bahasa, dan mekanika. Data dikumpulkan melalui pre-test dan post-test, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan uji-t untuk menentukan signifikansi statistik. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa siswa yang mengajar menggunakan Padlet mendapat skor lebih tinggi dalam semua aspek penulisan, menunjukkan peningkatan yang signifikan dan efek positif pada keterampilan menulis mereka. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa Padlet merupakan media yang efektif untuk meningkatkan kualitas penulisan dan keterlibatan mahasiswa. Penelitian ini menyiratkan bahwa guru harus mempertimbangkan untuk mengintegrasikan alat digital interaktif seperti Padlet ke dalam pengajaran menulis untuk mengatasi tantangan dan meningkatkan motivasi dan kinerja siswa.

Kata kunci: padlet, keterampilan menulis, surat pribadi

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English in a foreign-speaking country like Indonesia presents several challenges. Hasanah (2020) identifies three main obstacles in teaching English in non-native English-speaking countries: learning materials that do not align with students' needs, a less supportive school environment, and low student motivation. Additionally, teaching English is a multidimensional process that requires teachers to address all language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking (Surayatika, 2022). Among these skills, writing is particularly challenging for students to master.

Writing is considered the most challenging skill due to its complexity, involving a wide range of aspects such as vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, organization, and content (Salviyati & Mertosono, 2022). Strong writing skills are essential not only for academic success but also for future professional endeavors (Elfiyanto & Fukazawa, 2022). Academic writing is one of the most crucial forms of writing for students. In general, academic writing encompasses a range of writing styles and genres within an educational context. Readers usually view academic writing as a text that includes scholarly works such as theses and journals (Turmudi, 2017). However, students often struggle with writing due to the influence of their mother tongue, lack of comprehensive feedback, low awareness of the importance of writing, and negative attitudes toward the task (Rezeki & Rahmani, 2021).

To better understand the challenges faced by students, the researcher conducted observations and interviews at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan. The findings revealed that all students in grade XI struggle with writing, particularly in areas such as vocabulary,

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grammar, mechanics, organization, and content. A pre-survey on personal letter-writing skills showed that 100% of the students scored in the fair category, indicating a need for significant improvement in writing skills. Given these challenges, there is a need for effective teaching strategies to enhance students' writing abilities.

Based on the pre-survey results, it can be concluded that all the students scored between 21 and 40, which falls within the fair category. This indicates that the students still struggle with writing personal letters, highlighting the need to improve their writing skills. Additionally, the pre-survey revealed that grade XI students face challenges in writing, including limited vocabulary, poor grammar, weak mechanics, disorganized structure, and insufficient content. Moreover, the students showed a lack of motivation and interest in learning to write. Therefore, effective English writing instruction is necessary to address these issues.

The researcher chose personal letters as the focus of the study because personal letters are informal and relevant to students' daily lives. Rubio (2024) notes that using materials such as letters helps students feel more connected to their task. Writing personal letters teaches them about structures and language that can be used in real life, thus making the task more interesting. Personal letters serve to share news, build relationships, and achieve specific goals, making them an effective tool in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Sartika et al., 2021). In conclusion, students at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan face challenges in writing, particularly in areas like vocabulary and grammar. Personal letters, being both relevant and engaging, provide practical ways to enhance these skills, making them effective material for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

According to Pramanca (2013), learners require clear media to facilitate and enrich their experience in learning English as a foreign language (EFL), thereby enhancing the effectiveness of English language teaching. The use of media in teaching writing has been shown to facilitate the learning process and help students express their ideas more effectively (Firmansyah & Firmansyah, 2018). Puspitasari & Tsara (2022) suggest that various types of learning media, such as video-sharing platforms, online notice boards, and language support tools, can be used to address writing difficulties by improving linguistic aspects, expanding ideas, and organizing content. One such medium is Padlet, an online notice board that has been proven effective in improving students' writing (Fadhilawati et al., 2020; Sehuddin et al.,

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2021). Padlet not only enhances the writing performance of students but also makes the teaching-learning process more creative and engaging. With the recent launch of 20 new features, including AI-driven content and lesson planning tools, Padlet offers even greater potential to support English writing instruction.

Previous studies consistently highlight the effectiveness of Padlet in enhancing various aspects of learning across different educational contexts. It has been proven to improve student participation, engagement (both behavioral and cognitive), vocabulary knowledge, and self-confidence, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings (M Alabbad & Saad Bin Huwamel, 2020; Ramadhani et al., 2023; Subramaniam & Mohd Fadzil, 2021). Padlet also supports collaborative learning and has been shown to improve performance in specific tasks, such as writing descriptive texts. These findings collectively suggest that Padlet is a versatile and effective tool for fostering active participation and improving learning outcomes across diverse subjects (Arouri et al., 2023; Sætra, 2021; Taufiqurohman, 2018; Villanueva et al., 2023).

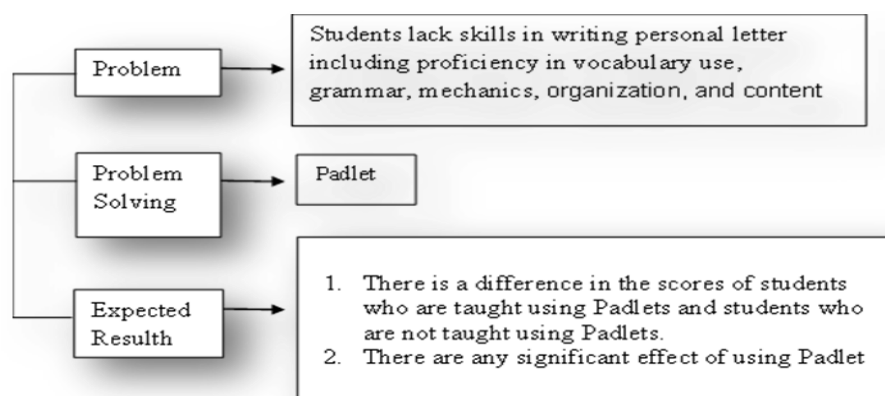


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study on the use of Padlet to enhance personal letter-writing skills among grade XI students at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan is as follows: This study investigates the impact of using Padlet as a tool for teaching personal letter-writing to grade XI students at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan. Padlet serves as the independent variable, while the dependent variables encompass various aspects of personal letter-writing skills, including vocabulary usage, grammar, mechanics, organization, and content. The research aims to determine whether there are differences in writing scores

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between students who receive instruction using Padlet and those who do not. Additionally, it seeks to assess the significant effects of Padlet on improving students' personal letter-writing abilities. After reviewing the theoretical background, I plan to conduct this research and have formulated research questions accordingly.

1. Do students taught using Padlet achieve higher scores in personal letter writing than those not taught using Padlet in grade XI at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan?
2. Is there any significant effect of using Padlet on students' writing skills of personal letters in grade XI of SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan?

METHOD

Design

This study utilizes a quasi-experimental design to evaluate the effect of using Padlet on students' ability to write personal letters. According to Sugiyono (2017), experimental research tests the effects of a particular treatment under controlled conditions, focusing on the cause-and-effect relationship between variables. Due to practical limitations at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan, where random sample selection is not feasible, a non-equivalent design with a control group was employed. This design features an experimental group that receives instruction using Padlet, while a control group continues with conventional methods.

A pre-test is administered to both groups to assess their writing abilities prior to the intervention. Following the treatment, a post-test is conducted to evaluate the impact of Padlet and to identify significant differences in writing abilities between the two groups. The design can be represented as follows:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} O_1 & X & O_2 \\ \hline O_3 & & O_4 \end{array}$$

O1 = The pre-test is to measure the personal letter-writing skills of the experimental class before the treatment.

O3 = The pre-test is to measure the personal letter-writing skills of the control class without the treatment.

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X = The treatment of the experimental class with the Application of Padlet as a learning medium

O2 = The post-test is to measure the personal letter-writing skill of the experimental class after the treatment.

O4 = The post-test is to measure the personal letter-writing skill of the control class without Padlet treatment.

Participant

The participants in this study are 26 11th-grade students from SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan, divided into two classes: XI IPA with 14 students and XI IPS with 12 students. Using saturation sampling, the entire population was included in the study. The experimental group (XI IPA) received instruction using Padlet, while the control group (XI IPS) was taught with conventional methods. XI IPA was chosen for the experimental group because these students were more comfortable with technology. At the same time, XI IPS, being more familiar with traditional methods, was selected as the control group.

Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is a personal letter-writing test designed to assess the effectiveness of using Padlet on students' writing abilities. The instrument includes two phases: a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test, consisting of an essay on writing a personal letter, is administered to evaluate students' initial writing skills before any intervention. Following the treatment using Padlet, the post-test is conducted to measure any improvements in students' writing abilities, using a similar essay format. Most of the test items are adapted from Hamp-Lyons' (2002) book, ensuring that the stimulus material and instructions align with the study's objectives. Additionally, the essay test items were validated by an expert validator, Dr. Dedi Turmudi, MA.TESOL, the lecturer of the English Education Study Program at Muhammadiyah University of Metro, ensures the accuracy and relevance of the research objectives.

Data collection technique

Data is collected using pre-test and post-test methods. The pre-test measures students' initial writing abilities. At the same time, the post-test, given after the treatment, evaluates

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changes in writing skills and the impact of Padlet. Both tests are administered to the experimental and control groups to assess progress and identify differences in writing performance.

Data was collected through personal letter-writing essay tests administered before and after the treatment. The pre-test for the control class was conducted on July 24, 2024, and for the experimental class on July 26, 2024, where both classes completed a 40-minute essay test on paper. The treatment for the experimental class (XI IPA) used the Padlet application over four sessions: July 26, 2024, Session 1 where students read and discussed materials on Padlet; Session 2 where students polled questions and discussed the results; July 27, 2024, Session 3 where students answered questions on Padlet and discussed responses; and Session 4 where students conducted polls and discussed them. The control class (XI IPS) used conventional media (paper) with the same material as the experimental group over four sessions: July 26, 2024, Session 1 where students read and discussed material on paper; Session 2 where students answered questions and discussed them; July 27, 2024, Session 3 where students answered additional questions and discussed their answers; and Session 4 where students reviewed poll results and discussed them. The post-test for the control class was conducted on July 25, 2024, and for the experimental class on July 27, 2024, where both classes completed a 40-minute essay test on paper.

Data analysis technique

The pre-test and post-test results will be analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25. We will test for normality and homogeneity, and then conduct hypothesis testing. The Paired Sample t-test will compare pre- and post-test scores in the experimental group. In contrast, the Independent Sample t-test will compare scores between the experimental and control groups. The hypothesis is tested as follows: if the t-test value is smaller than the t-table, H₀ is accepted, meaning the experimental group's score is lower. If the t-test value is larger, H₀ is rejected, meaning the experimental group's score is higher. The significance level (p-value) will also be checked: if $p < 0.05$, H₀ is rejected, showing a significant effect; if $p > 0.05$, H₀ is accepted, showing no significant effect.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Finding

This study aims to investigate the effect of utilizing Padlet media on enhancing eleventh-grade students' personal letter-writing skills at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan. This test highlights the differences between the control and experimental classes. The results are as follows:

Table 1. Result score of experiment and control

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>					
	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
<i>Pre-test Experiment</i>	14	25	35	27.14	3.780
<i>Post-test Experiment</i>	14	40	60	46.43	5.694
<i>Pre-test Control</i>	12	25	35	28.33	3.257
<i>Post-test Control</i>	12	25	30	26.67	2.462
<i>Valid N (listwise)</i>	12				

Source: IBM SPSS Statistics 25 program

Based on Table 3, it can be seen that the mean between the experimental group and the control class is different. The mean of the post-test of the experimental class is higher than that of the control class (46.43 > 26.67). This shows that the use of Padlet in learning personal letter-writing skills provides better results than without using Padlet. The difference in the average pre-test and post-test in both classes can be seen in the following graph.

Furthermore, the writing scores are based on the holistic scale, which includes Grammar (G), Vocabulary (V), Content (C), Mechanics (M), and Organization (O). The purpose of the scale is to make it easier for the researcher to assess the students' post-test results based on the scoring rubric.

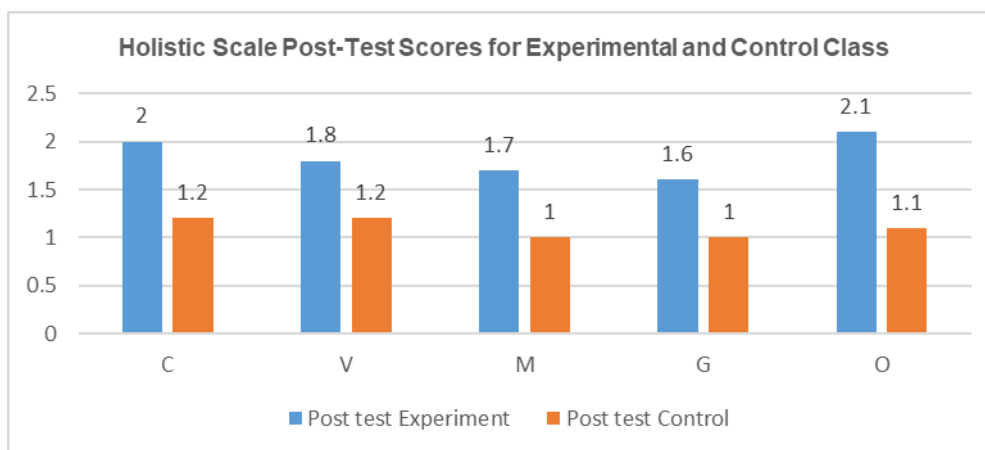


Figure 2. Holistic scale post-test scores for experimental and control classes

The graph demonstrates that the experimental class consistently outperforms the control class in personal letter-writing indicators. Specifically, the experimental class achieved higher scores across all indicators: content (2/4), vocabulary (1.8/4), mechanics (1.7/4), grammar (1.6/4), and organization (2.1/4). In contrast, the control class's scores were lower: content (1.1/4), vocabulary (1.2/4), mechanics (1/4), grammar (1.1/4), and organization (1/4). The pre-test results confirm that after intervention, the experimental class exhibited superior performance compared to the control group.

Table 2. Result of the t-test, independent samples test

		Independent Samples Test									
		Levene's Test For Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
Score	Equal variances assumed	5.438	.028	11.139	24	.000	19.762	1.774	16.100	23.423	
	Equal variances not assumed			11.767	18.263	.000	19.762	1.679	16.237	23.287	

As seen in Table 4, the result of the analysis indicates that the t-value obtained (11.767) is higher than the t-table (2.06) at the significance level of 0.05. The significance (0.000) is lower than 0.05. That is why the hypothesis is accepted. It means that teaching writing skills using Padlet creates a significant difference between the experimental and control groups.

Table 3. Result of t-test paired samples t-test

		Paired Samples Test							
		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
						Lower	Upper		
Pair 1	Post_E xp – Pre_E xp	36.179	11.182	2.113	31.843	40.515	17.120	2	.000
								7	

The result of the analysis, as presented in Table 5, indicates that the t-value obtained (17.120) is higher than the t-table (2.05) at the significance level of 0.05. The significance (0.000) is lower than 0.05. That is, there is a significant difference between the scores before and after treatment.

Discussion

As discussed concerning the first research question, the findings of this study indicate a significant improvement in the personal letter writing skills of students who were taught using Padlet compared to those who were taught using conventional methods. The pre-test score of the experimental group was 27.14, while the control group scored slightly higher at 28.33. However, after the Implementation of Padlet as a digital learning medium, the post-test score of the experimental group increased significantly to 46.43. In contrast, the control group's score declined to 26.67.

This result supports the hypothesis that using Padlet in teaching writing is effective. Furthermore, the independent sample t-test showed a significance value (p-value) of 0.000, which is lower than 0.05, indicating that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. Similarly, regarding the second research question, the findings reveal that there is a significant effect of using Padlet on students' personal letter writing skills. The t-test value of 17.120 was far above the critical t-table value of 2.05, reinforcing that the use of Padlet as a teaching tool significantly affects students' writing performance. These results show that students who were exposed to Padlet-based writing activities demonstrated better writing outcomes compared to those who received the conventional method.

Previous studies support these findings. For instance, Sehuddin (2021) reported that Padlet improved students' writing achievement in the EFL context. Scholars found that students who used Padlet showed significant improvement in descriptive writing (Etfita & Wahyuni, 2020). Likewise, Maulana and Hanafi (2023) concluded that Padlet-based learning media positively affected writing performance. Additionally, the study documented the effectiveness of Padlet in enhancing aspects such as vocabulary, organization, and student engagement during writing activities.

The comparison between these studies and the current research highlights a consistent

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trend of Padlet enhancing writing skills across various genres, samples, and methodologies. While this study concentrated on personal letter writing, the previous research by Sehuddin, Wahyuni, and Maulana documents similar improvements in different types of writing, such as narrative, descriptive, and recount texts. Sehuddin and Wahyuni conducted their study using an experimental design with pre-tests and post-tests, including a control group for comparison. They focused on junior high school students in grades 7 and 8. In contrast, Maulana's study employed Research and Development (R&D) methods using the 4D model to create effective Padlet products. It targeted senior high school students in grade 10.

Lestari (2022) and Fadhilawati (2020) also documented the effectiveness of Padlet in enhancing aspects such as vocabulary, organization, and student engagement during writing activities. The study shows that Padlet significantly improves students' personal letter-writing skills compared to conventional media. The experimental group scores much higher on post-tests. These results align with the previous study, which also found Padlet effective across various writing genres, despite differences in text type, sample, and methodology.

This study extends the previous research by focusing specifically on personal letter writing, which involves informal expression, idea development, and organizational skills that are well facilitated by Padlet's features, such as visual collaboration, feedback, and real-time interaction. To address challenges in students' writing abilities, particularly in grammar and motivation, educators are encouraged to integrate interactive and digital platforms such as Padlet. These benefits align with Turmudi (2020), who points out that the Philippines ranks second in Asia for TOEFL iBT test scores, which can be attributed to the country's well-structured English curriculum. The curriculum integrates essential macro skills such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. It is supported by multimedia facilities and internet access that foster creativity and effective information processing. This comparison underscores the importance of a comprehensive approach to language education, where tools like Padlet can be instrumental. However, it must be complemented by targeted efforts in areas like grammar to achieve well-rounded language mastery. In addition, Harmer (2004) highlights that the writing process involves planning, drafting, revising, and feedback, all of which were supported during the Padlet-based learning in this study.

However, despite the positive findings, this study has some limitations. One notable issue is that grammar remains a challenge for many students. Although there were

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improvements in content, organization, and vocabulary, the grammar scores of the experimental group were relatively low (1.6 out of 4), suggesting that Padlet alone may not be sufficient to address all areas of writing proficiency. Another limitation is the scope of the study. The research was conducted at a single school with a limited number of participants, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research is encouraged to involve larger populations and diverse settings better to validate the impact of Padlet across different writing contexts.

To address challenges in students' writing abilities, particularly in grammar and motivation, educators are encouraged to integrate interactive and digital platforms such as Padlet. As Johnson (2023) suggests, digital tools foster creativity, increase student engagement, and create meaningful learning experiences. Padlet allows students to express their ideas visually and collaboratively, which contributes to a more active and enjoyable learning environment.

In conclusion, the results of this study highlight the effectiveness of Padlet in improving students' personal letter writing skills. By comparing the pre-test and post-test results, it is evident that Padlet helps students develop their ideas, structure their writing better, and engage more actively in the learning process. These findings support the conclusion that incorporating interactive platforms like Padlet into the writing classroom can help students overcome common writing challenges and enhance their overall writing performance.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the use of Padlet as a digital teaching aid has a significant positive impact on the personal letter writing skills of Grade XI students at SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Pekalongan. Initially, the control class had a slightly higher average score (28.33) than the experimental class (27.14) on the pre-test. However, after the Implementation of Padlet, the experimental class showed a substantial improvement in their post-test scores, reaching an average of 46.43, far exceeding the control class, which declined to 26.67. This significant difference indicates that Padlet effectively enhances students' writing abilities. The improvement is evident across all writing assessment components, content, vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, and organization, where the

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experimental class consistently outperformed the control group.

Furthermore, the independent sample t-test revealed a t-value of 11.767, which exceeded the critical value, and a significance level of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), thereby confirming the strong effect of Padlet in developing writing skills. Given these findings, it is recommended that English teachers consider integrating Padlet into their teaching strategies to foster greater student engagement, creativity, and motivation. Students can also be encouraged to use Padlet as a platform for independent practice beyond classroom hours to strengthen their writing competence. Nonetheless, this study acknowledges several limitations. One of the primary challenges identified is that improvements in grammar were not as substantial as in other aspects, suggesting that Padlet should be complemented with focused grammar instruction.

Additionally, the study was limited to a specific group of students within a single institution, which may restrict the generalizability of the results. Therefore, further research is encouraged to explore the effectiveness of Padlet using different research designs, involving more diverse populations, and applying it to various writing genres. Schools and educational institutions are also advised to support the integration of technology into the classroom by providing sufficient facilities and training for both teachers and students to utilize interactive learning media like Padlet effectively.

Limitation

This research has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the data collection was limited to writing tests only, which may not fully capture all aspects of students' writing development or learning experiences. Using other data collection methods, such as interviews, observations, or questionnaires, could have provided more profound insights into students' attitudes, motivation, and challenges in using Padlet.

Second, the research employed a quasi-experimental design with a relatively small sample size from only one school, which may not fully represent the broader population of students. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings is limited.

Third, the intervention was conducted over a short period. A longer duration might yield more significant or different results regarding the long-term impact of Padlet on writing skills. Finally, while the research focused on personal letter writing, it did not explore whether

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Padlet would be equally effective in improving other types of writing, such as argumentative or descriptive texts. Future studies are encouraged to consider different writing genres and longer implementations to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

Implication

The findings of this study suggest several implications for English language teaching, particularly in writing instruction. First, for educational practice, the use of digital tools like Padlet can be an effective strategy to enhance students' engagement and performance in writing tasks, especially in writing personal letters. Teachers are encouraged to integrate interactive media into their teaching practices to create more engaging and collaborative learning environments. Second, in terms of policy, schools and educational institutions should consider supporting the integration of educational technology by providing access to digital platforms and training for teachers. It could help promote the development of 21st-century skills, including digital literacy and independent learning. Third, the findings contribute to theoretical development by supporting the idea that collaborative and visual learning tools can positively influence students' writing outcomes. It aligns with constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes active participation and interaction in learning processes. Lastly, for future research, this study highlights the need to explore further the impact of Padlet and similar tools on different types of writing and among diverse student populations. Given the limitations of this study in terms of sample size and context, further studies with a broader scope and longer duration are recommended to confirm and expand on these findings.

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