UTM

# A Case Study on the ESL Upper Secondary Level Students Views in Engaging with Online Writing Lessons Conducted Via Google Classroom

Hemamalini Shelvam
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Tanjung Malim, Malaysia

Aireen Aina Bahari
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Tanjung Malim, Malaysia

## ABSTRACT

Most of the researchers and experts are prompted to investigate why English as second language students (ESL) are running out of radar during their online classes especially for writing lesson conducted via Google Classroom. In order rectify the issues, the researchers of this study, wanted to find out how English as second language learners (ESL) secondary school students experienced about participating in online writing classes delivered via Google Classroom. This research focuses on the three upper level secondary students at SMK Batu Gajah in Perak. The students were introduced to the advantages of engaging with online writing class via Google Classroom, especially during this pandemic, to improve their writing ability, which can be measured, as it is the most difficult skill for students to master. This study is important for upper secondary students to enhance their writing skills before sitting for their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) exam. As it is a case study, the interview sessions were accomplished via Google Meet with the learners at various times to maintain the validity and reliability of the instrument. The recorded interview sessions were then transcribed after the interview session. The researcher judiciously categorised and analysed the relevant key notes that strongly support the research questions in order to jot down the findings. The findings clearly show that all of the students are enthusiastic about their participation in a writing class facilitated via Google Meet during the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, the students believed that Google Classroom has improved their writing abilities to some extent, despite some difficulties in familiarising with the new learning platform. However, the students mentioned that Google Classroom, the new teaching and learning platform, had boosted their motivation to improve their writing skills.

*Keywords:* Google Classroom, writing lessons, participation, students' views, ESL upper secondary students

## INTRODUCTION

This study specifically intended to find out the students views in participating with online writing lessons conducted via Google classroom during the pandemic. This study was carried out in a convent school at Perak involving three upper level secondary school students. Therefore, the outcome of study can also be predictable to identify the views of the students regarding their participation in online writing class conducted via Google Classroom to help them improve their writing skills.

---

*Correspondence to:* Aireen Aina Bahari (email: aireen@fbk.upsi.edu.my)

**Background and Context**

As we are aware with the increasing cases of COVID-19 in Malaysia, many sectors in Malaysia are affected by this outbreak. The education sector is the most severely impacted, with schools being closed for more than two years. As a result, both teachers and students have had a lot of difficulty interacting as they cannot meet or learn face-to-face. Parents, stakeholders, and the government are all concerned about this. Therefore, they started to find the best method to overcome this issue. Fortunately, because of the numerous online technologies available now, the teachers are able to conduct the lessons effectively using an online platform such as Google

Classroom. Any system, application (app), or technology that can be retrieved via the internet is referred to as an online tool. It improves teachers' capacity to deliver details and knowledge to students, as well as students' ability to gain material at the same time. Since students are now involved in online learning at diverse times and places, communication tools are required to facilitate interaction and learning (Lim, 2017). These online communicative teaching tools are divided into two groups based on the relative speed of interactivity between users: synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous tools enable individuals to communicate with one another swiftly, whether one on one or in a group setting, and are ideal for brainstorming exercises. Another online platform called Google Meet is currently concentrating on delivering a lightweight video chat services for virtual meetings, such as distance learning. COVID-19, known for its infectious outbreak, has made it critical for teachers to recognise that their students are from the advanced internet age, and that classes must be more learner-centred, which can be accomplished through blended learning. Google Classroom is a free online learning environment (Adnyana, 2021). However, the implementation of the new teaching via learning platform Google Classroom to assist teachers and learners in conducting their lessons has become an educational debate (Mohd Shaharanee, Jamil and Mohamad Rodzi, 2016). This currently implemented online distance learning is more flexible compared to the conventional teaching and learning before the Movement Control Order (MCO) due to the pandemic outbreak. Both students and teachers only need to equip themselves with communication devices and good internet or Wi-Fi connection to proceed with online distance learning. They can join virtual class anywhere possible instead of having to go to physical class. Materials and resources of the lessons can also be accessed anywhere when needed. The students also no longer need to meet face-to-face with the teachers for assistance since they are able to conduct video chat through Google Classroom. Riegel and Kozen (2016) opined that Google Classroom is an application that allows teachers to create, share, collect paperless coursework, and analyse students' work while also automatically saving documents. It's also known as the notion of understandable input with scaffolding (Levine and McCloskey, 2012), where teachers can deliver input with proper context and support so that students can understand it. The advent of Google Classroom as an instructional medium is a recent development in the education industry, and it is designed to make the learning and teaching process easier, especially when teaching repetitious content.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education has launched an online portal for teachers to continue learning sessions normally (Ahmad, Norhinaini, Muna and Syahrul, 2020). As a result, using Google Classroom as learning and teaching platform, the students are anticipated to create new desires,

interests, motivation, stimulation of learners' learning activities, and, of course, writing competencies using English internet-based learning media. In the midst of COVID-19, a highly discussed problem in the education system has been writing lessons via online classes. According to Johannes, Daniela, Jager, and Nina (2020), among all the language abilities that learners must acquire, writing is one of the most significant. Furthermore, Haezari, Irawan, Suadiyatno, and Hidayatullah (2020) opined that writing is one of the most difficult skills to master as good writing requires organisation in the development of ideas, reasoning, and information, and a high level of precision in grammatical use and the selection of appropriate terminology. The researchers eager to deal with challenges that arose and wanted to use Google Classroom as a great platform to teach the students as usual and improve their writing skills in particular. So, the researchers want to investigate the factors influencing learners' commitment in writing lessons and their views in participating with online writing class via Google Classroom based on pre-observation at SMK Batu Gajah, Perak.

**The Problem Statement and Rationale**

All the educational institutions in the world have temporarily closed to stop the spread of COVID-19. Thus, an alternative method of teaching and learning are carried out through the new teaching platform called Google Classroom. In Malaysia, the Ministry of Education (MOE) urged teachers and lecturers, tertiary education and schools to use new teaching and learning platforms named Google Classroom and Microsoft Team. However, the researchers managed to highlight negative responses among the students when it comes to online teaching and learning in general, especially in writing lesson. Apart from that, the researchers conducted this research to determine students' attentiveness in adapting to a new teaching platform and to get some ideas to generate students' interests through various types of writing activities via Google Classroom. Despite the fact that the researchers used technology to conduct online classes, the researchers would like to know how to bring active participation from the students during online writing lessons. Therefore, Mohamed and Bahari (2016) mentioned that numerous attempts have been made to build a more communicative curriculum, and it is considered that online interactions might serve as a beneficial tool in facilitating authentic communication experiences among students. Students with poor competency and limited ESL skills, on the other hand, often have difficulty articulating their thoughts and opinions, whether orally or in writing.

**The Statement of Purpose and Aim**

The first aim of this study is to find students enthusiasm in adapting to the new teaching and learning platform during this pandemic using synchronous and asynchronous methods. Therefore, the researchers are eager to explore a case study on the students' views in participating with online writing lessons via Google Classroom. In addition, the researchers also wanted to discover why students are not attentive when it comes to writing lessons via Google Classroom. The researchers used Google Classroom to carry out the online writing lesson as the study focuses on the students' engagement with online writing lessons. Apart from that, the researchers incorporated jam board,

mind mapping and various teaching materials to support improvement among the students in writing.

**Research Objective (s)**

1. To investigate the views of the ESL upper secondary students on their engagement in online writing lesson conducted via Google Classroom in order to help them to write better.
2. To discover the factors that affect students from participating in online writing class conducted via Google Classroom in order to enhance their writing skills.

**Research Question (s)**

1. What are the views of ESL upper secondary students regarding their engagement in online writing lesson conducted via Google Classroom to help them to write better?
2. What are the major factors affecting the students' participation in online writing lessons conducted via Google Classroom to enhance their writing skills?

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

**21st Century Teaching and Learning**

Along with the advancement of Information Communication and Technology (ICT) platform in this 21st century, the educational systems also undergo innovation and reformation in the need of preparing students for globalisation in the future. Malaysia has followed the steps of other developed countries in preparing globalised students by introducing the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2025), (UNICEF-2020). The reformation aims to prepare the learners with the 21st century learning skills of communication, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity or known as 4Cs that is also stated in Buletin Anjakan Transformasi Pendidikan Malaysia 4/2015. (Norazlin, 2018). In the bulletin, four main principles were outlined namely student-centered learning, collaborative learning, contextual learning and integrating with the community as the basis of implementing 21st century learning with integrations of technologies. 21st century teaching is also known as teaching based on certain capabilities and skills. Among the core capabilities that are given attention include creative and critical thinking, digital education, communication, collaboration and problem solving. The main idea of 21st century teaching is to expose the students to a learner-centred learning whereby they will be taught using online tools and later will assist their peers in completing the tasks given. 21st century teaching also helps to create a conducive classroom environment, where the classroom is equipped with technology and the students are given opportunity to explore the world beyond their imagination, Garba, Byabazaire and Busthmi (2020). Besides that, the teacher will derive the suitable teaching and learning methods for the students based on their overall needs and learning styles. This is to assist the teacher in conducting effective and meaningful lessons for the students. Apart from

that, 21st century learning no longer focuses on memorisation but rather it emphasises on the importance of learning to master the contents in the syllabus as cited in Characteristics of a 21st Century Classroom (2008). In addition, the Ministry of Education (MOE) hopes that through 21$^{st}$ century teaching and learning process, they are able to produce students who are holistically developed in every aspect. Sarica & Cavus (2009) in their article published entitled "New Trends in 21st Century English Learning" had widely discussed on the relationship between the newly trend of teaching with the changing in technology. Technology in different disciplines has proven to be quite effective and advantageous for teachers in achieving certain goals, particularly in education and for those learning a foreign language. Hence, it is safe to say that technology should be widely incorporated together with the latest changes in education, especially in the Malaysian context.

**Current Online Tools Amidst COVID-19 Outbreak**

In the context of Malaysian education, the Ministry of Education gives full support for the teachers in schools to fully utilise Google Classroom as their teaching and learning materials. Students can learn at their own pace without being pressured by others; learning can take place at any time with no time constraints as long as the learner has access to the internet. Skills and knowledge are imparted to them not just during in-person classroom hours, but also through a collaborative effort on an e-learning platform. A test inclusion in learning while agreeing that many forms of this hypothesis have been applied in educating and learning, with the focus on moving away from teacher-centred ideologies and towards learner-centered pedagogies, as recommended in 21st century learning (Levine, 2012). According to the authors, students' digital competency should be aligned with the European Digital Competence Framework, which serves as a scaffold for the CEFR framework. During this pandemic outbreak, it is clear that the usage of ICT has grown in popularity among primary and secondary school students. Popular applications include YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook, which are commonly connected with social networking sites. Meanwhile, Mike (2020) opined that teachers employ alternate ways to deliver their lessons through WhatsApp, Google Classroom, Instagram and WeChat. In Malaysia, the Ministry of Education has created many platforms that have the ability to influence learners' learning.

For instance, Quizzes and Kahoot are considered as game based and quiz based learning that keep a classroom context fun and enthusiastic. Besides, there are plethora of sites available for the teachers to integrate them to keep their teaching and learning session interesting. Google Meet or Classroom, Live Worksheets, Microsoft Teams and Padlets are the platforms provided by the Ministry of Education. These applications are enlisted under the Digital Education Learning Initiative of Malaysia (DELIMA) that can be easily retrieved by students and teachers. Despite its potential to influence teaching and learning, Johannes *et al.* (2020) argued that the mere availability of computer technology in the form of hardware or software does not always imply student's development. He emphasised that technological infrastructure is prerequisite to integrate ICT into instructional learning, instructional and students are invigorated in their use of digital technologies, began in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The robust support system that one obtains is a good foundation in collaborative learning with technology.

**The Benefits of Online Tool: Google Classroom**

Implementing Google Meet as a synchronous online teaching tool is deemed useful for distance learning of English language during the MCO. It has given the opportunities for the students to participate in a collaborative learning by participating in group activities and discussions instructed by the teachers. Lim (2017) supported the advantages of utilising synchronous communication tools in teaching in which it facilitates the collaboration in real-time similar to the conventional classroom where interactions are spontaneous and feedback from each other are immediate between participants. Google Meet allows collaborations through videoconferencing and the chat service available. This shows that Google Meet is an efficient online teaching tool as it is connected to the collaboration principle of 21ˢᵗ century teaching and learning. Riegel and Kozen (2016) statement that Google Hangout is split into two different services, 'provide participants the opportunities to learn together, increase social presence, promote interactivity and build a sense of community'. Learners are also able to engage actively in the virtual class through the collaborative activities. Collaboration does not only occur between students but also with the lecturer through questionings and providing feedbacks on assessments and exercises. This is clearly connected to the principle of collaboration in the Integrated Language Teaching and Learning where in class students collaborate with classmates and teachers in problem solving activities.

Google Meet also offers similar environment of traditional classroom in which students are able to watch their lecturer delivering lectures through the webcam and audio features although not being physically together in the same room (Racheva, 2018). Questions and answers sessions could also be done on the spot just like in the conventional classroom. In addition to that, the speciality of having Google Meet as some of the other online synchronous teaching tools is that the live sessions can be recorded and students can view the recorded virtual lectures later whenever they want to.

This advantage of Google Meet creates a positive environment of student-centred learning, which is one of the principles of 21st century teaching and learning. In general, students are given the opportunities to learn at their own pace by watching the lecture videos according to their schedules. Meanwhile, during live lectures, it shows the importance of having teacher presence in the 'classroom' where instructors facilitate and guide the students throughout the lessons and activities. According to Racheva (2018), the development of knowledge, skills and competences as well as enjoyment in synchronous virtual teaching. This face-to-face virtual classroom also correspondence to the principle of comprehensible input with scaffolding (Levine and McCloskey, 2012).

**Learning to Write with Technology**

According to Woodrich and Fan (2017), internet technology plays an essential role in language acquisition in today's society since it facilitates not just virtual cross-cultural learning but also collaborative and effective group interactions during the writing process. This raises a number of concerns for the students in terms of academic, emotional, and motivational challenges. Nonetheless, the author says that in today's digital society, strategies such as using graphics to link with themes, introducing coordinating vocabulary phrases, and encouraging students to discuss their perspectives

before writing them down on paper are outdated. As a result, they're regarded as ineffective methods. According to the author, several collaborative web second-generation applications, such as Google Docs have developed in language schools, changing the dynamics of classroom teaching and learning.

**Writing with Google Dropbox in Google Classroom**

Based on the concept of the zone of proximal development, students with higher writing skills serve as the examples for those who are less talented in peer collaboration. If the feedback is unfavourable, on the other hand, the learner may be discouraged from writing again since his or her feeling of self-worth has been harmed (Richardson & Swan, 2003; Rovai,2002). This is due to the fact that most social media platforms are open and do not allow privacy for peer review. Dropbox, on the other hand, includes interactive and user-friendly feedback tools. Because peer criticism may be conducted discreetly and directly to the specific person without anyone else seeing the input, it helps to avoid learners feeling demotivated by the impact of public shame. Learners' self-efficacy, motivation, and attitudes have all increased as a result of this. As a result, Dropbox could be a useful tool to foster and preserve a productive writing atmosphere.

According Mohamed and Bahari (2016) the use of Dropbox in writing not only increases motivation, but also has the potential to improve writing abilities by providing learners with a real and personalised context in which to write. When members of the shared folder are able to produce ideas and build on peer responses and comments, this results in real learning. When other peers accept their ideas favourably and provide positive comments, learners' self-efficacy in writing may be boosted. As a result of sharing their opinions and exchanging messages online, students gain confidence in their ability to write in English. Most importantly, students' exposure to the usage of Dropbox in writing tasks may improve their ability to handle the ever-changing tools of technology in order to generate high-quality writing (Anderson *et al.,* 2013).

**Writing with Google Document in Google Classroom**

Mohamed and Bahari (2016) mentioned that teachers must quickly adjust to the usage of online materials due to the rapid evolution of technology. Google Classroom is one of the most user-friendly platforms that teachers use in their online teaching strategies to increase classroom lessons. Teachers, for example, use this platform to teach writing skills by utilising a number of learning tools to develop various areas of writing abilities, according to the author. Several academics have advocated that mobile devices and applications be used to improve students' writing skills and self-efficacy (Haerazi, Irawan, Suadiyatno and Hidayatullah, 2020). Writing is a kind of communication in which a message is sent to a reader through a standard graphic system; however, using an online platform is critical in maintaining student interest and motivation in order to achieve the lesson's aim. According to Woodrich and Fan (2017), online networks such as Google Classroom can be classified as an idea-processing tool that helps students learn more effectively as it facilitates cooperative learning by supporting students in gathering information collectively. A web-based writing environment like Google Docs can be used to expand out-of-class interactions. This is especially crucial when students are unable to meet face-to-face due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and they may use Google Classroom

as an alternative to engage on collaborative writing projects with ease and efficiency. Students who used Google Docs to remark and give feedback on one other's work, for example, have a better understanding of the writing process and performed better on individual post-test scores than students in a face-to-face group. As a result, Google Docs is essential for students who want to develop their writing skills. Students can use Google Classroom to access Google Drive to exchange documents and spreadsheets online, either individually or in groups. As a result, Google Classroom not only helps with performance writing, but also stimulates peer cooperation.

## METHODOLOGY

### a)   Research Methodology

The researchers used an instrumental case study to further probe into the intended case. Therefore, under the collective case study, the researchers selected multiple case studies to explain one issue that is selected in this study. Thus, purposive sampling was utilised in this study as it allowed the researchers to identify and choose a group of students with whom they could cultivate and build a genuine relationship to collect the appropriate answers for the research questions. Furthermore, it broadens our platform for offering the greatest, most complete data for the current study. According to Bernard (2002), purposive sampling is known as a judgement sampling that denotes to a purposeful selection of participants for the respective study based on the participants' characteristics. It is a non-random strategy that does not require any underlying ideas or a predetermined quantity of participants. Simply said, the researcher determines what information is required and sets out to discover people who can supply it based on their knowledge or experience. A qualitative study is included in this research strategy to collect information through interviews, and approach guided reflection writing (Creswell, 2014). The researchers incorporated both data tools in this to sustain the validity of the study.

### Participants and Setting

As highlighted in the research methodology above, the researchers used purposive sampling strategy in selecting the setting and participants for this research. This study was carried out from the local context at SMK ST Bernadette's Convent, Batu Gajah, Perak among three upper secondary level of Form five students. The participants were chosen based on their experiences of using Google Classroom and have the capability of sharing their genuine views in engaging with online writing lesson conducted via Google Classroom.

### Data Collection Tool

The researchers focused on writing tasks and interview sessions as stated below:

a)   Writing tasks

According to Bahari, Kussin, Harun, Mohamed and Jobar (2021), teachers can teach argumentative essays by having a whole class debate on their major task instead of small group arguing. They can conduct two-way communication environment through a complete class discussion and individual writing in a 40 to 70-minute course. Therefore, Bahari *et al.* (2021) further opined that every classroom occupied at least 30 students in his or her class. The teachers can divide the students into two groups with at least 15 students that will definitely spark whole-class debate in the classroom, rather than small group debates.

Based on the ideas opined by Bahari *et al.* (2021), the researchers in this study focused on argumentative essays in particular that took almost one month to complete the teaching and learning session with Google Docs and Dropbox. In these three weeks, the researchers guided the students by developing their ideas, on writing a good essay, on using new vocabularies and carried out a preliminary search for information based on the topic of "*Are schools and teachers responsible for low test scores?*". Based on the points shared, the students were approached to draw a mind mapping to fill in the points, idioms, new terminologies and essay structures and outline of argumentative essay before starting over their writings. On the fifth week, the students were instructed to write a full essay based on the points shared in Google Docs and Dropbox within the given time. The students were given 1 hour and 15 minutes to complete the essay writing that was assigned as an assessment to be completed within the stipulated time. After the remarks session, the students were given another essay writing on the title of "*Students should not be required to take physical education courses*" to identify how the students have improved their writing skills through online writing lesson conducted via Google Classroom.

b)   Semi structured interview session

Based on the writing lesson conducted via Google Classroom, the students were asked to share their views in engaging with online writing lessons and their acquaintance in learning writing through this new learning and teaching platform. This interview sessions were done at the post stage of the study (in the end of the study) that might be helpful for the students to share their views based on the teaching and learning of writing lesson. The researchers prepared some questions related to their study from past studies (Appendix 1). In order to sustain the ethical consideration, a consent form was given to the participants and each participant was interviewed via Google Meet with their consent and at the same time it was being recorded. When the responses were unclear, the researchers had the flexibility to ask for clarification through prompting questions that improved the validity of instruments. The researchers then transcribed verbatim based on the interview session recorded.

**Codes and Categories**

Based on the transcribed verbatim, three codes are identified under the views. It is evidently proven that, the students expressed their views based on their experiences participating with online lessons in general and writing lesson in particular via Google Classroom.

**Table 1** The students' view in engaging in online writing lesson via Google Classroom

| Category/ code/ sub-code | Definition/ Description/ Example |
|---|---|
| **Category 1**<br><br>●   Views | These are the statements made by the students in participating with online writing lessons conducted via Goggle Classroom. |
| **Codes**<br>(1)   Flexible learning | **Examples:**<br>*Based on the codes categorised, the students expressed that*<br>●   Google Classroom became a convenient and comfortable teaching and learning medium during epidemic, and they were able to submit their assignments without any hassles and the online tools available in the stream was good enough as well. |
| (2)   The features | *Based on the students views, the students can*<br>●   Submit their assessments, projects, assignments as well as the Google Docs auto-correct their grammatical errors while writing their points or sentences on the document itself. |

**Table 2** Factors that affect students' engagement in online writing via Google Classroom

| Category/ code/ sub-code | Definition/ Description/ Example |
|---|---|
| **Category 2**<br><br>●   Affecting Factors | The statements made by the students on the factors that affect their participation in online writing lessons conducted through Google Classroom. |
| **Codes**<br>(1)   Empiric strategy | **Examples:**<br>*Based on the codes categorised, the students expressed that*<br>●   Approach and deliver contents as an overall, no strategies employed. |
| (2)   Teaching materials | **Examples:**<br>*Based on the codes categorised, the students expressed that*<br>●   No teaching materials are incorporated while teaching writing for the students. |
| (3)   Traditional learning | **Examples:**<br>*Based on the codes categorised, the students expressed that*<br>●   Talk and chalk method, dreary lesson, no two-way communication learning, poor relationship with the teachers and no collaborative learning atmosphere. |

c)   Reflection Writing

This logbook was handed to the students after the interview session to assist them in writing down any points that were overlooked during their participation in an online writing lesson via Google Classroom. Students were given a guided logbook in which they may report on their impressions of Google Classroom based on their own experiences (Appendix 2). They may be able to express their opinions on the usage of instructional materials, how the lesson was conducted, the limitations, and the benefits and drawbacks of using it in a writing lesson. This logbook writing is necessary to capture

the students' perspectives based on the descriptions and explanations provided as they transition to a new teaching and learning environment. Many studies have indicated that logbooks may be utilised as an engaging tool for reflection, and that logbooks are effective in motivating students to learn and deliberately engage in reflective practice, according to Lutz and Paretti (2019). As a result, the usage of a logbook for data gathering was deemed legitimate and reliable.

## FINDINGS

### Comparison of Three Students Views in Engaging Online Writing Lesson Via Google Classroom

This comparison of students' views are comparatively similar in terms of submitting assignments, Google Docs that facilies their grammatical errors, and online tools available in the stream as jam board and polls that help them to brainstorm the points in mind mapping styles. All of the three learners expressed positive views towards their engagement with the online writing lesson directed via Google Classroom. Therefore, Google Classroom became a convenient teaching and learning platform throughout epidemic, and the students were able to submit their assignments without any hassles. They submitted their assessments, projects, assignments as well as the Google Docs auto correct their grammatical errors while writing their points or sentences on the document itself. The students agreed that the new teaching and learning platform Google Classroom is a fantastic platform with numerous benefits and some drawbacks in terms of poor internet connection, poor climate, unstable network that affects their learning. Despite the numerous disadvantages of utilising Google Classroom, participants still prefer it and believe it is useful for learning.

The students expressed their genuine views that Dropbox, Google Docs as well as Google Classroom saved them time and assisted them in analysing assignments; learners, on the other hand, stated that typing was easier than writing and that this pushed them. They also believed that the personal comments they received from their teachers would enable them to learn more knowledge. They also thought that doing writing activities via Dropbox and Google Docs, brainstorming ideas via jam board is more convenient since they could double-check their grammar before submitting the final version in the stream. In some ways, this aided them in learning how to use the written language at the same time. They were indirectly learning how to write using a proper writing technique.

### Categories and Excerpts

### *Category 1: Students Views in Participating with Online Writing Lessons Directed via Google Classroom*

Students' views refer to their observation and views on their engagement in online writing lessons directed via Google Classroom. In the present study, it could be seen that the students stated that writing lesson conducted via Google Classroom is being helpful in various ways in terms of submission, assessment, and classes updates and teachers' holistic comments on their performances in the class. It could be seen that the participants were engaged with online writing lesson conducted through new

teaching and learning platform, and it helped them to improve their writing. This seems to give a view that other than being a Google Classroom platform, it promotes an expedient and motivating environment for English learning in general, writing in particular. For this reason, the students felt that engaging in online writing lessons help them to expand their writing ability, especially outside of the classroom (from their flexible own pace of home-based learning). From the interview, the students mentioned that engaging in online writing lessons has evidently improved their language skills.

**Excerpt One**

*Participant 1*
- *Flexible learning play an important role in Google Classroom, whereby I can submit my assignments on time without having any issues unless I'll have some troubles if I have internet connection problems.*
- *Google Documents works as similar to a dictionary that helps me to auto correct my grammatical errors and suggests some new terminologies with synonyms.*

In excerpt 1, the student highlighted that Google Classroom promotes flexible learning environment that evidently supports the new teaching and learning platform as the most accessible platform for their continual learning and online submission of writing tasks. However, the student made extra manipulation towards her participation in Google Classroom by using it as a platform to improve her vocabulary skills as well. Chelle (2017) opined that vocabulary knowledge is important for students to incorporate in their writing. According to Albashtawi and Al Bataineh (2020), students can be directed to reflect themselves by using their own words during online writing lessons or in their respective assignment and assessment. As a result, the auto-correction feature of Google Classroom was being emphasised the most.

For example, when students instigate typing their essays in a Google Docs, the system automatically corrects their language structures in terms of grammatical errors. It has been one of the advantages for students when writing essays to minimise their mistake through learning. Iftakhar (2016) stated that Google Classroom expands students' writing skills. As supported Bahari *et al.* (2021), collaborative learning appears to be a potential strategy to raise the competency of learners with poor proficiency in a more communicative environment. Face-to-face collaborative learning, on the other hand, is no longer at the top of the list because schools and teachers are more interested in online interactions.

**Excerpt Two**

*Participant 3*
- *Embedded features in Google Classroom such as Google meet is so exciting that I can learn from my own comfort zone and virtual face-to-face learning that promotes communication confidence among teachers and myself.*

*Participant 2*
- *Google Documents works as similar to a dictionary that helps me to auto correct my grammatical errors and suggests some new terminologies with synonyms.*

In excerpt 2, the students mentioned that embedded features in Google Classroom such as Google Meet excites them as it is a technological dashboard aimed at promoting student learning by simulating course curriculum. Google Classroom is embedded with Google Meet that drives a new opportunity for the students and teachers to learn face-to-face virtually. According to Azhar and Iqbal (2018), the content is grouped into courses or classes, and assignments are offered alongside content (e.g., readings, videos, writing tasks and other relevant resources to their lessons) (i.e., classwork and homework). Through synchronous Google Meet or asynchronous tasks, students use Google Classroom to participate in classroom activities. For instance, the students can type their essays in Google Docs that prevent from making grammatical errors and learn their mistakes. Therefore, McConnell, Parker, Eberhardt, Koehler and Lundeberg (2013) stated that teachers and students could have a good communication among them.

### *Category 2: Factors Affecting the Students in Engaging Online Writing Lessons*

The data collected from the interview session also give an overview of the factors affecting the students' participation in engaging online writing lessons conducted via Google Classroom. There have been some challenges in implementing this online teaching tool. Google Meet requires both students and teachers to have good network connectivity for a smooth learning and teaching session. Without the participation of the students in the Google Meet, they will be missing the guided learning like they should normally receive in the live classroom (Ahmad, 2020). Hence, their academic performance will be affected, as they are unable to ask for guidance and received feedbacks from the teachers. However, Google Meet possesses inability to monitor and keep the student's attention towards the lectures as noted in a recent study that investigates challenges of implementing online teaching and learning in which 'students were less focused and motivated with their online learning' (Bibi Noraini, 2020).

**Excerpt Three**

*Participant 3*
- *The students are using the repetitive method that seriously making me bored and I have no interest in partaking online writing lesson especially because no writing strategies were applied in teaching and learning session.*

*Participant 2*
- *Online writing class is boring that I do not share my point to the class as how I usually share in face-to-face class.*

Furthermore, when it comes to the factors that influence students' willingness to participate in an online writing class, the students expressed some unfavourable feelings viewed as an affecting factor that hindered their learning. The students strongly suggested that teachers continue to teach writing in the same way, without using technology-based learning or other strategies that might help them learn to tackle writing lessons with appropriate strategies. It proves that teachers rely primarily on experimentation and observation in the classroom rather than tailoring strategies to students' competence levels. Therefore, according to Norazlin (2018), teachers should be prepared to implement interesting teaching materials in terms of applying YouTube videos, Kahoot, Quizzes to maintain active participation from the students. Ninda (2018) supported that YouTube videos improve students' ability to write and that teachers should take into account to integrate videos and game-based learning to help students learn easily.

**Excerpt Four**

*Participant 2*

- *The teacher prefers talk and chalk method of teaching. For instance, my teacher never been used teaching aids in writing class except mind mapping. She will ask us to draw a mind map and ask us to write the points and share the points verbally. I don't write even a word!*

*Participant 3*

- *Google Document can be considered as a teaching material since we are in pandemic; however, she will not use google document itself. She will present her Microsoft word, and she will type while we will share the points. It is unfair that she types the whole thing that is time consuming as well.*

*Participant 1*

- *Google Drop box help me to improve my grammatical errors that I learn a lot from my mistakes in terms of passive to active sentences, new words, sentences structures and coherences.*

The statements made by the students in sample three demonstrate that the majority of teachers lack expertise on how to use technology in the classroom. Teachers should be well-knowledgeable using Google Classroom because it is the new teaching and learning platform approved by the Ministry of Education (MOE) until COVID-19 is gradually phased out. At this stage, teachers should be capable of instructing students utilising a variety of Google Classroom strategies. Writing skills are not one of the easiest language skills to teach vocally. It requires a lot of direction so that the students can learn well. As a result, Google Docs can be utilised as an online learning resource to assign writing tasks to students. After the discussion, the teachers may, for example, establish a Google Docs page for the students to enter their words in. After that, the teacher and students can work together to correct the sentences, and the students will see a significant improvement. Aside from that, traditional learning in terms of two-way communication was also emphasised. Ninda (2019) claimed that students will learn more if teachers encourage two-way communication by asking

the students to share their opinions after watching YouTube videos or short clips. In order to foster a flexible learning environment, teachers must build good relationships with their students.

Therefore, from the great new teaching and learning platform Google Classroom, it contains new features as Dropbox and Google Docs aid them to overcome their writing issues in terms of grammatical errors and improve their writing skills through the online lesson. It was obvious from the good replies received by the students that Dropbox was seen favourably as a sharing tool for acquiring writing abilities. Participant one further mentioned that she liked Dropbox in Google Classroom because she could comment freely or share her views without having to care about how her friends would feel because the criticism could be given discreetly. It was evident from the good replies received by the students that Dropbox was seen favourably as a sharing tool for acquiring writing abilities.

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

As a result of the findings, it is clear that joining a Google Classroom-based writing lesson has a major impact on the students' writing. The education-friendly website Google Classroom aids both teachers and students in terms of improving their writing skills, learning from mistakes, having a clear knowledge of employing sentence structures, and using new terminology in essays. Teachers appreciated online writing sessions performed using Google Classroom during the COVID-19 outbreak since it has numerous features such as a jam board, surveys, and recordings, as well as making work assignment easier. When students have access to a writing class led through Google Classroom, they are more likely to write. The study's goal is to find about students' views on online writing classes delivered via Google Classroom, as well as the reasons why the students do not like joining in online class lessons.

It was clear that the students agreed that participating in a writing session using Google Classroom is handy, that typing replies is simple, and that completing the work within the deadline is simple. Students who use Google Classroom are less likely to miss assignments and complete all tasks on time. Nonetheless, some students complained that the writing lesson held through Google Classroom was ineffective in identifying their weaknesses in terms of grammatical errors, spelling, and writing improvement.

Finally, using Google Classroom to engage students in a writing lesson was found to be a successful platform for improving writing. Iftakhar (2016) claimed that Google Classroom has a robust collection of features that make it an ideal tool to utilise with kids. This platform assists the teacher in saving time, staying organised in the classroom, and enhancing communication with the pupils. By providing a single access point to the core of conversation and assigned work, Google Classroom has the ability to streamline communication and learners' workflow. Furthermore, according to the evidence presented during the interview, Google Classroom aids students in keeping files more organised by allowing them to store all of their work in one programme without the use of paper, and it aids teachers in identifying students who are having difficulty submitting assignments on time due to the tracking mechanism associated with the assigned tasks. Therefore, According to

the findings, allowing students to submit their work online can actually save time for instructors. This is because teachers can ask students to provide formative evaluation on their peers' work. The teachers can also develop a feedback reference with this peer checking. At the same time, grading students' work can assist teachers to improve their feedback while also increasing learners' pleasure because they can observe their teachers' involvement.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The following are some recommendations for teaching and other practices:

For further research, students should be exposed to different types of difficulties in other lessons rather than focusing only on writing lessons. In this study, the researchers aimed to find students' views in participating in a writing lesson conducted via Google Classroom, and factors affecting students' engagement in online writing lesson that facilitates improvement in writing. It would be helpful for the researchers to collect other issues faced by the students to have more insights into the difficulties. Based on the findings in this research, Google Classroom has all the portents of being a productive platform for the students to participate in a writing lesson. This study supports that the students prefer writing lessons to be conducted using Google Classroom that tremendously motivates their performances in writing as teachers' play a significant role in educating the students that can turn into a substantial development for the students' informative achievement. Furthermore, further research can examine the informative strategies for Google Classroom to decide whether it helps to improve the students writing abilities or not.

**CONCLUSION**

Incorporating online tools in teaching and learning are both useful and challenging at the same time. Overcoming the issues related to online education should be the responsibilities of everyone. Institutions need to assist the educators by preparing and providing necessary online materials and resources to be used to ensure that quality education could be delivered to the students despite the limitation due to the lockdown. Support from the government is obviously needed especially in improving the technologies and utilities for both students and educators; for instances by upgrading the bandwidth of the internet connection. Other than that, instructors should also join professional development trainings which focus on the information technology literacy in order to provide effective teaching and learning sessions for the learners. However, it is noted that the use of Google Meet service to conduct virtual classroom is aligned with the vision to equip the students with the $21^{st}$ century learning skills (Emmerson, 2019).

# REFERENCES

Adnyana, B. 2021. Preparation and Implementation of Writing Lesson Plan through Google Classroom in the Senior Vocational High School. Doctoral Dissertation, Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha.

Ahmad Alif Kamal, Norhunaini Mohd Shaipullah, Liyana Truna, Muna Sabri, Syahrul N. Junaini. 2020. Transitioning to Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic: Case Study of a Pre-University Centre in Malaysia.

Albashtawi, A., & Al Bataineh, K. 2020. The Effectiveness of Google Classroom among EFL Students in Jordan: An Innovative Teaching and Learning Online Platform. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET)*. 15(11): 78-88.

Anderson, R. S., Goode, G. S., Mitchell, J. S., & Thompson, R. F. 2013. Using Digital Tools to Teach Writing in K-12 Classrooms. In J. Whittingham, S. Huffman, W. Rickman, & C. Wiedmaier (Eds.). Technological Tools for the Literacy Classroom Hershey, PA: IGI Global. 10-26.

Azhar, K. A., & Iqbal, N. 2018. Effectiveness of Google classroom: Teachers' Perceptions. *Prizren Social Science Journal*. 2(2): 52-66.

Bahari, A. A., Kussin, H. J., Harun, R. N. S. R., Mohamed, M., & Jobar, N. A. 2021. The Limitations of Conducting Collaborative Argumentation when Teaching Argumentative Essays in Malaysian Secondary Schools. *Studies in English Language and Education*. 8(3): 1111-1122.

Bernard, H. R. 2002. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 3rd ed. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.

Bibi Noraini, Y. 2020. Are we Prepared Enough? A Case Study of Challenges in Online Learning in a Private Higher Learning Institution during the Covid-19 Outbreaks. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*. 7(5): 205-212.

Chelle, L. M. 2017. A Morphological Analysis of Complex Nouns in the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) Reading Comprehension Texts. *AJELP: Asian Journal of English Language and Pedagogy*. 5: 20-33.

Creswell, J. W. 2014. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.

Emmerson, D. 2019. The Use of Synchronous and Asynchronous Technological Tools for Socioconstructivist Language Learning. *The Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*. 9(2): 1-6.

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. 2016. Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*. 5(1): 1-4.

Gleason, B., & Heath, M. K. 2021. Injustice Embedded in Google Classroom and Google Meet: A Techno-ethical Audit of Remote Educational Technologies. *Italian Journal of Educational Technology*. 29(2): 26-41.

Haerazi, H., Irawan, L. A., Suadiyatno, T., & Hidayatullah, H. 2020. Triggering Preservice Teachers' Writing Skills through Genre-based Instructional Model Viewed From Creativity. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education (IJERE)*. 9(1): 234-244.

Iftakhar, S. 2016. Google Classroom: What Works and How. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences*. 3(1): 12-18.

Johannes Konig, Daniela J. Jager-Biela & Nina Glutch. 2020. Adapting to Online Teaching during COVID-19 School Closure: Teacher Education and Teacher Competence Effects Among Early Career Teachers in Germany. *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 43(4): 608-622. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

Levine, L. N., & McCloskey, M. L. 2012. Principles of Integrated Language Teaching and Learning. In Teaching English language and Content in Mainstream Classes: One Class, Many Paths. 2nd Ed. Boston: Pearson. 1-14.

Lim, F. P. 2017. An Analysis of Synchronous and Asynchronous Communication Tools in E-Learning.*Advanced Science and Technology Letters*. 143(46): 230-234.

Lutz, B. D., & Paretti, M. C. 2019, June. Development and Implementation of a Reflective Journaling Method for Qualitative Research. *2019 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition*.

McConnell, T. J., Parker, J. M., Eberhardt, J., Koehler, M. J., & Lundeberg, M. A. 2013. Virtual Professional Learning Communities: Teachers' Perceptions of Virtual Versus Face-to-Face Professional Development. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*. 22(3): 267-277.

Mohamed, M., & Bahari, A. A. 2016. ESL Instructors and Learners 'Views on the Use of Drop Box as a Sharing Tool in Writing Lessons. *Journal of Nusantara Studies (JONUS)*. 1(2): 1-10.

Mohd Shaharanee, I. N., Jamil, J., & Mohamad Rodzi, S. S. 2016. The Application of Google Classroom as a Tool for Teaching and Learning. *Journal of Telecommunication, Electronic and Computer Engineering*. 8(10): 5-8.

Ninda, S. Z. 2019. The Use of YouTube to Improve Students' Ability In Writing (A Classroom Action Research of the Eleventh Grade Students Oof SMK Negeri 1 Bawen in the Academic Year 2019/2020).

Norazlin Mohd Rusdin. 2018. Teachers' Readiness in Implementing 21st Century Learning. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*. 8(4): 1293-1306.

Okmawati, M. 2020. The Use of Google Classroom during Pandemic. *Journal of English Language Teaching*. 9(2): 438-443. Published, English Language Teaching Study Program of FBS Universities Negeri Padang.

Racheva, V. 2018, December. Social Aspects of Synchronous Virtual Learning Environments. *AIP Conference Proceedings*. AIP Publishing LLC. 2048(1): 020032.

Richardson, J. and Swan, K. 2003. Examining Social Presence in Online Courses in Relation to Students' Perceived Learning and Satisfaction. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*. 7(1): 68-88.

Riegel, C., & Kozen, A. 2016. Attaining 21st Century Skills in a Virtual Classroom. *Educational Planning*. 23(3): 41-55.

Garba, S. A., Byabazaire, Y., & Busthami, A. H. 2015. Toward the Use of 21 st Century Teaching-Learning Approaches: The Trend of Development in Malaysian Schools within the Context of Asia Pacific. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*. 10(4).

Sarica, G.N., Cavus, N. 2009. New Trends in 21st Century English Learning. *World Conference on Educational Sciences*. 2009: 439-445.

UNICEF. 2020, July 8. *UNICEF Education COVID-19 Case Study Malaysia – Empowering Teachers to Deliver Blended Learning After School Reopening* [PDF]. UNICEF.

Woodrich, M., & Fan, Y. 2017. Google Docs as a Tool for Collaborative Writing in the Middle School Classroom. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research*. 16: 391-410.

**Appendix 1**
**An Assisted Logbook Journal Writing**

**Guided Log book Template**

Use the following prompts to create a comprehensive log book on your experience of using Google Classroom for your writing lessons.

1) Do you prefer to use Google Classroom for online lessons?

2) How does learning via Google Classroom affect you? *(your feelings, communication with others, doing your assignments)*.

3) What are the benefits that you have gained by using Google Classroom to do your writing tasks?

4) What are the problems you face in using Google Classroom to do your writing tasks?

5) What are the features in Google Classroom which helps in your writing lesson? Describe the features. *(e.g: accessing materials, sending and receiving assignments, navigating the system)*.

6) If you are satisfied of using Google Classroom, what are your recommendations or suggestion in improving the use of it in your future writing lessons?

**Appendix 2**
**Interview Protocol**

**<u>Interview Protocol</u>**

| Section | Samples of Interview Questions |
|---|---|
| **Part A**<br>    Warm-ups | 1. How are you today?<br>2. How are you coping with Covid-19 pandemic?<br>3. How are you coping with online lessons at home due to this pandemic?<br>4. How are your feelings towards learning from home due to this pandemic?<br>5. Any exciting topics to share? |
| **Part B**<br>    Background/<br>    Demographic<br>        information | **Prompting Questions**<br>1. Can you tell something about yourself?<br>2. What are the mediums of your communication at home?<br>3. Are your parents supportive of online lessons?<br>4. Do they provide you with gadgets? What is it?<br>5. Are they with you during online lessons?<br>6. Are they supportive in your engagement during online classes?<br>7. Do you think you can cope with online lessons without your parents' support? |
| **Part C**<br>Online English lessons | **Prompting Questions**<br>1. How often do you engage in online English classes?<br>2. What types of English lessons or interactive activities are conducted during online lessons?<br><br>**Prompting Questions:** Writing Lessons<br>*A. What types of writing lessons are conducted online? Can you give me a few examples?*<br>1. In terms of writing lessons, what are your perceptions on online writing lessons?<br>2. Can you share with me some experiences of you engaging in online writing lessons?<br>3. Can you give me some examples/ or an example of a writing lesson conducted online which you have liked or disliked. |

| Part D<br>Writing lessons<br>via Google<br>Classroom/<br>Features | **Prompting Questions**<br>*A.   Are you familiar with Google Classroom?*<br>1.   Have you done any writing lessons using the Google Classroom platform?<br>2.   If so, can you share your experiences using Google Classroom to do your writing task?<br>3.   What is your perception of using Google Classroom to do your writing lessons?<br>4.   What are your feelings towards Google Classroom as a tool for e-learning in writing lessons?<br>5.   In your opinion, what are the affecting factors or issues that you face in utilizing Google Classroom during online writing lessons?<br>6.   What are the features that you like in Google Classroom? Why? |
|---|---|
| **Part E**<br>Closing | 1.   Is there anything else that you want to tell me regarding having writing lessons in Google Classroom?<br>2.   What are your suggestions or recommendations on alternative platforms that can be used, in an online writing lesson? |