WIKIS IN EFL WRITING CLASSES IN SAUDI ARABIA: IDENTIFYING INSTRUCTORS' REFLECTIONS ON MERITS, DEMERITS AND IMPLEMENTATION

by **Ahmed A. Al Khateeb**
University of Southampton,
Southhampton, United Kingdom
ahmed_9114 @ hotmail.com

Abstract

This paper presents the pre-and-post-reflections of English language instructors concerning the incorporation of a new pedagogy in English as foreign language (EFL) writing classes in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This approach is to integrate and blend wiki-mediated writing into a different course plan, with tasks that fit with the normal syllabi used for teaching writing skills. The methodology took a qualitative approach, specifically by conducting semi-structured pre-and-post-interviews. The qualitative analysis focused on the most frequent themes which occur in both cohorts. The participants, who were faculty members in the chosen institution, gave their reflections after they were shown the processes, thoughts and outcomes produced by the participants who actually applied the course and relevant tasks. It is important to identify instructors' perspectives as this practice can be applied to enhance (novice) non-native learners of writing in English for academic purposes (EAP). Accordingly, this paper intends to shed light on three vital elements: merits, demerits and some principles for implementation.

Keywords: web 2.0, social learning, merits, demerits, implementation, reflections.

1. Introduction

The significance of writing is becoming increasingly more significant (McMullen, 2009), and that is clearly thanks to the domination of social applications (e.g. wikis), which that are influencing the practice, and therefore learning and teaching of this subject. The popularity of such technologies are rapidly growing, particularly amongst the new generation, as they are used for entertainment not academic purposes. Nonetheless, developing academic writing skills has not always been straightforward for many EFL learners, particularly beginner, writers in Saudi Arabia, and even perhaps in many other contexts, since there is an emphasis on the product writing approach. Indeed, process-oriented approach strategies, which can contribute to generating sound written texts, have been neglected (Al- Hazmi and Scholfield, 2007). This method of teaching how to compose texts could be the cause of the widening

gap between what interests the learners outside class and how they face the difficulty of what they are required to achieve formally in class. The objectives of the addressed pedagogy are to a) integrate collaborative writing into a writing skills lesson and b) to incorporate wikis as a social networking tool into normal writing classes. The expectations behind this practice are 1) to show the impact of traditional and new methods of teaching writing skills; 2) to change the students' currently negative views of writing as a skill and writing classes.

2. Literature review

2.1. Theoretical paradigms

This work is in conjunction with two fundamental theoretical paradigms which are composed of theories, hypotheses and assumptions. The first theoretical view, the social view of learning, explains how people perform in groups and reinforces the role of collaborating in order to boost learning and learners' knowledge and confidence, along with describing the skills needed for its success (Wenger, 1998). This paradigm deals with such concepts as situated learning, which supposes that both the person and the environment are linked, which influences the tasks performed, and can be used to construct comprehensive knowledge. It also identifies how to work effectively in a group and how to reinforce the unity among colleagues.

The second theoretical view is computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL). It is defined as an emphasis on the implementation as well as evaluation of various technological devices and applications, i.e. social networking tools, to build up active learning with generative knowledge (Miyake, 2007). It reinforces individual users' capabilities concerning technologies to work socially under a single interest for personal and professional development while achieving mutual benefits. CSCL is also based on the concept of discussing a conflict with peers from distance leading to achieving asserted goals to build additional knowledge for participants by using recent collaborative authoring tools (Weinberger and Fischer, 2006). Thus, it is seen as a mode of enhancing collaboration in a way that is reliant on recent technological innovations, by using them as means for assistance.

2.2. Development of process writing approach (composition and revision)

The writing process is often described as an "exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning" (Zamel, 1983, p: 165). It is viewed as a complex operation rather than something attributed with a descriptive definition. Flower and Hayes (1981) argue that it is not quite accurate to assume that composition is merely comprised of a number of choices or decisions without a true understanding of the answers to the enquiries relating to the governing criteria. Moreover, Harmer (2007) attentively supports the creation of a piece of writing by moving through phases, with pre-writing as well as post-writing, and by responding to a checklist of commands and instructions.

Nevertheless, the writing process relies greatly on first language writing, because most teachers of second or foreign language writing lack the experience to deal with composition skills (Scott, 1996). It was realised that L2 (and even perhaps FL) writers, generally speaking, used the L1 writing process strategies in their L2 composition, and L2 writing proficiency is seen as a condition for L2 writing development (Wolfersberger, 2003). Thus, as the argument of Wolfersberger follows, advanced L2 writers use L1 writing process strategies to make their L2 compositions better and more coherent. Cumming (1988) supports this claim by stating that a link exists between expertise and competence in second language writing. As Zamel (1982) indicates, less proficient L2 writers need to be introduced to warm-up practices; activities promoting the discovery of writing subject, the development of their ideas towards it, and the realisation of the objectives and outcomes of the tasks set.

In disagreement with those who proposed that L1 and L2 writers compose in a different way, Raimes (1985) shed light on how unskilled writers in both L1 and L2 use similar composition processes. She noticed non-native writers edited less, compared with the substantial edits made by more expert native writers. However, Raimes found a similarity between unskilled L1 and L2 writers, in particular their lack of lacking of planning and recursive processes at sentence level. Because of these findings, she recommended that writing should not be taught as a single skill, and that implementing the pedagogical strategies of writing is of high significance especially for less able L2 writers. This method of recursiveness in the L2 writing process is called 'backtracking' (Manchón et al., 2000).

2.3. Cooperative and collaborative learning

Recognising the differences between cooperation and collaboration as two contradictory concepts is vastly significant. Cooperation occurs when individuals are given individual assignments to be completed independently which are then rearranged to produce a single body of work, by fitting the differently written parts together during the final stage (Donato, 2004). The efforts of members may be solely concentrated on working with the purpose of achieving a certain task. Thus, the act of completing the assigned roles or duties solely by individual participants is extremely important, as it represents the essence of any cooperative work. On the contrary, collaboration relies on the concept of social interaction, which seeks the mutual support of people by providing scaffolding, constructing meaningful negotiations and exchanging each other's views and understanding of the tasks (Boxtel et al., 2000).

Oxford (1997) has also examined the variations of collaborative versus cooperative learning. Based on her definitions of the two concepts, the latter term refers to a practice "that fosters learner interdependence as a route to cognitive and social development" (p: 443). The former notion, however, "views learning as construction of knowledge within a social context and which therefore encourages acculturation of individuals into a learning community" (Oxford, 1997, p. 443). By scrutinising the differences between the two terms, it is noticeable that collaboration urges the learners who are working alone to fulfil their assigned roles through the process of intermingling with other, therefore allowing for greater opportunities for negotiation during the production of a shared project.

Effective collaboration comes into play when there is enough interaction. According to Oxford (1997), interaction is described as a universal term that denotes the action of individuals' participation based on the accomplishment of the aspects of readiness to act together and reinforce group dynamics, which causes a trigger in learners' awareness and knowledge. Meaningful interaction engages learners in tasks or problems with peers, and with an aid of an instructor, in order to complete the activities by 'generating ideas', 'sharing resources', 'negotiating', and 'synthesising' personal ideas with others internally, and then socially, until they reach a common ground of understanding (Woo and Reeves, 2007).

Allowing learners to work on different compositions using feedback from peers ensures they become familiar with the concept of audience, learn how to avoid ambiguity and take into account questions raised by the readership (Barkley et al., 2005; Kuteeva, 2011). The feedback from peers for written documents was termed 'peer response'. As Nelson (1997) defines, this is when "students read and respond to each other's written work to provide their peers with comments on how they can improve the draft versions of their papers" (p. 77).

Collaborative feedback can in fact be practiced to sustain Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) practice, which is a core aspect in the social constructivist theory (Vygotsky, 1987). Vygotsky stated that human development, particularly in terms of learning, occurs within social contexts and is socially situated. Since the research context of the present study is located in Saudi Arabia, promising results were identified regarding reciprocal exchanges showing more constructive feedback and peer responses among such learners (Daoud, 1998; Al-Hazmi and Schofield, 2007). On the basis of these studies, the various instructional pedagogies including writing modules in colleges and universities need to look towards supporting peer feedback by allowing CL to maximise learners' knowledge and experience of the subject.

2.4. Collaborative writing: benefits and challenges

Several research studies have expressed the reasons for employing collaborative writing and its potential advantages and disadvantages. Research has demonstrated that when learners have been engaged in such classes and tasks, their knowledge, experience of writing and the outcome of the written pieces were seen to improve gradually (Fung, 2010). Hodges (2002) also points out that collaborative writing promotes the linguistic accuracy of the written language and considers exchanges for the collective knowledge that is given by learners. In addition, it proliferates writers' motivation to redraft, identifies the characteristics of various external written texts and leads to profound reflections that can be employed in the writer's work (Barkley et al., 2005). Collaborative writing also affords writers with an opportunity to develop the writer-reader dialogue, as writers begin to anticipate their readers' expectations and needs (Clark and Ivanic, 1997).

Writing collaboratively is considered a repetitive process, allowing writers to formulate their personal ideas and custom of discourse (Kuteeva, 2011). Peer feedback is also part and parcel of collaborative writing, which can serve to aid the essential need in slow learners or beginners to better understand how to write (Porto, 2002). It provides a different method to generate written texts where they can be shared and divided among participants by allowing multiple perspectives of learners to appear and their diverse ideas to raise and then to decide the most suitable and appropriate (Mendonca and Johnson, 1994). Ede and Lunsford (1990) reported a number of benefits obtained by the collaborative aspect, including making students familiar with new experiences and opinions, attending to more of their writing errors and achieving a better standard of writing overall, with higher level of accuracy.

On the other hand, Chisholm (1990) claims that collaborative writing can never be entirely problem-free, and therefore requires cautious management. He found the most problematic issues to be resistance, inexperience, friction and fairness in peers' distribution (in the way learners are organised). Two reasons are given to explain the failure of collaboration and constructive peer feedback: "student preferences and their beliefs about the relative value of teacher and peer feedback may impact on their use of feedback" (Hyland and Hyland, 2006: 91). Asaoka and Usui (2003) illuminate upon the challenges of how academic writing might look to non-writing experts in a collaborative environment setting, by proposing that collaborative writing tasks should urge writers to create and discuss academic topics in place of personal life-related stories. Accordingly, the employment of collaborative writing should always be restrained by careful practice with a high degree of caution.

2.5. Using wikis to practise writing through collaboration and sharing knowledge

Integrating teaching and learning to create compositions in digital environments, such as wikis, has been found to support new mediums of literacy and forms of knowledge (Williams, 2001). The idea of group writing is not unique but the mode and style of achieving this writing has become novel. Moreover, William (1992) argues that the abundance of new collaborative technologies has led to forms of writing which may form

challenges for writers. For these reasons, this new perspective has implied writing to be different when involving the writing process definition, as the practice of writing had to change due to the new ways of approaching it (Lundin, 2008). Furthermore, the use of wikis was found to result in flourishing learning experiences and activating learners' participation and involvement, allowing the consequences of the reasonable learning techniques to come to fruition (Davoli et al., 2009).

As a consequence, there have been a vast number of studies that have been conducted into wiki-based collaborative research, which aimed to boost, generally speaking, the learning process, the writing skill and the perceptions regarding this area of knowledge. For instance, wikis were employed to establish group project activities (Parker and Chao, 2007); to build learning communities for a group of learners (Cress and Kimmerle, 2008); to disseminate the practice of shared knowledge and information exchange (Elgort et al., 2008); to form a knowledge management store (Wenger, 2006), and to help promote students' critical analysis of their learning experiences (Chandra and Chalmers, 2010). Despite all of this, Wheeler et al. (2008) identified that written feedback on wikis may not always accurately be given or correctly practised since it is mostly sustained by peers. An additional problem is e-plagiarism as there is such a great wealth of information and data available on the Internet (Viegas et al., 2004). In addition, Davies (2004) reports that peer editing of wiki-based documents could destroy the original works of users.

As a result of the emergence of social networking tools, it has become easier for documents to be shared and tracked through a wide range of possibilities (Grief, 2007). The potential for examining users' written language, engagement and interaction has become simpler than before (Hyland and Hamp-Lyons, 2002). Nowadays, the integration of wiki and writing skills is entirely possible. Noël and Robert (2004) have listed the requirements for selecting an ideal collaborative tool: a) easy access to the document, b) easy to navigate and to deal with, and c) easy to differentiate between texts and comments as well as old and recent contributions. Moreover, wikis can be described as a resource for computer-mediated communication given that they are social tools that encourage communication of multiple writers, in the same way that blogs and other social networking tools do. However, blogs tend to be different since they do not show the entire reviews and edits, and often convey one

author's message to many readers. As such, they do not allow for the exchange of thoughts or ideas amongst many- or many-to-many communication (Woods and Thoeny, 2007).

3. The study

3.1. The aim and rationale

The purpose of this study is to uncover a group of instructors' experiences and reflections regarding the adoption of wiki-oriented tasks, as a new pedagogy for enriching EFL writers' abilities and writing classes. As this investigation has only focused on instructors' thoughts and feelings with regards to the influences of collaborative writing through wikis for enriching foreign language writing, those were targeted for closer analysis of their pre-and-post-perspectives, and the members of staff were shown the students' initial and follow-up results. This exposure involved learners' processes and outcomes before and after the employment of three tasks that were designed and practised using the process approach.. Such exploration was highly important in order to reveal the positive changes within the instructors that might impact their willingness to adopt this pedagogy in their future classes. On the contrary, the negative changes or no changes in reflections can show the reservations concerning this method and justifications for its unsuitability in some writing classes, based on the instructors' perspectives of the current study.

3.2. Participants

This research was conducted in one of the public, government-funded, universities in Saudi Arabia. It featured six members of staff, who were randomly chosen from the Department of English and the Centre of English Language at the university, which are both departments responsible for teaching modules of EFL. In addition, they came from a range of different backgrounds in terms of nationality, number of years of experience and academic positions.

Table 1. Participants' profiles.

Interviewees' names	**Academic position**	**Years of experience**

IMW	Instructor in English language	12 yrs
LAM	Lecturer in English language	18yrs
POS	Professor in English language	20yrs
LAR	Lecturer in English language	3yrs
APA	Assistant professor	7yrs
IAP	Instructor in English language	30yrs

3.3. Design and procedure

The research comprised twelve interviews with six interviewees, as each individual participated twice, both before and after the implementation of the new course and its related tasks (intervention). The cross-cutting analysis of the pre-and-post cohorts of the interviews identified three main components noteworthy of investigation: merits, demerits and matters for implementation. The nature of the questions was semi-structured. The process of interviewing the participants was conducted as follows: before the integration of the new intervention (a wiki writing course), the faculty members were enlightened about the purposes, aims, and theoretical framework of this approach including the supported theories and other similar studies.

On the basis of West and West's research (2009), in order to design a new course featuring the application of wikis for collaborative tasks**,** several criteria were taken into account in order to enhance the outcomes of learners in EFL writing. The major ones are as follows:

1. Laying the foundation and preparing students for the wiki writing course.
2. Building the framework of the wiki writing course.

The current course involved these subcomponents which were established by Chen, Gilbert and Sabol (2006):

Defining the goals of the course that is based on the instructor's intentions.

The goals were related to enabling the learners to understand their writing, how to develop and elaborate it while raising the learners' awareness of their writing in terms of accuracy, contents and cohesion. In addition, enabling them to apply the process of writing and its strategies. This was to provide them with opportunity to practice drafting, receive useful

feedback and comments from peers as well as the instructor. Lastly, allowing them to construct a group wiki that can be used as a reference for all group members to go back and check their writing pitfalls and to check their peers' negotiation.

Adopting a technology plan to determine the support required.

Throughout this course a technology plan was developed to assess what was needed by the learners; such as to further understand the tools already used in the institution, e.g. blackboard; to establish how well-equipped the computer labs and lectures hall in the institute chosen need to be and to verify the affordances of the IT support.

Making a gradual presentation of the wiki–based writing course to the students.

The participants received a number of emails from the instructor about the importance of using wikis in their writing course and for their future learning. The next steps that followed that involved orienting with wikis via the provision of training; showing learning outcomes and acceptable and unacceptable posting and guidelines; and highlighting the public nature of wikis. The same procedures were validated by the Australian Flexible Learning Framework, 2008.

Developing a connection among learners, both face-to-face and online, to achieve the designated tasks.

The participants were involved in in-class and online tasks which required them to meet occasionally to produce the final product. The participants were asked questions, but were then required to answer online. All the writing tasks were derived from the writing classes, while items were related to the textbook used in class.

Since the course was heavily dependent on earlier considerations relating to the design of the wiki course, the tasks were deliberately formed on this basis of blending face-to-face teaching and online-based tutoring. Table 2 shows the types of in-class and wiki-based writing tasks.

Table 2. Types of in-class and wiki-based tasks (snapshot for the first month).

Session No.	**Chapter No. (based on coursebook)**	**On-wiki elements of practicing collaborative writing**	**In-class elements of learning writing**
Week 1	Icebreaking tasks between the learners and the instructor Introducing the course and the objectives		
Week 2	Ch: 4	Space order, specific details and topic and controlling idea	Describing a scene (description of life in a busy street, resulting in traffic accidents)
Week 3	Ch: 4	Adjectives, cumulative and coordinate adjectives	
Week 4	Ch: 4	Prepositions and prepositional frases	
Week 5	Writing the final draft describing different scenes (1 hr)		

These two types of learning environments were implemented simultaneously in order to complement each other. The in-class ones concentrated on teaching grammar or punctuation-related rules, whereas the wiki-oriented tasks focused on practice.

4. Results and findings

4.1. Course evaluation findings

Since the wiki tasks were supposed to be partially assessed, a small percentage of marks was divided in response to the students' participation for some individual tasks to meet the course requirements. The reason was that the new (collaborative) tasks were not compulsory and not all students were required to participate to pass the course. For the purpose of the research to identify the effectiveness of wiki-based writing on writers, individuals were evaluated on their contributions to the wikis based on their participation in the group brainstorming; drafting for the compositions; and reviewing others' contributions (e.g., adding, expanding, reorganising and deleting).

There were two types of contribution: in-class and wiki-based. This exploration depended on one or all of the categories of writing change functions by Mak and Coniam (2008) with some adaptations:

a) adding ideas and making new contributions;
b) expanding ideas and using already given ideas to produce another contribution based on it; and
c) reorganising ideas and moving or adding a sentence or phrase to an existing contribution.

4.1.1. Merits

Triggering motivation seemed to be the greatest benefit of the wiki-based writing course. Changing the routine of learners resulted in more inspiring learning environments

> APA: I always try to find some ahh interesting topics, some relevant topics to their lives to motivate them ahhh topics using the internet, using chatting, using forums ahhh, football clubs, something about mobile technologies all of these topics I I find them motivating and interesting.

In the post-interviews, IMW reconsidered this issue when learners became actively involved in similar activities.

> IMW: Absolutely yeah. I think that this approach of social interaction will help facilitate ahhh will will facilitate the engagement of the learners and it will also increase their concentration and on their writings since this type of approach is ahhh something which is observed by their peers'.

As collaborative writing on wikis takes into account shared thinking and joint work among writers, the principle of the course was to expose the writing product to the public. LAR explicitly highlighted this benefit as a catalyst which leads to better writing skills

> LAR: It will improve ahhh their editing skills and ability to edit someone someone else's ahhh the ability to participate with your ideas and you know make them part of the whole that others have provided, these are all good things and you know students might not get them when they write on their own.

These advantages were also restated in final interviews by IAM as well.

> IAM: This is one of the reasons ahhh which increase students interests in writing well and avoiding mistakes because it's not just like when they write paragraphs and give them to the teacher and the teacher only ahhh is the only one who will see the paragraphs and correct

> them but ahhh on the contrary they they are open to all of their peers to see those their paragraphs so they will make their best to write well and provide mistakes and make an effort to produce a well written piece of writing.

The advent of recent technologies including wikis has contributed to the alternation of several educational and pedagogical practices. The boundless accessibility and availability were perceived as among the greatest merits of incorporating wikis into traditional writing classes, as evidenced in the quote below:

> POS: Now to introduce the computer as an instrument and later opening the ahhh door for a world of learning ahhh this can be really very much carried out within the educational process.

Later on, IMW addressed the positive reasons behind embracing social web tools such as wikis.

> IMW: It will make the students collaborate on a daily basis so they'll there will be a continuum a continuum in collaboration between the students and a continuum in learning mistakes and learning how to correct mistakes.

4.2. Demerits

The major pitfall of wiki-related writing tasks, as observed by a large percentage of instructors, was that beginner writers were restricted in their ability to adapt to this method. APA stated that:

> APA: I noticed about the students ahmm the passiveness of some low level students in one group ahhh I found them just listening to what other ahhh to their peers and then another group they were just ahhh transcribers or just wrote the ideas of their peers.

The students with limited writing abilities were seen to gain the least benefit from this method, which decreases the central role of instructors. In line with the former argument, APA stated the following:

> APA: Well, for the beginners I think could be a problem with them as they have some basic low level problems like lack of vocabulary problem with grammar structures so I think they first they need first to improve themselves.

As sometimes individual writing is necessary, this method was found to be good at promoting collaboration but, equally, it relies on others' enthusiasm.

> LAR: But if you want to ahhh if your focus is that you want students depend on themselves in writing it might not be as good you know there are some coded dependence, students might not be able to write unless they have a partner or a number of people helping them.

Likewise, LAR brought up the issue again of a potential challenge caused by collaborative writing tasks.

> LAR: I think this this might be you know one of the benefits of dividing students based on their levels because even some of the weak students wrote a paragraph so if I had included them in you know groups with better students they might have not written anything at all, so I think some students usually depend on others and don't write anything you know that's one of the problems.

One of the disadvantages of similar courses and tasks was that there was a substantial need for prior planning and ample preparation, which was identified by IAP.

> IAP: We instructors here are faced with the problem we have two or three hours a week…we have a major task because if you're trying to motivate the students to do independent work collaborating with others and that's only for three hours a week; whereas in fact these tasks take very long time to be prepared and designed. The effort is highly extensive.

This was also reported by LAR, who argued that such new pedagogies could characterise the instructors who are willing to accept the challenges, despite the demand to exert more effort and energy.

> LAR: Some teachers are a bit resistant to the idea of incorporated technology in a meaningful way ii their classrooms so you know if you are willing to do so… I think this is something that differentiates two groups of teachers those who stuck in the past and want to keep things as they were to do what works and teachers that are willing to take this leap even though there might be problems even though {overlapping}.

4.3. Implementation principles

The participating instructors drew attention to the importance of continuous training, even after the orientation week, which was assumed to provide a sufficient introduction to this technology to the participants. For instance, initially, IAP thought the following:

> IAP: The students that use them must you know be trained to use it for really improving their English and not just trying to put something there that they found.

This idea was confirmed in the post-interviews by APA who claimed that:

> APA: I'm concerned about is training the students in how to not only using ahhh wiki but how to make use ahhh how to benefit really from from these wikis.

Another group of instructors valued the role of having well-equipped infrastructure. In the pre-interviews, IMW indicated the importance of sufficient facilities.

> IMW: In fact I like to use the computer when I teach writing but there is something which is missing because we need more than one computer if we are teaching in class it should be taught in a laboratory in which there are many computers so that all of the students can benefit and use the computer when they write.

Agreeing with the previous thought, and adding to the significance of the technical support, POS argued:

> POS: I think are basically when you go from cooperation where class ahhh members can work together or in groups to the technical side of it to collaborative learning the difficulties are basically due to lack of technical support and maintenance because as you know you need to keep the ahhh the net and the computer sets and all that is working ahhh when you need them.

A very important element of any wiki-related course, as was expressed by the teachers, is related to the willingness of learners to keenly partake. In addition, allotting an adequate, yet controlled, amount of time for this course is also fundamental. That point was discussed by LAR.

> LAR: It is something new that they haven't done before ahhh but you need to carry this over and make it ahhh last not just for a short period and then would disappear yeah.

Similarly, this issue was referred to by LAM, showing the key role of persistence and need for a time limit for each task.

> LAM: We should mention that within the distributed time they have to finish this task otherwise it's going to be a marathon task for the students… since we have limited time for the course book or the syllabus to be covered these tasks should be made into time-bound tasks that way it will help carrying out this task effectively.

5. Discussion

In view of the data reported by the instructors, it is evident that the emergence of Web 2.0 technologies and social-based learning, relating to writing and written-based communication, has created new possibilities for teachers as well trainers to expand their skills in the area of teaching writing. The instructors valued this new experience due to its contribution to encouraging self-reliance and personal knowledge development; generating new methods of retrieving and commenting and promoting collaborative writing and shared group response of correction along with e-oriented feedback. All of these affordances contribute to the

usefulness of wikis as a pedagogical tool serving to construct more enhanced collaborative compositions, as it reduces the fear of sharing drafts or receiving a large amount of criticism (Dymoke and Hughes, 2009).

Nevertheless, the instructors began to have doubts when beginner writers became involved with wiki writing, as a learning environment relying greatly on indirect communication, either with tutors or peers, and non-face-to-face learning mode, proved to be extremely challenging for low-level learners. This corroborates the findings of Vratulis and Dobson (2008), namely, the pre-service teachers confirmed that such learners might find it hard to be active in communal spaces, e.g. wikis, and to make their voices heard and express their views clearly and coherently.

The interviewed lecturers also recounted the problem of increasing dependency and plagiarism and that classes became less formal. The instructors also identified the fundamental elements of implementation including: the importance of restricting time, maintaining awareness and training and providing technical support (i.e. dealing with the website when there is a technical failure, teaching learners how to update and re-use it again and how to use the proper browser).

Edwards (2012) stated that "the limitation and affordances of technologies [e.g. wikis] and education as an institution are constantly in play" (p. 205). In the same sense, Thomas (2011) recounted the value of digital education that is delivered via one or many of the social networking tools for language learning. Thus, it was evident that this pedagogy is a sound method for triggering motivation and expanding writers' experiences, as they can accomplish much effort and be assigned with more responsibilities for developing their learning process regardless of the constraints of time and space.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, this paper reported on the analysis of the instructors' reflections for establishing wiki-based collaborative writing tasks in one of higher education institutes in Saudi Arabia. This course was intended to empower novice writers and enrich their writing experiences and abilities to express themselves more effectively. Our course was systematically designed by consulting social views of learning and computer-supported collaborative learning

(CSCL) paradigms. The huge body of literature has also assisted in shaping this course and the tasks entailed. Furthermore, the qualitative analysis of this project helped us to determine the strengths and weaknesses that could influence this pedagogy. The next step, which will hopefully follow on from this project, will include scrutinising the reflections of the instructors in regards to using wikis between the faculty members in order to improve their collaborative writing abilities and argumentation.

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