



The Use of Padlet to Enhance Japanese Learners' Collaborative Learning of Basic Composition Writing Skills (*Sakubun*)

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ABSTRACT

The integration between the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and the education sector requires teachers and students to utilize nowadays technologies, one of them is Padlet. Padlet is a web-based application that enables users to write or pin-up files such as pictures on its' virtual walls. This study aims the utilization of Padlet to enhance students' Japanese composition skills in a Japanese basic writing class (*Shokyu Sakubun*). Involving a class of 15 (fifteen) students enrolled in a basic writing course at a state university in Bandung, West Java, this study attained the data through pre-test, post-test, and students' essay observations during four times treatments and questionnaires. The findings showed that there is a significant increase in the average grades after using Padlet for collaborative learning in basic Japanese writing courses, which is seen from the results of the pre-test and post-test. It can be interpreted that Padlet was helpful for Japanese learners to improve their competence in Japanese writing skills. The findings also showed that the respondents gave positive responses to Padlet utilization. Further, Padlet can be used not only as a medium in teaching but also as a medium to store and distribute teaching materials from teachers to students or vice versa, hence it is useful as an application to enhance Japanese language learning in general.

KEYWORDS

Collaborative learning; Composition skill; Japanese writing (*sakubun*); Padlet; Web-based application.

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INTRODUCTION

Collaborative learning utilizing technology is increasingly relevant in education in the Industrial Revolution 4.0. Collaborative learning is a product of shared ideas in a group or class to achieve a common goal (Sato, 2007; Palloff & Pratt, 2005), co-creation of knowledge, and transformation of learning (Palloff & Pratt, 2005) so that this learning

model can be used as a solution for learners in learning difficult material. Japanese composition writing (*sakubun*) is a course that is considered difficult by most Japanese learners (Sutedi, 2008). Meanwhile, writing is an important skill to be mastered by foreign learners (Fageeh, 2011), including Japanese language learners since writing is a productive skill that produces ideas, thoughts, or feelings in oral form. The need to express and

develop ideas (Cahyani, 2005), applying sentence patterns found in textbooks, writing kanji (Japanese characters), expressions, and the use of particles when conveying an idea or idea in Japanese composition writing is the most difficult thing (Aneros, 2013). For elementary-level Japanese learners, the lack of sentence patterns, and the lack of understanding of how to write content based on a certain flow that is adjusted to the theme in the textbook, make it difficult and confusing for them to write. In addition, learning *sakubun* in class requires guidance from the teacher directly in the classroom, which plays a role in the learning process of Japanese composition writing, such as grammar explanations, and giving feedback on the essays written by them.

However, since the COVID-19 pandemic, teaching and learning activities around the world have been carried out at home by implementing distance classes, better known as E-learning (electronic learning). In this case, utilizing technology to solve the problem of the learning process at home is the right solution. Likewise, the teaching and learning process in higher education nowadays involves mobile and online applications. Various types of learning media based on the latest technology are offered to meet the needs of learning in various sciences, including language learning. There are many applications and webs used by teachers such as Facebook, Edmodo, Padlet, Blog, Youtube, Google Classroom, zoom, Webex, and google meet. Some studies prove that web-based learning media can make the learning process easier than before (Yunus & Salehi, 2012), then teaching and learning activities change from teacher-centered to student-centered (Fageeh, 2011). In addition, the learning process is improved, effective, and interesting (Baharudin & Badush, 2016). However, correction and feedback of learners' essays by the teacher in front of the class cannot be done because, in online learning, feedback and correction are done personally. The use of Padlet creates online collaborative learning in terms of providing correction, feedback, and understanding to all learners. Padlet (formerly Wall Wisher) is a web-based tool (online application) and multimedia-friendly wall to organize ideas and collaborate online (online wall). This platform can be used by learners and teachers to post notes on the same page, containing links, images, audio, video, and document files (Fuchs, 2014; Sangeetha, 2016). So, it can be concluded that Padlet is an online whiteboard that functions to share information that can be accessed by

related parties in the learning process and can carry out learner-centered learning. Based on several studies, it is known that Padlet as an educational platform can help in language learning, especially in writing lessons. Research on Padlet media as a means of supporting writing courses has been conducted by several researchers. The use of Padlet in writing learning can motivate and make students more active in writing opinions (Ellis, 2016), in addition to the direct discussion activities between teachers and learners, as well as between students written on the Padlet wall (Klein, 2013) making classroom activities collaborative (Fuchs, 2014). Based on the above explanation, the use of Padlet is expected to help the learning process of Japanese composition in the basic Japanese essay writing course (*Shokyu Sakubun*). The objectives of this study are as follows. 1) To find out the implementation of online-based collaborative learning using Padlet 2) To find out the learners' responses to the use of Padlet in collaborative learning in the Japanese composition writing course (*sakubun*).

Collaborative learning in this study is collaborative learning using the web, namely Padlet. Collaboration is one of the essential elements in communicating effectively to develop 21st-century skills (Rashid, 2019). Technology-based collaborative learning in higher education is increasing for several reasons, such as the habit of constructivism, approaches to teaching and learning, and the need to increase engagement between learners (Beltrán-Martín, 2019). According to Resta and Laferrrière (2007), there are four directions when using technology in collaborative learning in the classroom, namely 1) preparing learners as a knowledge-based society through enhancing collaborative skills and knowledge creation; 2) contributing to improving learners' cognitive performance and supporting concept understanding; 3) adding time and space flexibility in collaborative learning, and 4) supporting learners' involvement in knowledge creation. Collaborative learning prioritizes sharing activities (Staples, 2007), and creates knowledge through cooperation between learners and teachers or between learners (Davis, 2013). Collaborative learning using technology, such as online learning, has several advantages, namely 1) it is an effective, fast medium in delivering learning materials; 2) it reaches all areas; 3) anytime, anywhere; 4) it builds community; and 5) it enhances student learning. The components needed in online collaborative learning are 1) hardware; 2) software; 3)

infrastructure; 4) learning content; and 5) interaction strategy for e-learning utilization in learning.

Padlet is a free online application, specifically an online whiteboard that can be used in online learning. Operation of Padlet can be done by using the official website, <http://padlet.com>, or by using the app on Android and IOS. If using the Android or IOS application, it needs to be downloaded first. The first thing to do is to register on the Padlet website using a Google, Facebook, or Microsoft account. Padlet provides two account options, free or paid. Once the web page is open, we can click "Make a Padlet" We can create our first canvas and then choose the type of format available according to the purpose of writing. On the next page setting and modifying the canvas format. These modifications can include creating a title, changing the background image or theme display according to the topic, creating a unique and attractive web address name, changing the display material, or setting the privacy level (Fuchs, 2014). After finishing writing in Padlet, the writing can be downloaded or exported in the form of a PDF, Spreadsheet and can even be embedded in blogs or websites. In short, Padlet is easy to create and practical to use, all depends on how smart and creative someone is in utilizing the existing features into an interesting thematic display. Padlet has several features that can help learners and teachers in the teaching process. First, students open the teacher's Padlet wall through a web address that has been created by the teacher without having to sign up. After the web is open, students can double-click the Padlet box and write something and can also upload photos, images, audio, video, document copy links, and others. This online whiteboard can be accessed by all participants (learners and teachers) to express their thoughts or post content (Kaya, 2015), and even serve as a place to collect assignments (Sangeetha, 2016). Integrating Padlet in learning makes students engage collaboratively, this can be seen from the learners' activities in adding to the teacher's posts containing links, videos, images, files, and others (Klein, 2013). Likewise, Padlet as a learning media can encourage all students to participate in classroom activities (Fuchs, 2014) and establish communication in the form of real discussions between teachers and learners, and other teachers (Klein, 2013). In addition, students can access directly, and see comments from classmates and teachers, and for teachers working on the same research, Padlet can strengthen the

relationship between teachers and students, increase motivation and self-esteem, and can even be used as a place of communication between students outside the classroom (Rashid, 2019).

Another advantage of using Padlet in writing lessons is that students can interact with each other in working on assignments, discussing learning materials, having time to think, and correcting their mistakes (Mahmud, 2019) through their friends' essays or feedback from the teacher. Awaludin and Abd Karim (2017) revealed that the use of this online whiteboard can be used as a communication medium for shy students to express their opinions through writing. This can improve their ability to write essays. Thus, the use of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), especially Padlet can be applied to other language learning. The phenomenon of more and more teachers using Padlet as a tool to improve collaborative learning for the reasons, 1) easy to use; 2) instant collaboration (every learner can see who uploads something on the Padlet wall; 3) can upload multimedia; and 4) can work on many different devices (Zhi & Su, 2015).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a quantitative approach, one group pre-test, and post-test design to determine writing ability and collaborative learning while the survey method used a questionnaire instrument to determine the responses of respondents to the use of Padlet in collaborative learning in Japanese composition writing class (*sakubun*). The population in this study were Japanese language learners of level I class A in the Department of Japanese Language Education, Faculty of Language and Literature Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. The sample was taken using a purposive sampling technique only focusing on students who volunteered to participate in the experiment of using Padlet in learning essay writing (*sakubun*) as many as 15 people consisting of 4 male students and 11 female students. The age range of the research subjects ranged from 18-20 years old. The implementation of the use of Padlet in *sakubun* learning was carried out for four meetings, in August 2020. The treatment implementation steps adopted by Kobayashi and Rinnert (2002) are as follows:

1. Pre-activity (Preparation Activity)
 - a. The teacher explained the theme, situation, and purpose of writing through the WA group.
 - b. The teacher explains important vocabulary, expressions, and sentence patterns using PPT files embedded in the WA group and Padlet.
 - c. The teacher explains the method of the activity (composition, organization, form, and writing time).
2. Writing Activities
 - a. Students write at their residence and upload to https://padlet.com/aneros_noviyanti/t2be8mlyozqs (picture 1)
 - b. The teacher monitored student activities using the WA group.
3. Post-activity (Feedback)

The teacher comments on the content b. Students correct errors (letters, vocabulary, expressions, sentence patterns).

theory of Japanese writing learning to the basic level, namely sentence patterns 30%, vocabulary 20%, story content 20%, expressions 20%, and the use of kanji 10%. Data were collected using a 23-item closed-ended questionnaire. The purpose of choosing a closed questionnaire as a data collection instrument is to find out students' perceptions of the use of Padlet in Basic Japanese Composition Writing. In addition, closed questionnaires can make it easier for researchers to focus more on analyzing the data obtained and not deviate from the expected answers. Each question item uses a Likert scale as follows: Strongly Disagree/STS (1), Disagree/TS (2), Neutral/N (3), Agree/S (4), and Strongly Agree/SS (5). The questionnaire was filled out online by students using Google Forms. The percentage of the results of each questionnaire item can be seen through Google Forms.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of data analysis were obtained from the results of learning basic Japanese writing through the online writing learning process using Padlet's application for online collaborative learning, as well as pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire scores. This study was conducted six times, including a pre-test held at the first meeting to determine the initial ability of respondents. Before the pre-test, attendance was checked. After that the researcher gave directions on what to do to students, for initial data collection, students were asked to write an essay in Japanese with the theme "moshi...tara...", the aim is to find out how students' abilities in writing Japanese composition (*sakubun*) and given 60 minutes to write on paper and then send it via e-mail. The second to the fifth meeting of Japanese writing class at the elementary level using Padlet. The form of collaborative learning in learning *sakubun* using Padlet in this study adopts the results of research by Resta and Laferrière (2007) and Beltrán-Martín (2019). There are four instructions when using technology in collaborative learning. First, it helps students to be ready for the knowledge society by increasing their collaboration skills and knowledge creation. This is done utilizing online dialogue. Second, it contributes to enhancing students' cognitive performance and promotes a deep understanding of key concepts. This activity is to write an essay that has been determined by the theme and then upload it to Padlet. Third, it provides the teaching



Figure 1: Screen Capture of using Padlet in Japanese composition writing courses.

In each treatment using collaborative learning, the themes used are 1) *shorai no koto*; 2) *ima made ichiban tanoshikatta ryokou*; 3) *dokuritsu kinenbi*; and 4) *korona pandemikku no naka de watashi no seikatsu*. Based on Sangeetha's (2016) research, the use of Padlet in learning is for class discussions, posting assignments, viewing grades given by the teacher, and sharing and uploading files. Feedback and assessment are affixed to student essays uploaded to the Padlet. This research is the development of writing skills in Japanese at the basic level (*shokyu*), while the learning targets at this level according to Ogawa (1993) are writing kana and kanji letters of 300-500 letters, the use of basic sentence patterns, vocabulary, and knowledge of grammar. In addition, Oomori and Kono (2013) adapted the

process with a higher flexibility of time and space for collaborative learning. The essay writing time can be done outside of learning hours and the place outside the classroom, such as at home. And fourth, it promotes students' engagement in knowledge creation through brainstorming. And at the sixth meeting, the last post-test was held to determine the learning outcomes by comparing the test results on the pre-test and providing a questionnaire through Google form. Assessment and evaluation of each treatment activity by analyzing the respondents' essays uploaded on Padlet at each meeting. The following is a description of the results.

Data Analysis Results

This section presents and discusses data in the form of respondents' essays in the pre-test, post-test, and observation of respondents' essay results in each treatment to determine the effect of using Padlet for online collaborative learning in basic Japanese composition writing courses (*shokyu sakubun*). The assessment table of the respondents' writing results in the form of Japanese essays used by researchers as core data adapted from the Brown (2005) assessment rubric and combined with what Oomori and Kono (2013) said about the important things that must be present when writing Japanese. The researcher made them into a single assessment component that would be used in this study, according to the needs of the study as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Components of Japanese Composition Writing Assessment.

Components	Ideal Score
Story content	20
Vocabulary	20
Grammar	30
Use of kanji letters	10
Phrases	20
Total Score	100

Learning Outcomes of Japanese Composition Writing by Utilizing Padlet

The results of student writing in this study are comparing the acquisition of the initial test score (pre-test) before using the Padlet application with the final score (post-test) after using the Padlet application. The results of the overall data calculation from the pre-test and post-test are in

Table 2. The process of giving treatment went smoothly, after doing the treatment four times, the changes began to appear. This can be seen from the results of the learners' writing which began to develop ideas following the theme being studied. Padlet can help students who have difficulty expressing ideas and stringing words and sentences to become a complete text by reading and observing their friends' essays that have been uploaded on Padlet. This is by the principle of collaborative learning, which is using peer assistance in the learning process.

Table 2: Data analysis of pre-test and post-test results.

Respondent	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score
1	64	92
2	44	60
3	52	84
4	76	96
5	52	92
6	56	84
7	60	88
8	48	76
9	60	92
10	60	96
11	52	92
12	60	92
13	48	80
14	40	80
15	52	96
Σ	824	1300
Mean	54,9	86,7

Based on the data analysis, table 2 shows the essay scores of each respondent, the overall scores and average scores can be seen at the bottom of the table. A significant increase can be seen from the pre-test mean score (54.9) and post-test mean score (86.7). This proves that the respondents' Japanese writing ability has increased before and after using the Padlet, thus creating collaborative learning. In collaborative learning, students can get ideas from their classmates so that they can understand how to express ideas, use vocabulary/expressions, correct kanji, and apply proper grammar from classmates or the results of feedback from the teacher so that they understand the material well and quickly write essays.

Questionnaire Analysis Results

Based on the answers to the questionnaire that has been filled in through Google forms from 15 respondents regarding Padlet for collaborative

learning in Japanese composition writing class (*sakubun*). Each question from the questionnaire was analyzed and calculated in a percentage format. The questionnaire questions related to this were 23 items. Furthermore, the overall results of the questionnaire were very positive and the answers from the questionnaire had a percentage of over 60% who agreed and strongly agreed. The data were categorized into four instructional as seen in Table 3.

Table 3 shows positive results. Based on the category of collaboration skills and knowledge creation, it can be seen that Padlet is an application that can share or write student essay results so that other students can gain knowledge in the form of concepts, and guidelines for writing essays besides getting knowledge in the form of new vocabulary and expressions that match the theme of the essay.

According to respondents, the use of Padlet in the Japanese Composition Writing course creates cooperative learning through posting essays so that peers who read these posts feel helped and their writing skills improve. This is engagement in knowledge creation, namely the interaction between students who post and those who read essay posts uploaded on Padlet to create new knowledge and transfer knowledge to students who read the posts (see Table 3).

The essays, texts, photos, and other links posted on Padlet can help teach Japanese composition writing so that students' writing skills improve (table 3). Improvement or improvement in the ability to write Japanese composition writing is a cognitive performance. This agrees with the research result of Songkram, Khlaisang, Puthaseranee, and Likhitamrongkiat (2015) that Cognitive performance and motivation are the impacts of e-learning implementation on learning. E-learning improves learners' cognitive skills. The use of Padlet in learning Japanese composition writing is one form of e-learning.

Table 3: Data on respondents' perceptions of the use of Padlet in collaborative learning.

Category	Questions	Answers
Collaboration skills and knowledge creation	1. Applications that can be used to share or write what we want to write	Agree 63,6%
		Strongly Agree 18,2%
	2. I learn new concepts from posts by my classmates	Agree 54,5%
		Strongly Agree 13,6%
	3. Padlet gave me a guide to writing Japanese	Agree 63,6%
		Strongly Agree 0%
	4. I learned more new vocabulary and expressions from my classmates' posts	Agree 54,5%
		Strongly Agree 9,1%
Engagement in knowledge creation	1. Through posting on the Padlet, collaborative learning occurs	Agree 68,2%
		Strongly Agree 0%
	2. Through my classmates' posts, I was helped in writing Japanese compositions and my Japanese writing skills improved	Agree 63,6%
		Strongly Agree 4,5%
Cognitive performance	1. Padlet is a medium created and packaged to aid teaching in the form of text, photo links, and more	Agree 59,1%
		Strongly Agree 27,3%
Flexibility of time and space	1. I feel comfortable using Padlet to write Japanese compositions	Agree 59,1%
		Strongly Agree 4,5%
	2. I think writing Japanese compositions in Padlet is practical	Agree 63,6%
		Strongly Agree 9,1%
	3. The platform for collecting assignments for teaching and learning activities	Agree 57,1%
		Strongly Agree 19%

A big part of the reason teachers choose online learning is because of the flexibility it offers. As technology evolves, online learning can offer an equivalent experience to offline classes. All of which will create a richer learning experience that will give students the same experience as classroom learning. While online learning is on the rise, making it more flexible is a plus. Therefore, the flexibility of time and space is important in e-learning. Based on the questionnaire results in Table 3, it is known that Padlet is a practical application, a platform for collecting Japanese composition assignments in soft copy so that students feel comfortable using Padlet in learning Japanese composition writing.

Discussion

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major effect on the world of education. Various obstacles must be faced in online learning, such as how the teacher teaches and how students can receive learning, besides the circumstances and limitations of physical meetings in learning. To deal with this situation, one of them is by utilizing online media in the form of online learning, one of which is Padlet. This research introduces teaching innovation based on online collaborative learning through Padlet. Padlet is an educational platform that can be used by teachers, such as sharing information/learning materials and collecting assignments (Sangeetha, 2016). Online Japanese composition writing courses in this study focused on collecting assignments, namely writing Japanese composition (*sakubun*). Based on the data analysis presented above, it is known that Padlet can facilitate students in learning to write online, especially in writing Japanese composition. In addition, respondents were satisfied with the use of padlet during online learning and achieved good academic scores as seen from the pre-test and post-test scores. Padlet creates collaborative learning, facilitates teacher feedback, and learning through reflection, increases student motivation, and improves students' mastery of Japanese tenses and vocabulary acquisition. This is in line with the research of Rashid (2019) and Mahmud (2019) saying that learning occurs when students can learn from their classmates' posts and feedback from the teacher. Working on Padlet assignments will extend students' learning time outside of class and encourage autonomous learning.

The advantages of using Padlet in learning Japanese composition writing, of course, are the

disadvantages or obstacles faced. When using the Padlet, a stable internet connection is required, and a smartphone can be used outside of class. However, respondents felt that the use of Padlet was not effective in this study due to the lack of interaction between teachers and students. This contradicts research that proves that the use of Padlet in learning will establish communication in the form of real discussions between teachers and learners and other teachers (Klein, 2013; Rashid, 2015). Learning Japanese composition writing at the basic level requires several important aspects that need to be considered. Among them is the use of Japanese characters, namely hiragana, katakana, and kanji. In addition, it requires sufficient vocabulary mastery and an understanding of Japanese grammar. This is in line with the opinion of Oomori and Kono (2013) that one of the functions of writing for beginner or basic-level learners is to know and practice the extent of vocabulary mastery and understanding of sentence patterns that have been learned. Through these writing activities, learners can train their communication skills in the realm of writing.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the implementation of online collaborative learning using Padlet and students' perceptions of its use in collaborative learning in a Japanese composition writing course (*sakubun*). The use of Padlet proved to be quite influential in improving basic Japanese writing skills. Overall, it can be concluded that students' perceptions of the use of Padlet in Japanese composition writing lessons are very diverse. Of course, most students had positive responses to the use of Padlet for online collaborative learning. The findings of this study provide students with insights into Japanese composition writing by posting their friends' essays. It is hoped that this research can be used as initial research to be followed up in exploring more deeply the use of Padlet that focuses on communication between teachers and students, as well as between classmates so that it has an impact on student learning achievement in *sakubun* learning. Data information in the form of questionnaires used in this study has not been able to dig deeply into the obstacles or problems experienced by students, therefore it is necessary to conduct interviews with students. For online

learning to be carried out well, a stable internet connection is needed.

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