

EFL PEER FEEDBACK THROUGH THE CHATROOM IN PADLET

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Abstract

This research was conducted to achieve two objectives. The first one is to give the vivid explanation about the peer feedback practice through Padlet chatroom. Secondly, it was carried out to dig out the students' responses toward that practice. It was conducted within qualitative descriptive research by employing observation and open-ended questionnaires of 70 non-English university students as its data collecting technique. Then, qualitative data analysis was utilized by the researcher. The results revealed Padlet usage is a new thing for most of the students, yet they can use it easily because it is user-friendly and cost-free. Moreover, anonymity becomes one of the prominent features in Padlet chatroom. The students find it more convenient as being anonymous in giving and receiving feedback due to the freedom of expressing the students' feedback without worrying about their friends' sense of emotion. The last finding showed that the peer feedback practice through Padlet chatroom had met five principles out of seven principles that are proposed as the basic requirements of feedback practices.

Keywords: Padlet, peer feedback, ICT, EFL learning

Introduction

Numerous advantages have been gained through the integration of ICT in EFL learning. It has been confirmed by several studies that are conducted by Balaji and Chakrabarti (2010), Haythornthwaite (2006), and Warschauer (1995) as cited in Espitia et al. (2013) claiming that ICT uses has provided potential benefits for the English Foreign Learning in the educational context. Moreover, the developments of the technologies have carried new chance and facilitated the learning process (Bishop & Elen, 2014).

It becomes a current trend, especially in higher education to make use of ICT for the improvements of learning (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). The educators are encouraged to upgrade their style of teaching and adjust it with the millennial students learning trend that is tightly bound to the technology and internet. To be more specific, this research takes Padlet online platform as the object of discussion. Padlet is an online platform that looks like a blog enabling the users to share, edit, collaborates with each other through the internet connection. In similar words, Padlet becomes a media to have a discussion and social interaction with others that is all happen over the internet connection (Cole, 2009 as cited in Lowe & Humphrey 2018).

This research examines the possible correlation between the use of Padlet for the English Foreign Language learning in higher education. Due to Padlet's advantage in accommodating the social interactions, the researcher specifies the scope of this research into the use of Padlet for doing peer feedback in the speaking activities in EFL learning. Peer feedback is pivotal that enables the students' improvements through the dynamic of social interaction and sharing (Liu et al., 2001). Regarding those points, two research questions are investigated in this study:

1. How is peer-feedback through chatroom in Padlet conducted in EFL learning?
2. What are the students' responses of the peer-feedback through chatroom in Padlet?

Literature Review

Padlet for EFL learning

Some researches have been revealed the benefits of using Padlet for language learning, one of which is its advantage in increasing the students' interest and motivation in learning. Richardson (2009) as cited in Jabar & Ali (2016) claimed that online website application is able to enhance the learning process since the students currently have a natural sense to be attracted to technology. The application of Padlet in EFL learning is getting more popular. It is reported that this online platform is commonly used in a seminar, small teaching sessions to stimulate conversation, facilitate open call questions and opinion and engage the students' participation (Lowe & Humphrey, 2018). Padlet is a unique tool with its excellence as being a virtual interaction wall based on the specific instructional task that is so constructive for the EFL learning (Weller, 2013). To be more specific, the chatroom is the feature of Padlet that is used in this research. It enables the students to have chat interaction without acknowledging their identity. Thus, this activity that happens through Padlet chatroom is anonymous.

Regarding students' interaction, it is necessary since language is all about interactions of a human being. Thus, Padlet is a suitable instrument to establish collaborative learning that boosts the language practice in a written form. It is in line with Bound and Prosser (2002) as cited in Lowe, and Humphrey (2018) noted that the process of learning does not happen in isolation; in fact, their peers play a great role on it. Collaborating the students' interaction over the online spaces is also becoming common in the education field (Wheeler, 2009).

Peer feedback as the focus of this research that occurs in the online platform of Padlet chatroom brings lots of benefits. Kahiigi et al. (2012) explained that peer feedback through the collaborative online platform circumstance gives access to the students to see their friends' feedback and provide-receive feedback with ease and flexibility.

Peer Feedback

A theory of constructivism by Vygotsky (1978) as cited in Bijamin (2013) stated that "mind develops through one's interaction with the world around him/her". He claimed that a process of learning is not an individual one, but it is more about the interaction in a particular social setting. On a conclusion, peer activity in class is a cardinal method to enhance the students' learning, since it gives

students an opportunity to scaffold knowledge and skills that occurs within social interaction and sharing (Lie et al., 2001).

Yang et al. (2006) added that peer feedback gives lots of benefits in the process of improving students' critical thinking, establishing learners' autonomy and stimulating students' interaction. Besides, Hyland (2000) stated that peer feedback motivates the students to be more active in classroom participation. It makes the students be less passive and less teacher-dependent. Furthermore, the activity of giving and receiving feedback allows the students to practice the language skills that they are currently learning (Lundstrom and Baker, 2009).

In this study, students' writing skill is the focus of discussion. It is due to the peer feedback that the students give and receive are all done in Padlet chatroom which enables them to give input in the form of writing. Writing activity during the peer feedback is beneficial for the learning. It is supported by Pena-Sha and Nicholls (2004, p.245) noting that the written communication among peers that is done in the written form becomes more potent because writing activity requires more elaboration and language awareness rather than immediate and spontaneous thinking like what it occurs in the spoken one. Thus, writing peer feedback form is perceived to be able to accommodate a broader scope of language practice.

As the core of the research, there are seven principles of feedback practice that is proposed by Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick (2006):

1. Support informing what good performances are (goal, criteria, expected standards)
2. Help to develop the students' self-reflection and self-assessment
3. Give clear and good-quality of information about the students' learning process
4. Stimulate the teachers and peer discussion about the learning
5. Motivate students' positive belief and self-esteem
6. Give a chance to fill the gap between the current and the expected performance
7. Serve the students about information to help shape the teaching (p.205)

Method

This research is a descriptive qualitative study. The subjects of the research are 70 non-English university students in using the Padlet online platform in EFL learning. They are students from Psychology major in Sanata Dharma University, Indonesia. This research utilizes direct observation in class to gain information about the research subject. Note taking and documentation was done to record the data. Moreover, open-ended questionnaires that are email-based were distributed to those 70 students to support the data.

Some theories related to feedback, one of which is Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), peer feedback and Padlet usage is collaborated to gain a thorough analysis. The researcher employed a method of qualitative data analysis by Renner, M., & Taylor-Powell, E. (2003). It proposed five steps in analyzing the qualitative data in the form of open-ended questionnaires:

1. Understanding the data
2. Focus and limit the analysis based on the research goal

3. Categorize information
4. Identify and relate the patterns and connection between categories
5. Data interpretation – compiling into one holistic analysis

Findings and Discussion

The Procedure of Padlet Usage in EFL Learning

Activities facilitated by Padlet platform was instructed into the General English learning for Psychology students in Sanata Dharma University. It is according to Holzweiss (2014) who claimed several online tools that teachers may integrate into the classroom learning to enhance students' learning engagement. One of the collaborative online tools is Padlet. The teacher asked the students to do peer-feedback towards the video project that their friends made. Shields (2014) proposed some learning activities by integrating Padlet, and peer feedback is one of which.

Afterward, having watched their friends' English video project that is played through LCD projector in the classroom, the students are individually asked to access Padlet chatroom through the online address link that was shared by the teacher. Padlet is a web 2.0 tool for students' interaction on a virtual wall in the online platform and has been able to accommodate the simple instructional tasks in the classroom setting (Weller, 2013). Then, the peer-feedback was conducted through the chatroom in Padlet which requires personal mobile phone and internet connection. The identity of the students is anonymous.

According to the data from observation, it is seen that the students were having fun when they were in the process of learning. Although they all had activities with their mobile phone, but the chatroom in Padlet created a huge bound and connected them all. How fun the practices with Padlet chatroom was indicated by the students' laugh and their high interest in typing feedback in the chatroom. The overview of the Padlet chatroom is illustrated in the following figure:

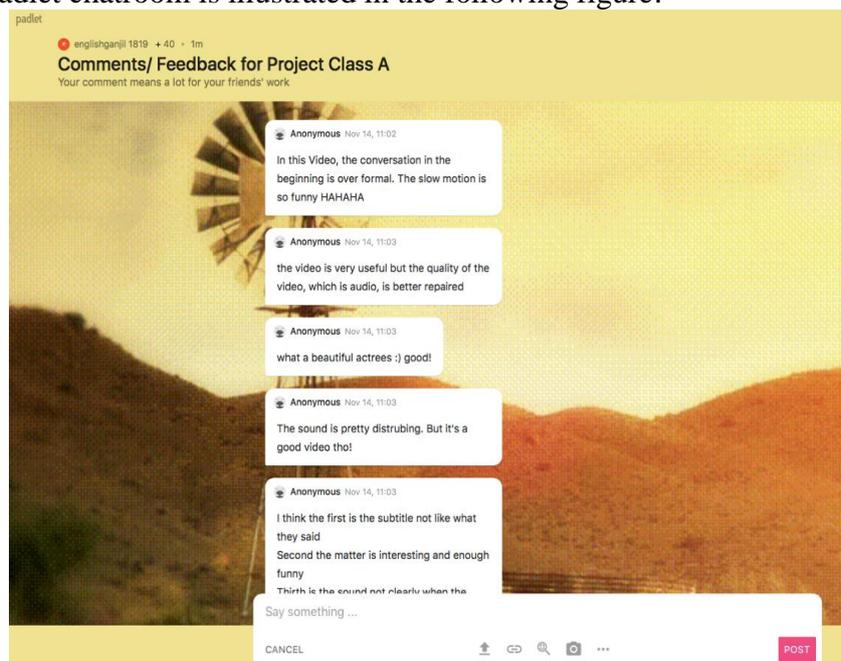


Figure 1. Screen capture of the chatroom in Padlet

Students' Familiarity and Capability of Padlet Usage in EFL Learning

The result showed that there are many the students have not been familiar yet in using Padlet tools in the English learning. It is revealed in the following figure:

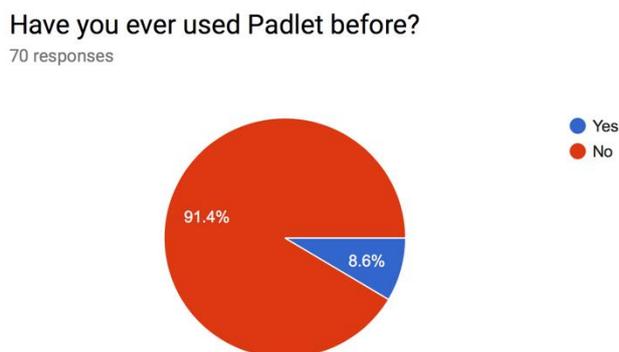


Figure 2. Students' familiarity with using Padlet

It is surprising to find out that most of the students in the percentage of 91.4% are less familiar with the Padlet which becomes one of the web tools that is popular in the education field especially in the higher education. It is in line to what has been said by Lowe & Humphrey, 2018 stating that Padlet has been popular amongst lecturers. However, the students are still less likely having interaction with Padlet.

Despite that students' unfamiliarity in using Padlet, it is seen that the students found no major obstacles in using Padlet. In a similar word, Padlet operation is easy for the students in the classroom setting. It is shown in the table as follows:

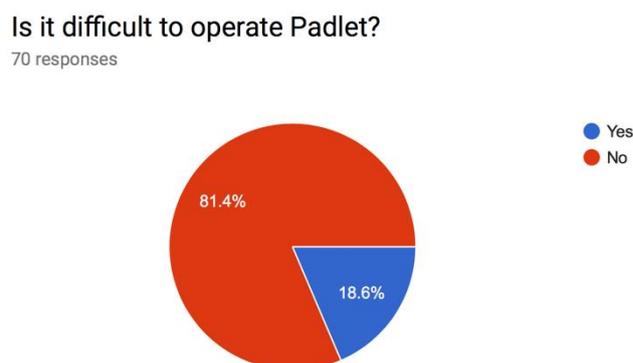


Figure 3. Students' capability in using Padlet

The research result showed that the majority of the students in the percentage of 81.4% found no difficulties in using Padlet. They admitted that Padlet is easy to use and user-friendly. It is supported by Fuchs (2014), claiming that Padlet is a useful device in the informative-collaborative classroom because it is compatible with various types of different tools and it requires no particular skill or know-

how. Also, Byrne (2015) as cited in Manowong (2017) identified “Padlet” as one of the collaborative learning devices that is costs no fee for its service. Thus, both the teachers and all students get no obstacle to dealing with the Padlet access.

Nevertheless, there are a few students in the percentage of 18.6% who felt that Padlet is hard to operate. The summary of the students’ reason shows that the obstacle came from the technical issues that are the low internet connection and the weak performance of their mobile devices. It is normal to encounter that phenomenon in this Padlet-based learning since the internet connection and the website online page are something that we can’t always rely on, primarily when it is used for the massive number of users at the same time.

Confidentiality in giving-receiving peer feedback through Padlet

The activity of giving-receiving peer feedback is done anonymously. It means that the students’ identity as the giver of feedback is confidential. It becomes one of the features in the Padlet online tool, especially in the chatroom one. According to the research result, it is shown that the students prefer the confidentiality/ anonymity in the process of both giving and receiving feedback. It is illustrated in figure 4 and figure 5.

Which one do you prefer in giving feedback to your friends?
70 responses

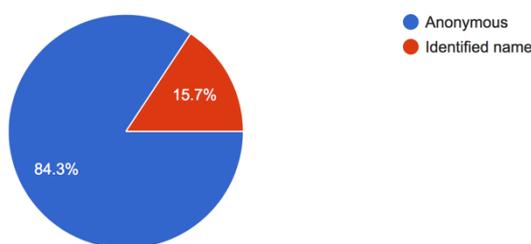


Figure 4. Students’ preference in giving feedback

Is it important for you to know from whom you get the feedback?
70 responses

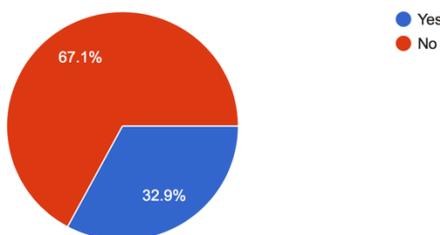


Figure 5. Students’ preference in receiving feedback

A few numbers of students prefer peer feedback's giver identity (identified names)

Figure 4 and figure 5 illustrated that there are 15.7% and 32.9% of the students who prefer to show their names in giving and receiving feedback. The summary of their reasons are due to the social interaction among their peer group, they want to be known and to know the identity of the feedback's givers. Constructive comments can establish positive social interaction. It is supported by Yang et al., (2006) who claimed that peer feedback is beneficial in developing and social interaction among students. However, it won't be run well if the students are anonymous. How they can interact with they did not know who the feedback's givers are and their identity in giving the feedback. Next, the reason is that of the students' self-control; when it is anonymous, a few of the students say harsh words and give feedback that is not related to the context of learning (not serious), and too many jokes. It is proven in the Padlet chatroom that some jokes, harsh words, informal Indonesian terms appeared there. To be worse, the teacher can do nothing to control them since the students' names were not identified in that chatroom.

A big number of students like to be anonymous in giving and receiving peer feedback (unidentified names).

Compared to the identified-name ones, the number of students who prefer to be anonymous is more significant. It is seen in figure 4 and 5 that there are 84.3% and 67.1% of the total respondents prefer anonymity. The respondents' reasons are related to the preference of having more freedom. By having more freedom, the students feel to be able to express their critical thinking more deliberate and free since they do not have to worry whether they hurt their friends feeling or not because their identity is concealed. By having that freedom, the students critical thinking in the process of peer-feedback is developed and get the advantage from it (Yang et al., 2006). Moreover, by being anonymous, the quality of information is highly valuable since the students do not have to be limited to the feelings of their friends. The peer-feedbacks runs more objectively by delivering high-quality information to the students about their English performance (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006)

Students' responses in the classroom activity of using Padlet chatroom

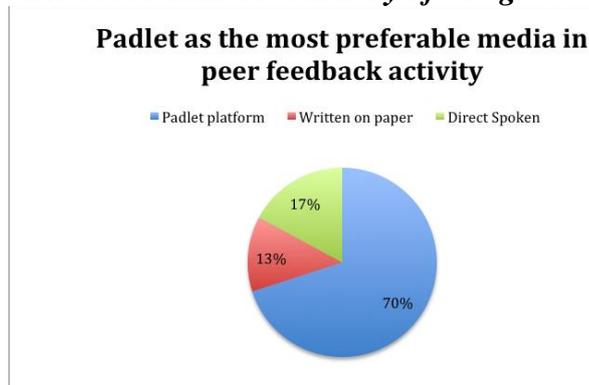


Figure 6. Padlet as the preferable media in peer feedback activity

The summary of the open-questionnaires result showed that the least preferable media in giving feedback is through written on paper. The students who chose this

media argued that by using this conventional media which is paper, provides them a media to keep the results on their own as their archives. They felt that they need it so that they can re-read, contemplate and re-evaluate themselves again through the written feedback that they got. The percentage of the students who prefer written paper peer feedback is at the rate of 13%. However, the rest of the students who did not belong to this category said that this media is not paper-friendly (may cause global warming), takes time and old-fashioned. Moreover, the teacher cannot have any control and access to the result of the peer feedback since the results were submitted to the students and owned by them.

The second least preferable category is through direct spoken peer feedback. It is seen that there is 17% of the total students prefer to express their peer feedback orally and directly. The summary of their reasons showed that it is because the spoken language can express what they want to evaluate their friend more precisely regarding its emotional. In this case, the students believed that spoken way has a more emotional impact toward the peer feedback. Then, the other reason is they prefer the spoken one because the students want to practice their speaking skills during the peer feedback activities. Nevertheless, the teacher perceived that there are some drawbacks to this method. It took time to listen to the peer-feedback one by one and all students cannot equally get a chance to speak up due to the time limitation.

The preferable media in the peer feedback activity is through the chatroom in Padlet. A significant number of students in the percentage of 70% perceived that Padlet is an excellent media for them to express and deliver their peer feedback. Several reasons came up from the students' perspective. The first one is that they felt that Padlet makes the peer feedback run more effective and efficient due to its online platform. It did not take much time to see the feedback result, can be accessed by the whole students in class with an equal chance to participate in and also paperless. It is supported by several experts saying that that technology-based media enhances learning and support the teaching to be student-centered (Attwell, 2010 as cited in Jabar & Ali, 2016). Moreover, it is also claimed that Padlet online chatroom platform can produce rapid feedbacks that make the action to be time-efficient (DeRaadt, Toleman, and Watson, 2005). Furthermore, the teacher felt that the chatroom in Padlet could be easily accessed by both all the students and the teacher. Thus, it makes the teacher have the control and monitor the process of peer feedback activity (Lowe & Humphrey, 2018).

Students' responses to the quality of peer-feedback in Padlet

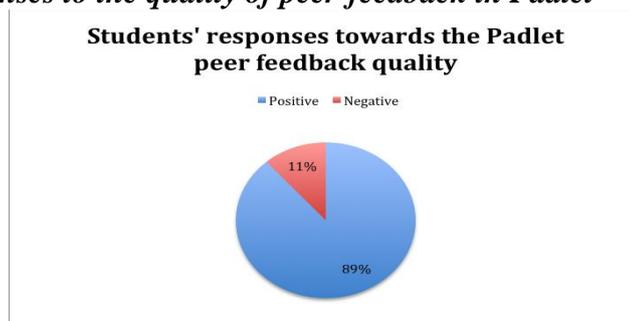


Figure 7. Students' responses to the Padlet peer-feedback quality

According to the research result illustrated in figure 7, it is revealed that most of the students in the percentage of 89% considered that the quality of the peer feedback conducted through Padlet chatroom is qualified and satisfying. The summary of their responses are covered as follows: (1) they felt positive about what their friends' evaluations are, (2) they got compliments and constructive comments that makes them happy (3) the peer feedback result is presented interactively since it was expressed in the online chatroom. It is supported with Velandia et al. (2012) explaining that classroom activities that are based on the current information and communication technologies is believed to become an effective learning tool that can encourage new students' interests.

Nevertheless, there is 11 % of the total students who thought that they are not satisfied with the peer feedback result that was conducted through the chatroom in Padlet. The summary of the reasons showed that it was because the peer feedback results were containing bias due to the in-objective peer feedback, some jokes and silly words that were appeared in the chatroom and the feeling of ashamed and hurt. This finding is in line with Saito and Fujita (2004) who revealed that there are some biases associated with peer feedback including friendship (in-objective and jokes) and also the impact of the negative feedback on the students' future performance. Furthermore, a study conducted by Tsui and Ng (2000) discovered that some students prefer teacher feedback than peer feedback. The primary reason is that the students perceive that teacher is the one who is qualified to give them with constructive evaluation and comment. Thus, the teacher is considered as the only figure who has authority for providing the proper feedback.

The further discussion will be based on the theory of seven principles for feedback practice (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). The theory claimed that there are seven basic requirements for the feedback activities. According to the research result, there are two principles, according to Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), out of 7 that did not exist in the practice of peer feedback by using Padlet chatroom. The first one (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006) is clarifying what good performance is (the goal, criteria, expected standards). There is no elaboration of what good performance is. The peer feedback mostly talked about appraisal and critics; and there is no further explanation about the goal, criteria and expected standard. Most of the students appreciated what their friends did whether it was good, fair or poor. It is proven in the students' responses who are many of them said "good job", even the teacher said it so. Thus, there is poor clarification of what good performance is. The other principle (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006) that did not exist in the Padlet peer feedback activities was the high-quality information to the students about their learning. Since the peer feedback was conducted in the chatroom, the quality of the feedback is considered to be not complete enough due to the chat style feedback that made the students do peer feedback just in several phrases or only one sentence. It is seen in the chatroom that there is a few number of students who expressed their feedback more than one sentence. Thus, the high-quality information about their learning was not found in the Padlet peer feedback activities.

In spite of those two principles that did not exist in the Padlet peer feedback, five principles governed. The first one is facilitating the students' self-assessment

and development (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). It is seen that the students become more aware of what things that they have to improve. It is seen in the several responses such as (1) “The feedback could improve me to become a better person in making videos or on being a talent”, (2) “Positive one it can be something that we can learn for better”, (3) “I think, I need to do better”, and (4) “*Baik untuk evaluasi diri = Good for self-evaluation*”.

The second one is encouraging teacher and peer dialogue around learning process (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). It is seen in the chatroom that the dialogue occurs in a fun way. It is identified in the responses: (1) “I think it's good if it just for fun”, (2) “from me it is so funnn”, (3) “So funny i like funny” and (4) “Its felt great to have such a positive community”. It created a favorable situation where the students and their peer along with the teachers are motivated to establish dialogue related to the learning process. They have actively participated in the chatroom that was identified in the number of chat appeared in the chatroom.

The third principle that appeared is the encouragement of positive motivational beliefs and also increasing self-esteem (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). It was indicated in the responses (1) “I think its good, and there are many supportive comments” (2) “I love all the comment. I just wanna say thanks for all my friends that already comment on my video”, (3) “can give something constructive” and (4) ‘more positive and pleasant feedback’. Some of those responses revealed that the students are more encouraged and motivated with the feedback that they got. Thus, it may increase their self-confidence and self-esteem from the process of learning that they have done.

The forth principle existed in the Padlet peer feedback activity is the opportunity to close the gap between current and desired performance (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). The result from the students’ responses revealed that they learned new insights or lesson from the “(1) *Saya senang dengan setiap komen dari teman-teman saya karena hal itu membuat saya bangga akan hasil saya dan dapat memperbaiki hal yang kurang= I’m happy with every comments given by my friends because those comments makes me proud of what I have done and can improve the things that still need improvements*” and (2) “*Aku jadi tau what the results in my video, is it good or not= I can know what the result of my video was*”. Those responses illustrated how the students learn something about the result of their project, so that it bridged the gap between their current project result and the expected result.

The fifth principle that was found in this study is giving information to the students that can be the source of supporting the teaching process (Nicole and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). The results of the peer feedback were mostly expressed in the English language. This became an excellent media for the students to provide them with a source of English teaching and learning. Not only the content of the feedback that was important, but also the grammar, vocabulary, and other elements of written expression appeared in those feedbacks. That kind of implied language elements in the written feedback can be the source of writing skill-oriented learning.

Conclusion

The emerging technology-based learning is getting more popular in EFL learning. Padlet online application is one of which. The research result shows that although the students have not been familiar yet with Padlet chatroom, they can use it with ease. Moreover, the result of the peer feedback activities in Padlet chatroom revealed that the students prefer the anonymity in that activity since they can express their feedback more freely and the students also feel that the feedback givers' are not important, the content instead is much more important. Then, the research results also showed that chatroom in Padlet becomes the most preferable media in giving peer feedback that is presented in the percentage of 70% because it is fun that is conducted via mobile phone, time efficient (can collect huge number of feedback in a quick time), accessible for both students and teachers. Principally, that activity also covers 5 principle of feedback practices which are: (1) improving self-assessment through the reflection of feedback that the students' get; (2) stimulating discussion among students and teachers through the online chatroom; (3) increasing self-esteem from their friends' appraisal and constructive comments; (4) bridge the gap of current and expected result of the students' work; and (5) providing a source of teaching process from the students' English written feedback in the chatroom (grammar, vocabulary, tenses, etc.)

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