

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM WALL: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON THE USE OF PADLET IN SUPPORTING INDONESIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS

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ABSTRACT This study explores Indonesian secondary school students' perceptions of using Padlet to support English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing and examines how the platform facilitates different stages of the writing process. Addressing the limited qualitative evidence on Padlet use among secondary school learners, the study employed a qualitative descriptive design. Data were collected through non-participant classroom observations involving 30 eleventh-grade students and semi-structured interviews with four purposively selected participants at a public senior high school in Malang, Indonesia. The data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, while trustworthiness was established following Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria. The findings indicate that Padlet transforms writing from a stressful individual activity into an engaging collaborative process by facilitating idea generation through visual features, reducing handwriting-related anxiety through easy editing, and promoting peer-mediated revision through its commenting feature. Although technical barriers were minimal, prolonged screen use emerged as a potential ergonomic concern. Interpreted through the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the findings suggest that students' perceptions of Padlet's usefulness and ease of use contribute to positive engagement in collaborative writing activities. The study contributes to the literature by providing qualitative evidence from Indonesian secondary school EFL learners and offers pedagogical implications for integrating collaborative digital platforms to enhance writing instruction beyond the classroom.

Keywords: EFL writing; Padlet; students' perceptions; Technology Acceptance Model

INTRODUCTION

Writing in EFL secondary classrooms remains a complex challenge. Secondary school students frequently struggle to construct coherent English paragraphs due to intertwined cognitive, linguistic, and affective barriers (Khudaverdiyeva, 2025). Difficulties include generating ideas, organizing text, and applying grammatical accuracy, which often lead to fatigue and avoidance behavior (Dao & Dan, 2024). Beyond technical constraints, psychological factors such as fear of making errors and low self-confidence further inhibit engagement (Afidawati, Arrasyid, 2024). Consequently, without supportive scaffolding, writing activities risk becoming tedious and demotivating, particularly for learners at the A2-B1 proficiency level (Mehta et al. 2021).

Digital technology has emerged as a pedagogical solution to address these challenges. Recent developments have transformed English language teaching by enabling more interactive, learner-centered experiences (Jadhav, 2022). Digital platforms provide flexible spaces that transcend physical classroom limitations and sustain engagement inside and outside school (Tick & Ling, 2025). Collectively, previous studies demonstrate that technology-enhanced writing instruction improves motivation, facilitates collaboration, and offers multimodal support that traditional pen-and-paper tasks lack (Nur & Ramadhani, 2025). This shift aligns with blended learning frameworks widely adopted in Indonesia (Zuhri et al. 2024).

Among the various digital learning platforms, Padlet has attracted considerable attention because of its unique pedagogical affordances that support collaborative writing activities. Padlet is a web-based collaborative platform that enables users to share ideas, texts, images, videos, hyperlinks, and documents on a shared digital board in real time (Kharis et al. 2020). Unlike many other educational platforms that provide only limited discussion spaces, Padlet offers an "infinite canvas" feature that allows learners to organize ideas visually, collaborate extensively, and interact simultaneously (Boateng & Nyamekye, 2022). Its real-time commenting system, multimedia integration, and collaborative editing features facilitate peer feedback, idea sharing, and collective knowledge construction throughout the writing process (Lestari, 2025). Furthermore, Padlet extends learning beyond the physical classroom by providing flexible access

that encourages continuous interaction between teachers and students both during and after classroom instruction Tick & Ling, 2025). These pedagogical affordances suggest that Padlet has considerable potential to support collaborative writing practices in EFL classrooms.

A growing body of research has investigated the educational use of Padlet in English language learning (Zainuddin et al. 2020) reported that Padlet increased students' engagement in classroom learning by facilitating active participation inside and outside the classroom. Similarly, Jong & Kim Hua (2021) found that elementary school students in Malaysia showed positive attitudes toward Padlet as an online writing assessment tool. (Rosmayanti et al. 2025) further revealed that pre-service English teachers perceived Padlet as an effective instructional tool for language learning, highlighting its usefulness in supporting classroom interaction. Likewise, (Lubis & Rafida, 2025) found that Malaysian secondary school students viewed Padlet positively as a writing platform that facilitated idea generation and writing development. Collectively, these studies consistently demonstrate that Padlet promotes positive learning experiences, increases engagement, and supports writing activities across different educational contexts. However, most previous research has primarily focused on students' perceptions or the effectiveness of Padlet using survey-based approaches.

Among available platforms, Padlet offers distinctive pedagogical affordances. Padlet is a web-based application that allows real-time expression of ideas and collaboration through an 'infinite canvas' that encourages extensive visual mapping and direct interaction (Kharis et al. 2020). Unlike conventional writing walls, it integrates features for posting links, photos, videos, and documents, allowing writers to be creative (Lestari 2025). Its comment feature operationalizes peer feedback as a dialogic process rather than one-way correction (Mafulah & Cahyono 2023). Its user-friendly, device-agnostic design reduces mechanical constraints and creates a low-stakes environment where learners can experiment without fear of public error Azizah et al. 2025).

Previous studies on Padlet in EFL writing have been conducted thematically in three strands. Collectively, previous studies demonstrate positive perceptions and engagement benefits, yet they diverge in focus. First, studies on engagement report increased participation inside and outside classrooms across secondary and higher education (Zainuddin et al. 2020). Second, studies on assessment and motivation show Padlet functions as an effective tool for formative assessment and motivational enhancement (Jong & Kim Hua, 2021). Third, studies on perceptions reveal learners view Padlet as accessible and enjoyable, though most focus on university contexts (Rosmayanti et al. 2025). These strands confirm Padlet's potential but remain fragmented across educational levels and predominantly reliant on survey data.

However, contextual and methodological gaps remain. Most studies have examined tertiary learners, leaving secondary school EFL learners underexplored despite their distinct developmental needs. Furthermore, prior research has focused primarily on technical usability and general perceptions, providing limited depth on how Padlet specifically scaffolds stages of the writing process and reshapes affective engagement. Theoretically, few studies have anchored findings within an established acceptance framework. To address this, this study applies the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989), which posits that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use influence behavioral intention to use technology. Recent EFL studies have applied TAM to digital tools, including Padlet (Alghazo 2024), showing its relevance for understanding learner acceptance. This novelty strengthens the contribution beyond mere contextual replication.

Therefore, this study aims to explore secondary school students' experiences using Padlet as a collaborative writing support. The research questions are what benefits and challenges do students experience when using Padlet in collaborative writing activities, and how do senior high school EFL students perceive the role of Padlet in supporting collaborative writing? This study contributes contextually by investigating Indonesian secondary learners, methodologically by triangulating observation and in-depth interviews within a qualitative descriptive design (Villamin et al. 2025), and conceptually by extending TAM to explain affective-cognitive mechanisms in collaborative writing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

EFL Writing in Secondary Education

Writing is one of the most important language skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning because it enables students to communicate ideas, demonstrate language proficiency, and develop critical thinking skills (Khudaverdiyeva 2025). At the secondary school level, writing becomes increasingly challenging as students are expected to produce coherent and grammatically accurate texts while simultaneously organizing ideas logically and appropriately. Compared with other language skills, writing requires greater cognitive effort because learners must integrate vocabulary knowledge, grammar, organization, and content development throughout the writing process (Dao & Dan, 2024).

Despite its importance, many secondary school EFL students continue to experience difficulties in writing. Common problems include limited vocabulary, grammatical inaccuracies, weak organization of ideas, and low confidence in expressing opinions in English (Afidawati & Arrasyid, 2024). These linguistic and psychological barriers often reduce students' motivation and engagement during writing activities, resulting in lower writing achievement (Mafulah & Cahyono, 2023). Consequently, teachers need to adopt instructional approaches that provide meaningful guidance, encourage collaboration, and facilitate students throughout the writing process rather than focusing solely on the final written product (Pangestu et al. 2022).

Technology-Enhanced Writing Instruction

The rapid advancement of educational technology has transformed English language teaching by creating more interactive, collaborative, and learner-centered instructional environments (Zuhri et al. 2024). In writing instruction, technology enables students to generate ideas, collaborate with peers, receive immediate feedback, and revise their work more efficiently than in conventional classroom settings. Consequently, technology-enhanced writing instruction has become an important pedagogical approach for addressing writing difficulties among EFL learners (Jadhav, 2022).

Digital learning platforms also support collaborative learning by allowing students to exchange ideas, provide peer feedback, and actively participate in writing activities regardless of time and location (Nur & Ramadhani, 2025). Such technology not only facilitates the development of writing skills but also increases students' motivation, autonomy, and engagement throughout the learning process (Mehta et al., 2021). Therefore, integrating digital technology into writing instruction is considered an effective strategy for creating meaningful learning experiences that meet the educational needs of today's secondary school students.

Padlet as a Collaborative Digital Writing Platform

Among various educational technologies, Padlet has emerged as one of the most popular collaborative digital platforms for supporting writing instruction. Padlet enables teachers and students to create shared digital boards where users can post texts, images, videos, hyperlinks, and documents in real time (Kharis et al., 2020). Unlike many other digital platforms, Padlet provides an “infinite canvas” that allows students to organize ideas visually and collaboratively without space limitations (Boateng & Nyamekye, 2022).

From a pedagogical perspective, Padlet offers several affordances that support collaborative writing. Its real-time collaboration, peer feedback, multimedia integration, and user-friendly interface encourage students to exchange ideas, revise their work collaboratively, and actively participate throughout the writing process (Tick & Ling, 2025). These features extend learning beyond the physical classroom and create a flexible environment where students can continue writing activities both synchronously and asynchronously (Lestari, 2025). Therefore, Padlet provides meaningful opportunities to promote collaborative learning and improve students' writing experiences in EFL classrooms.

Conceptual Framework: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

This study is underpinned by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by Davis (1989), which explains user acceptance through perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU). In EFL contexts, TAM has been applied to understand adoption of digital learning tools (Alghazo, 2024). Confirmed, perceived ease of use significantly predicted Saudi EFL learners' intention to use Padlet for writing, extending TAM with collaborative factors to explain writing performance in higher education and the explanatory power of metaverse-based language learning. Building on these, this study uses TAM to interpret why Padlet works: when learners perceive Padlet as easy and useful, affective barriers decrease and engagement increases. This framework bridges technical features with affective-cognitive engagement.

Therefore, the Technology Acceptance Model provides an appropriate theoretical framework for interpreting students' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using Padlet in collaborative writing. Through the TAM perspective, this study examines how students' acceptance of Padlet contributes to their engagement in collaborative writing and supports the development of English writing skills among Indonesian secondary school EFL learners.

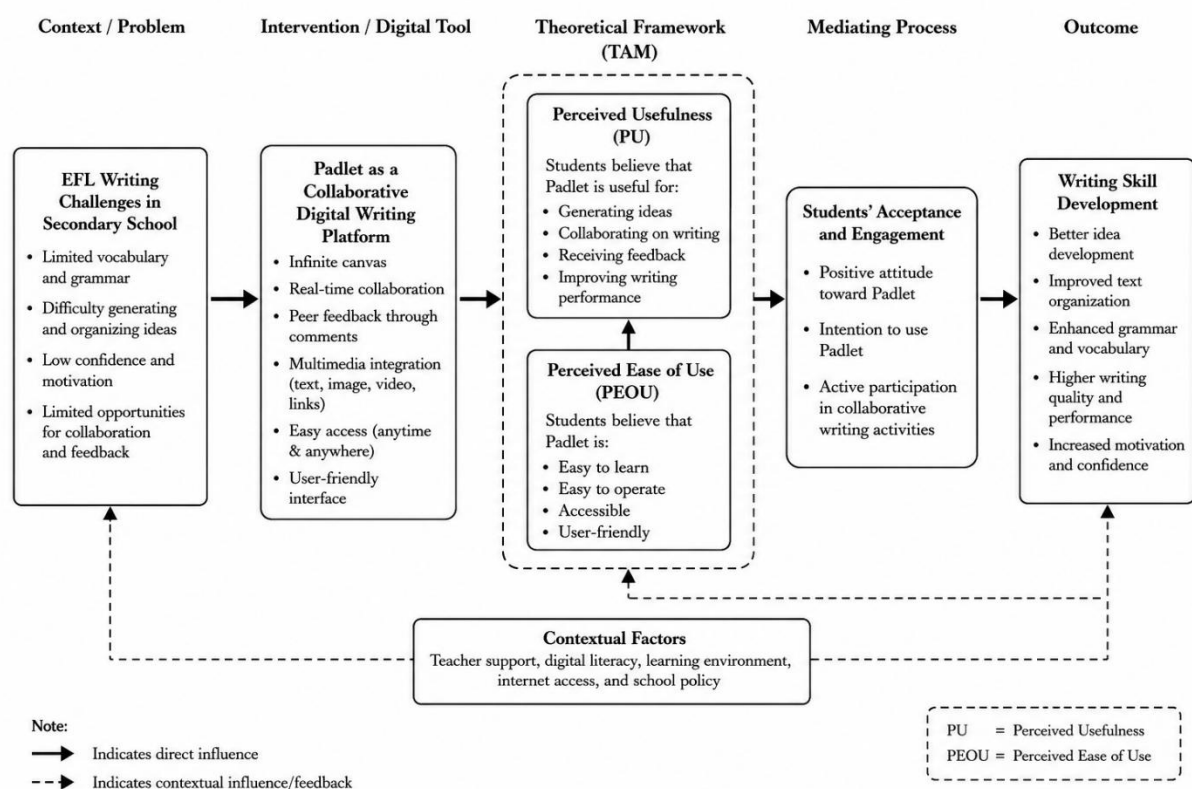


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Padlet-Supported EFL Writing Based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

Research Gap

Collectively, previous studies confirm Padlet's benefits, but three gaps remain. Contextually, most research has focused on university learners (Rosmayanti et al., 2025; Lestari, 2025), leaving secondary school EFL learners underexplored. Methodologically, prior studies relied heavily on quantitative surveys on general perceptions, providing limited depth on how Padlet scaffolds writing stages and affective engagement in natural settings. Theoretically, few studies have anchored findings within TAM to explain why Padlet works, despite recent applications to digital tools (Alghazo, 2024). Therefore, this study fills the gap by conducting a qualitative descriptive investigation using observation and open-ended interviews at a secondary school in Malang City, interpreted through TAM.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of students' experiences in using Padlet for writing classes. Qualitative methods are suitable for describing phenomena in social environments through in-depth exploration (Rustamana et al. 2024). This approach was chosen to provide a deeper understanding of students' perceptions, experiences, and interactions when using Padlet in writing classes. It is useful for exploring complex real-world phenomena (Villamin et al. 2025). Then, the study used a qualitative descriptive design to investigate students' perspectives on their experiences using Padlet as a medium to support collaborative English writing, focusing specifically on the perceived benefits and challenges encountered during the process. By focusing on these aspects, this study aims to provide a clear picture of how digital platforms can be integrated into writing activities in secondary schools.

Participants

The participants of this study were 30 eleventh-grade students from one English class at a public Senior High School in Malang, East Java. This school was selected because learners had previously used Padlet for writing activities. All 30 students were involved in classroom observations. For interviews, four students were purposively selected based on their activeness during Padlet activities and willingness to engage in follow-up sessions (coded as S1, S2, S3, S4 to ensure anonymity). Purposive sampling was chosen to obtain rich, information-rich cases rather than random representation.

Research Instruments

Consistent with the qualitative focus and following the suggestion from supervisors to use two instruments only. First, this study employed non-participant classroom observation based on an observation checklist and field notes. Second, use semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. Then, Observation checklist and field notes: The observation protocol was developed based on process-based writing stages (Pangestu et al., 2022) and collaborative learning indicators (Afidawati et al., 2024). The checklist comprised six observable aspects: (a) posting initial ideas/outlines on Padlet, (b) integrating images/multimedia to enrich writing, (c) collaborating by giving comments/suggestions on peers' posts, (d) revising writing based on peer feedback, (e) maintaining engagement and enthusiasm during writing, and (f) using peers' posts as models to generate ideas. Each aspect was observed using event sampling with tallies and descriptive notes. Field notes were written using a three-column format: time, observed activity, and researcher reflection, enabling thick descriptions of participation, peer interactions, engagement levels, and responses during Padlet-based tasks.

The protocol was validated through expert judgment by two EFL lecturers with expertise in qualitative research and digital learning. Feedback led to revision of ambiguous descriptors and addition of non-verbal engagement cues. Semi-structured interview guide: The interview guide consisted of 10 open-ended questions organized into three sections: First, general experience using Padlet (e.g., "Can you tell me about your experience using Padlet for writing?"). Second, perceived benefits and support for writing stages (e.g., "How does Padlet help you when you start writing and when you revise?"). Third, challenges and coping strategies (e.g., "What difficulties did you encounter and how did you overcome them?"). Open-ended questions were deliberately chosen to allow participants to express thoughts, feelings, and reflections in their own words and to enable probing (e.g., "Can you give me an example?"). The guide was validated by the same two experts for content relevance and clarity and piloted with two non-participant students from a different class. Pilot results indicated some questions were too leading, so they were rephrased to be more neutral. All interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to allow free expression, then translated into English for analysis

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out in three phases over three weeks in May 2025. Phase one involved classroom observations. Non-participant observation was conducted during two regular English writing lessons (each for 80 minutes) focusing on descriptive text writing using Padlet. The researcher acted as a complete observer, sitting at the back of the classroom without direct involvement in teaching, to avoid influencing natural classroom dynamics and to ensure non-maleficence. The English teacher conducted the lesson as usual: in session one, students were asked to post initial ideas and images related to the topic; in session two, they drafted, commented on peers' posts, and revised. During observation, every important event, interaction, and student response was recorded using video (with consent) and systematically written in field notes and the observation checklist to ensure consistency. Immediately after each session, field notes were expanded within 24 hours to preserve detail. Phase two involved semi-structured interviews. The four selected students were interviewed individually face-to-face in a quiet room at school for 20-35 minutes per participant. Interviews were audio-recorded using a voice recorder, with prior permission, and the researcher took brief notes on non-verbal cues. The interview began with rapport building, followed by open-ended questions, with flexible probing based on participants' responses to achieve depth. Phase three involved member checking: interview transcripts were returned to participants within two days to confirm accuracy and allow additional comments, thereby enhancing credibility.

Data Analysis

Data analysis applied thematic analysis methods to analyse classroom observations and interviews to identify recurring themes and insights about the challenges and benefits that students associate with the platform. Data were analysed using Thematic Analysis based on the six-step framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). First, researchers familiarized themselves with the data through repeated transcription of interviews and reading of field notes to ensure a deep understanding of the content. Second, the process involved forming initial codes by marking key phrases related to student experiences, which were then grouped into broader themes such as "login issues" and "group discussion". Third, searching for themes involved collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme. For example, codes related to internet problems and device limitations were grouped under a candidate theme "technical barriers" for challenges, and codes on group can be used anywhere and anytime resources formed "flexible access" for benefits. Fourth, reviewing themes entailed checking if the themes worked in relation to coded extracts and the entire dataset, refining, combining, or discarding themes to ensure they formed a coherent and meaningful pattern.

Fifth, defining and naming themes involved conducting a detailed analysis to specify the essence of each theme, determining what aspect of the data each theme captured, and developing clear, concise, and informative names such as "digital infrastructure as a learning obstacle" for challenges and "collective knowledge construction" for benefits. Sixth, producing the report was the final phase; clear and interesting quotation examples were selected, and the analysis was synthesized into a comprehensive narrative report that directly answers the research questions. This approach aims to create a comprehensive understanding of how Padlet influences students' experiences in their writing process (Farikah et al., 2025). Finally, the themes were defined and named, providing a coherent overview of the students' experiences and perceptions of using Padlet as a digital tool to improve their English writing skills.

Furthermore, proper data analysis would facilitate clear interpretation of findings and help reveal the nuances of students' perspectives on the implementation of Padlet in English writing instruction (Mehta et al. 2021). The combination of questionnaire, observation, and semi-structured interviews enabled triangulation, ensured that this research would produce robust findings, strengthened the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings analysis, and provided a holistic understanding to offer recommendations on how Padlet can support and enhance the writing skills of EFL students.

Trustworthiness

To ensure research rigor, this study adopted several strategies based on Lincoln and Guba (1985) trustworthiness criteria. Credibility was established through triangulation of data from observations and interviews, complemented by member checking with the four interviewed participants to confirm transcript accuracy and initial interpretations. Transferability was addressed by providing thick descriptions of the research context, participant characteristics, and the implementation of Padlet, enabling readers to assess the applicability of findings to other contexts. Dependability was maintained through an audit trail that documented all research processes, including raw data, field notes, coding procedures, and thematic development. Confirmability was ensured through reflexivity, where the researcher maintained a reflexive journal throughout data collection and analysis to minimize potential bias and enhance transparency.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the school principal and the English teacher. All student participants were provided with a clear explanation regarding the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights as participants. Written informed consent was secured from both students and their parents or guardians. To protect participants, confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained by using pseudonyms in all transcripts and reports, and all data, including classroom observation (observation checklist and field notes), video recordings, and interview transcripts, were stored securely and used exclusively for research purposes. Participation was entirely voluntary, and students were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without academic consequences. The researcher also ensured non-maleficence by conducting observations and interviews in a manner that did not disrupt regular learning activities or cause psychological harm to participants.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The analysis of classroom observations, field notes, and semi-structured interviews generated two major themes: (1) students' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using Padlet in EFL writing, and (2) Padlet's role in supporting students' writing development. The findings are presented descriptively based on qualitative evidence obtained from classroom observations involving 30 students and interviews with four purposively selected participants (coded as S1–S4).

Students' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using Padlet in the writing process

The findings indicate that students generally perceived Padlet positively as a collaborative digital platform that facilitated writing activities. Five benefit-related themes emerged from the data: motivational transformation, increased confidence, multimodal scaffolding, collaborative peer feedback, and learning flexibility. One challenge-related theme concerning technical and ergonomic issues was also identified. A summary of the findings is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of students' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using Padlet in EFL writing

Theme	Sub-theme	Evidence (S1-S4)	Interpretation
Benefits	Motivational transformation	"The afternoon lesson usually makes us sleepy, but writing on Padlet feels easy and motivates me." (S1)	Padlet increased students' motivation and sustained engagement during writing activities.
	Confidence & anxiety reduction	"I feel more confident because I don't have to worry about my handwriting" (S3)	The digital interface reduced writing anxiety and encouraged students to express their ideas more confidently.

	Multimodal scaffolding	“The image library helps me find ideas for writing” (S2) “The image feature makes writing more creative” (S3)	Multimedia features supported brainstorming, idea generation, and creativity during the pre-writing stage.
	Collaborative peer feedback	“Friends can correct our mistakes through the comment feature” (S3) “We can discuss and collaborate while writing.” (S4)	The commenting feature facilitated collaborative learning and peer-assisted revision.
	Flexibility	“Padlet is practical because it can be used anywhere and anytime” (S1)	Students appreciated the flexibility of continuing writing activities beyond the classroom.
Challenges	Technical & ergonomic	“The main obstacle is an unstable internet connection” (S4)	Internet connectivity and prolonged screen use were identified as minor challenges during Padlet-based writing activities.

Motivational Transformation

Observation data showed that students became more actively engaged after Padlet was introduced during writing activities. Although many students initially appeared tired during the afternoon class, their participation increased once they began interacting with the platform. One participant explained:

“When we have a writing lesson in the fourth period in the afternoon, most of us feel sleepy and lazy, but when writing on Padlet it feels easy, not tiring, and not a waste of time; I am really motivated with the use of Padlet”. (S1)

Similarly, classroom observations indicated that almost all students remained engaged throughout the writing activities.

Increased Confidence

Students reported that Padlet reduced their anxiety during writing activities because they no longer worried about handwriting quality. The digital interface allowed them to revise their work easily before submitting it. As one participant stated:

“Padlet is easy to use, and I feel more confident writing on Padlet because I don't write by hand, so my messy handwriting won't be seen”. (S3)

These responses suggest that students felt more comfortable expressing their ideas in a digital environment.

Multimodal Scaffolding for Idea Generation

Padlet's multimedia features supported students in generating ideas before writing. Observation notes showed that many students explored images uploaded by peers before drafting their texts. Students explained:

“I find it easy to find ideas for writing topics because of the help of the image library feature in Padlet. Padlet makes writing activities more lively, interesting, and fun because it provides many useful features such as customizable themes and image uploads that allow us to stimulate ideas for writing”. (S3)

Another participant commented:

“The most interesting feature in my opinion is the image feature because we can write as creatively as possible and our writing results become more interesting”. (S4)

Field notes further indicated that students frequently referred to classmates' posts when developing their own writing.

Collaborative Peer Feedback

The comment feature encouraged interaction among students during the revision stage. Classroom observations documented active exchanges of suggestions and corrections throughout the activity. One participant explained:

“The comment feature is very helpful. Our friends can revise our mistakes, for example, wrong words or grammar, so we can learn together, discuss and share”. (S3)

Another participant stated:

“Writing with Padlet is fun because we can discuss and collaborate with friends in the comments feature”. (S4)

Observation records also showed that most students revised their writing after receiving peer feedback.

Learning Flexibility

Students appreciated Padlet because it could be accessed both inside and outside the classroom. As one participant explained:

“Padlet is easier and more practical to use anywhere and anytime. It doesn't take much time compared to writing in a book, which is just empty paper” (S1).

This flexibility enabled students to continue writing activities beyond regular classroom sessions.

Challenges

Although students generally reported positive experiences, several challenges emerged. Internet instability occasionally delayed access to Padlet during classroom activities. One participant noted:

“The obstacle when using Padlet is usually an unstable internet connection.” (S4)

Another challenge concerned prolonged screen exposure. One student reported experiencing eye strain after using smartphones for an extended period during writing activities.

Padlet's Role in Supporting Students' Writing Skills Development

Observation data indicate that Padlet supported students throughout different stages of the writing process. Six key learning behaviors were consistently observed: posting initial ideas, integrating multimedia, providing peer feedback, revising drafts, maintaining engagement, and using peers' work as writing models (Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of classroom observation on students' writing activities using Padlet

Writing Stage	Aspect Observed	Observed Participation (%)	Observation Evidence
Pre-writing	Students post initial ideas/outlines on Padlet	88%	Students created titles easily after searching images; reduced blank-page hesitation
Pre-writing	Students include images/multimedia to enrich writing	90%	All students added themes and images, showing creativity and visual scaffolding

Drafting	Students collaborate by giving comments/suggestions	90%	47 peer comments across 30 posts within 40 minutes; lively discussion correcting mistakes
Revising	Students revise writing based on peer feedback	85%	Students accepted corrections and revised lexical and grammatical errors openly
Revising	Students maintain engagement and enthusiasm	98%	Students actively engaged throughout; less fatigue during the afternoon session, sustained interaction
Reflection and Idea Development	Students use peers' posts as models to generate ideas	90%	Students scrolled peers' uploads before drafting, using them as a framework for their own writing

Pre-writing Stage

During brainstorming, students used Padlet's image and multimedia features to generate ideas before composing their texts. Observation data showed that most students searched for visual references before beginning to write. One participant explained:

"I find it easy to find ideas for writing topics because of the help of the image library feature in Padlet." (S3)

Drafting Stage

Students enriched their writing by incorporating images and other multimedia resources available on Padlet. As one participant stated:

"The image feature because we can write as creatively as possible and our writing results become more interesting." (S4)

Revision Stage

Padlet's comment feature supported collaborative revision. Students actively exchanged feedback and revised grammatical and lexical errors based on peer suggestions. One participant commented:

"With the comment feature, we can give each other suggestions and feedback if there is any writing error; making it easier for us to correct and improve our writing." (S3)

Observation records documented active peer interaction during the revision process.

Student Engagement

Throughout the two classroom observations, students consistently participated in writing activities using Padlet. One participant explained:

"I feel excited when writing with Padlet because it is easy to use, has many interesting features." (S2)

Field notes similarly showed that students remained actively involved during collaborative writing tasks.

Using Peers as Learning Resources

Students frequently viewed classmates' posts before drafting their own work. As one participant stated:

"When I'm confused about finding references for writing, I usually look at my friends' uploads, which I can use as examples to build the framework for my writing." (S3)

These observations suggest that students used their peers' work as a source of inspiration and guidance during the writing process.

Discussion

The present study explored Indonesian secondary school students' perceptions of using Padlet in EFL writing and examined how the platform supported their writing development. Overall, the findings suggest that Padlet functions as more than a digital writing platform; it serves as a collaborative learning environment that promotes students' engagement throughout the writing process. Interpreted through the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), students' positive experiences can be understood through two central constructs: perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, which together fostered active participation in collaborative writing activities.

The first research question examined students' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of using Padlet. The findings indicate that students perceived Padlet as an accessible and engaging platform that reduced psychological barriers commonly associated with writing. Participants consistently reported that the platform was easy to operate, enabled flexible access, and simplified the writing process through features such as multimedia integration and real-time editing. These experiences correspond to the perceived ease of use component of TAM (Davis, 1989), which proposes that technologies requiring less effort are more likely to be accepted by users. Rather than struggling with the mechanics of handwriting or document management, students were able to devote greater attention to generating and organizing ideas. This finding extends previous studies reporting that Padlet enhances students' motivation and classroom participation (Megat Mohd. Zainuddin et al., 2020; Tick & Ling, 2025) by demonstrating how ease of use also reduces writing-related anxiety among secondary school learners.

Another important finding concerns students' perceptions of Padlet's usefulness in supporting different stages of writing. The image library, multimedia resources, and collaborative board enabled students to generate ideas more efficiently and organize their thoughts before drafting. During revision, the comment feature facilitated meaningful peer interaction, allowing students to receive suggestions and improve their writing collaboratively. These findings illustrate the perceived usefulness construct of TAM, whereby students recognized that Padlet contributed directly to improving their writing activities. Previous research has shown that Padlet encourages collaboration and learner engagement (Boateng & Nyamekye, 2022; Lubis & Rafida, 2025); however, the present study provides qualitative evidence that these features function as cognitive scaffolds supporting idea generation, drafting, and revision within authentic classroom practice.

The findings also highlight the importance of collaborative learning in digital writing environments. Students frequently consulted their classmates' posts, exchanged comments, and revised their texts based on peer feedback. These interactions demonstrate that learning occurred not only through individual writing but also through collaborative knowledge construction. Instead of perceiving feedback as evaluation, students viewed comments as opportunities for discussion and improvement. This finding supports previous research indicating that interactive feedback increases learner engagement and promotes collaborative writing practices (Mafulah & Cahyono, 2023). In this study, Padlet created a learning environment in which students actively learned from one another, suggesting that digital collaboration contributes to both language development and learner confidence.

Another notable finding is the reduction of writing anxiety. Participants explained that typing on Padlet allowed them to edit their work easily without worrying about untidy handwriting. Consequently, students reported feeling more confident when expressing ideas in English. This finding suggests that digital writing environments may alleviate not only linguistic anxiety but also non-linguistic concerns related to the physical presentation of written work. Such evidence complements earlier studies that primarily associated writing anxiety with grammar and vocabulary limitations (Dao & Dan, 2024). The present study indicates that the

flexibility of digital writing platforms can also foster a psychologically supportive environment in which students are more willing to participate and experiment with language.

Although students overwhelmingly reported positive experiences, several challenges remained. The most frequently mentioned difficulty was unstable internet connectivity, which occasionally interrupted classroom activities. In addition, one participant reported experiencing eye strain after prolonged smartphone use. While these issues did not substantially reduce students' overall acceptance of Padlet, they suggest that successful implementation of digital learning tools depends on contextual factors such as technological infrastructure and appropriate classroom management. These findings imply that teachers should balance the educational benefits of digital platforms with practical considerations, including internet accessibility and healthy screen-time practices.

Regarding the second research question, the findings demonstrate that Padlet supports students throughout the entire writing process rather than only during the final production stage. During pre-writing, multimedia features helped students generate and organize ideas. During drafting, the digital interface facilitated text production and encouraged creativity through visual resources. During revision, peer comments promoted collaborative reflection and continuous improvement. This sequence illustrates how Padlet functions as a pedagogical scaffold that supports recursive writing practices instead of linear text production. Consequently, the platform extends writing instruction beyond classroom boundaries by encouraging continuous interaction between students and teachers.

The study also contributes theoretically by illustrating how TAM can be applied to interpret students' experiences in collaborative writing contexts. While previous studies have often employed TAM to examine technology acceptance quantitatively, the present research demonstrates how qualitative evidence can explain why students perceive Padlet as both useful and easy to use in authentic classroom settings. The findings suggest that students' acceptance of educational technology is closely associated with collaborative interaction, confidence development, and reduced writing anxiety. Therefore, the study extends the application of TAM from explaining technology adoption to understanding how digital platforms facilitate meaningful learning experiences in EFL writing.

Overall, the findings indicate that Padlet does not replace teachers' instructional roles but complements classroom pedagogy by providing a flexible and collaborative learning environment. Through its multimedia features, peer-feedback functions, and ease of access, Padlet supports idea generation, encourages collaborative revision, and promotes sustained engagement in EFL writing. These findings underscore the importance of integrating collaborative digital platforms into secondary school writing instruction to create more interactive, learner-centered, and supportive learning experiences.

CONCLUSION

This study explored Indonesian secondary school students' perceptions of using Padlet to support English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing and examined how the platform facilitated different stages of the writing process. The findings indicate that Padlet was perceived as a useful and easy-to-use collaborative learning platform that enhanced students' engagement, confidence, and participation in writing activities. Its multimedia features supported idea generation during the pre-writing stage, while the commenting feature encouraged peer feedback and collaborative revision throughout the writing process. Interpreted through the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the findings suggest that students' positive perceptions of Padlet's usefulness and ease of use contributed to their acceptance of the platform and fostered a more interactive, student-centered learning environment beyond the physical classroom.

This study contributes qualitative evidence on the use of Padlet in Indonesian secondary school EFL contexts, where such research remains limited. However, the findings should be interpreted in light of several limitations, including the small number of interview participants, the single-school setting, and the short duration of classroom observations, which may limit

the transferability of the results. Future research is encouraged to involve more diverse educational contexts, larger participant groups, and longitudinal or mixed-methods designs to examine both students' perceptions and measurable improvements in writing performance. Comparative studies involving other collaborative digital platforms may also provide broader insights into technology-enhanced writing instruction while considering students' digital well-being and classroom implementation challenges.

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