

Executing reflective writing in an EAP context using Edmodo

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ABSTRACT

Reflective practice encourages students to deliberately observe, analyse, comprehend and rework materials assigned to them. Writing reflections based on an asynchronous environment is regarded as an essential part of a learning process in the 21st century language classroom as it allows learners to critically reflect on their learning, in addition to being in control of a meaningful learning experience. This paper reports on the potential of reflective writing coupled with the Connectivism theory as a practice in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course. Students taking an EAP course at a private institution of higher learning were exposed through a series of materials posted on Edmodo which needed reflective writing. At the end of the course, focus group discussions and face to face interviews were carried out to ascertain how reflective writing supported them in critical analysis and writing using English on the materials posted. The findings of this study report the use of reflective writing carried out asynchronously using Edmodo as an effective pedagogy for learning English, promoting student autonomy and active participation in learning. Among others, findings also point to the strength of reflective writing as a tool in developing critical thinking, creativity and problem solving.

KEYWORDS: reflection writing, connectivism, edmodo, asynchronous learning, active learning

Introduction

In a non-dominant English-speaking country such as Malaysia, English is seen as an important language in the education sector as an effect of globalisation. This is viewed as essential as English language helps to develop the human capital as well as the overall economic growth of the country. English-medium instruction is practised for its intrinsic value; utilising English as a language of knowledge and extrinsic value; utilising English as a medium to achieve other goals. Generally in Asia, English is used at the tertiary level institutions particularly as an extrinsic value to achieve globalisation and produce global citizen, provide access to education and also as a tool to measure its university ranking in the global arena (Nor Liza, 2013).

Tsui and Tollefson (2007) shed light on the actual situation in Malaysia in which the effects of globalisation has imposed a pressure on Malaysia, one of the non-dominant English-speaking countries to use English-medium instruction even though the students are not prepared and well-equipped to use English as a medium in education. Hence, students' poor level of English proficiency becomes an obstacle at the tertiary level.

Many higher-learning institutions in Malaysia face this common phenomenon. Thus to overcome this problem, various courses are designed to suit the Malaysian learners at the tertiary level so that students could improve and upgrade their English language proficiency. English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is one such example of a course usually offered at a Malaysian private institution.

English for Academic Purposes

Malaysian students who pursue their education at a tertiary level institution are often obliged to take up the EAP course. This course is often made compulsory as it teaches students to meet the academic standard set at higher learning institutions (Thang, Wong, Noorzah, Rosniah, Najihah & Kemboja,

2012). Developing students' study skills and their proficiency in the English language becomes the main aim of the course. These aspects are viewed as vital as students must equip themselves with the study skills and language proficiency needed to understand their other course materials.

In a study conducted to investigate the advantages of EAP, it was discovered that the international postgraduate students in Australia who underwent the EAP lessons were more skilled at discussing their learning strategies, more confident in handling written assessments and possessed a better understanding of their course demands compared to those who did not attend the EAP course (Terraschke & Ridwan Wahid, 2011).

EAP encompasses the four important aspects of language learning; reading, writing, listening and speaking. This course is usually offered to the first semester students in order to mould and build their foundation in learning at the tertiary level.

In this study, the EAP course runs for 14 weeks with three hours of classes every week. Students are expected to be able to use the reading techniques to manage reading course textbooks, understand what is read, write using the academic writing conventions, write with good grammar and vocabulary, listen to academic lectures, listen to understand the main gist and supporting details, speak to express opinions confidently and be able to present with good presentation skills through this course. The learning process is carried out face to face and using an online platform called Edmodo. Students are given the liberty to use the Internet to carry out their research to better understand the materials posted on Edmodo; done asynchronously, throughout the semester.

The researcher supports the practice of reflection writing through the materials uploaded on Edmodo with the aim to study students' responses through their writing in advocating autonomous learning and promoting learning retention while embracing digital technology. These aspects are emphasised as essential in the 21st century learning and the ultimate game changer in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 which shapes the Education 4.0 (Md Abdul, 2018; Bell, 2010; Woolf, Lane, Chaudhri & Kolodner, 2013; Yoke, 2018). This study also responds to the call made by the Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh who stresses on knowledge, industry and humanity in the latest mandate of embracing Industry 4.0 as a process of revamping Malaysian's higher education system (Maizatul Ranai, 2018).

Problem Statement

Malaysian tertiary level students are seen to struggle with the English language despite learning the language for 11 years prior to their tertiary level education. The declining rate of the English language proficiency is quite alarming and it has become a national concern. Many students are not able to cope with the demands of reading and writing in English in the academic environment (Ainon, Mohamed, Engku, Isarji, Faridah and Rozina, 2013; Thang, Wong, Noorizah, Rosniah, Najihah & Kemboja, 2012).

It was also noted that many students possessed a negative self-image and lack of self-confidence when it comes to the writing skill, believing that they are bad writers (Fernstan & Reda, 2011). This is also the case with most Malaysian students at the tertiary level. Thus, it is essential to introduce writing activities in English that would capture students' interest and require their active participation in constructing their own learning. Therefore, writing activities such as reflection writing should be a part of the EAP course at the Malaysian tertiary level.

Many studies have been carried out in the EAP context, however, very few studies emphasised creativity and critical thinking through Reflective Writing coupled with the learning theory of Connectivism.

Literature Review

The literature review in this study is presented to review the past literatures and to support the theories which underpin the current study which employs the learning theories of Connectivism, Expressivism and Reflective Writing.

Connectivism: Edmodo in the 21st Century Learning

Connectivism is a learning theory developed based on knowledge acquisition which happens through technology. It is a recent learning theory which was a result of continuous revision and evolution. The need for this theory can be seen in the changes experienced by the society at large in the way of living, communicating and learning with the existence of technology (Siemens, 2005).

Learning has rapidly evolved over the years to suit learners as knowledge is now developing exponentially. Learning in the 21st century is led by technology thus it expands learning from the traditional face to face classroom interactions between the instructor and learners to the virtual learning platforms which allow learning to happen asynchronously (Siemens, 2005; Trust, 2012; Holotescu & Grosseck, 2011; Holland & Muilenburg, 2011).

The shift from ‘electronic’ to ‘mobile’ is said to have made education become more efficient and project improved learning results (Lehner & Nosekabel, 2002). Research have also indicated that academic institutions all over the world have adopted mobile-learning (learning through online platforms using mobile devices) which has enhanced the teaching and learning at the tertiary level (Holotescu & Grosseck, 2011; Deljanin, Čolaković & Memić, 2017).

Additionally, it is considered high time in intensifying learning based on Cybergogy (virtual-based learning), a strategy in building new learning experiences through a person’s active engagement in the learning process in the cyber world (Muresan, 2014). According to Maizatul Ranai (2018), the Malaysian higher education system has listed heutagogy (self-determined learning), paragogy (peer-oriented learning) and cybergogy (virtual-based learning) as paramount aspects of the Learning and Teaching 4.0.

Education 4.0 also outlines the shift in a teacher’s role from that of an educator to a facilitator, coach and mentor with the advancement of technology. Learning materials in the form of digital and multimedia are more interactive, engaging, flexible and accessible online with the advent of technology. These paradigm shift allows teachers to have a wide-range set of pedagogical approaches to support their learners and be more inclusive with their teaching methods (Ernst & Young LLP, 2017).

Understanding that learning is a dynamic and pragmatic tool which faces constant changes therefore requires the society to keep abreast with the new way of acquiring knowledge through various virtual learning platforms. Virtual learning platforms help learning to be relevant to learners and this is an important aspect as the new age learners experience rapid learning via technology (Kongchan, 2013; Muresan, 2014; Siemens, 2005; Lehner & Nosekabel, 2002). Enriquez (2014) also stressed on the motivation and empowerment factors of the virtual learning platforms which are essential in the 21st century learning.

Edmodo has been designed and developed since 2008 by Nick Borg, Jeff O’ Hara and Crystal Hutter to bridge the gap between students’ usual practice and formal learning as well as introduce learning in the 21st century setting. This online learning platform is free and safe (Kongchan, 2013). According to Trust (2012), there were more than 6.5 million teachers and students who use Edmodo in learning. The Edmodo official site shows an account of 85 million members from 190 countries as of June, 2018.

Edmodo is a trusted online platform which could be used for interaction and learning; managing an online classroom community and teachers’ professional development (Trust, 2012; Balasubramanian, Jaykumar, Fukey, 2014). Previous research projected that Edmodo’s user-friendly feature encourages student engagement and authentic learning. Edmodo’s layout which looks similar to Facebook creates a sense of familiarity amongst not only students of the 21st century but also teachers who are exposed to social networking sites (Holland & Muilenburg, 2011; Balasubramanian, Jaykumar & Fukey, 2014; Kongchan, 2013).

As Edmodo could be installed into mobile devices, students were found to have positive perception towards using Edmodo in learning in which they pointed out that Edmodo allowed for effective

communication to take place as well as able to save time (Al-Said, 2015). Edmodo was also nominated as a successful supplementary tool in the learning of the 21st century (Enriquez, 2014).

The elements of effective communication in learning and time saving in Edmodo are in line with the theory of Connectivism which is apt, current and relevant in the learning of the digital age of today. Based on the theory of Connectivism, Siemens and Tittenberger (2009, p.11) recapitulated that “knowledge and cognition are distributed across networks of people and technology, and learning is the process of connecting, growing, and navigating those networks”. In order to keep learning current and fun based on the theory of Connectivism and increase students’ engagement in learning, the researcher incorporates other virtual platforms such as Instagram and Youtube into Edmodo. These Instagram and Youtube links were shared on Edmodo for students to reflect.

Reflective Writing: Reflection Writing as an Effective Pedagogy and Practice

Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Learning Theory is an essential framework in discussions pertinent to learning through reflection. Kolb has outlined concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation as an integral part of holistic learning which emphasises the process more than outcome.

Gibbs (1988) further created a reflective learning cycle which includes six stages; description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan. This Reflective Writing approach is widely used in education. Moon (1999) also indicated that the reflective practice is the practice of taking a critical stance, applying problem solving and constantly evaluating and reviewing one’s practice in the light of new learning.

Schon (1983) has also dissected the reflection process into before an experience, during an experience and after a learning process. The important aspects highlighted in these stages were one’s insights, emotions, examination of thoughts, analysis on challenges, lessons learnt, and improvements which could take place. Reflective writing allows learners to go through a mental process of critically thinking about their own skills and practice, analysing and learning via experiences as well as solving problems which finally leads to their improvement and development that are essential in aiding learners to adapt to new situations which contribute towards life-long learning in today’s fast-changing world (Schon, 1983; Asiah & Siti Zaidah, 2017; McGuire, Lay & Peters, 2009). Schon also pointed out that the notion of filling up students with knowledge before sending them out to the industry was incongruous. This is especially apt with the current principle of Education 4.0 which focuses on the enrichment of life skills that are essential in preparing learners for future jobs (Ernst & Young LLP, 2017).

Reflective writing, also a vital part of the Expressivism theory is a process of writing which encourages one to analyse the stages of an incident, occurrence, experience or activity promoting self-discovery, self-expression and self-experience coupled with the use of language (Gibbs, 1988; Berlin, 1988). An Expressivist approach emphasises the construction of meaning and fluency in writing rather than the structural rules and accuracy. Learners are believed to learn the semiotic aspects of a language in expressing their emotions which are categorised under the meaning-making activities (Berlin, 1988; Bilton & Sivasubramaniam, 2009).

In advocating expressive writing in the EFL/ESL writing courses, Bilton and Sivasubramaniam (2009) found that learners adopted a constructivist stance, employed a sense of engagement, enjoyment and involvement, showed more confidence, motivation and fluency, nurtured the habit of critical reading and love for writing as well as showed positive growth as a mature writer. Murray and Hourigan (2008) also indicated that the Expressivist approach emphasised the authentic voice of the author, creativity, reflection, vanity-publishing factor and the collaboration between students and teacher in a study of incorporating blog writing with the Expressivist approach.

Similarly, Fernsten and Reda (2011) indicated that reflection writing can be an effective practice to build students’ confidence to see themselves as writers. They also stated that critical reflection is an

essential approach in bridging the gap between students who write well and students who do not. In order to help build a positive self-image of students as writers, a series of reflective exercises were structured for the participants of their research. The main objective of the activity was to make participants think through issues critically and alter their perspectives on writing. It was later discovered that participants were given space to explore their writing anxiety and invoke their self-awareness through reflection writing which eventually led them to write more effectively.

Blood (2000) who conducted a study on weblogs also mentioned the importance of reflection. According to him, we are currently overwhelmed with data from the internet and unless we stop to make time and space to reflect on our actions, we are only left with reactions. Thus, the reflective task was assigned to participants in the context of this study in order to give the required space for learners to consider their various learning strategies.

Fernsten and Reda (2011) pointed out that the reflection writing is an important self-esteem and self-assurance exercise. It was also highlighted that students began to collect data on their learning experience and analyse them in the journey of becoming a writer.

Reflective writing which focuses more on the process compared to product, allows learners to deal with complexity in learning by integrating their critical thinking skills, reflections, emotions and own thoughts in their writing in order to discover the learning process and be in charge of their own growth in learning. These skills are vital in producing future human resource on par with the requirements of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. As stated in The News Straits Times, graduates must acquire deeper self-learning skills and have the cognitive flexibility to deal with complexity and remain relevant in the epoch of rapid changes (Md Abdul Haseeb, 2018).

The Present Study

This study sought to investigate the effectiveness of Reflective Writing carried out using Edmodo which promotes Connectivism through asynchronous learning, apt for the 21st century learning. Two research questions formulated for the purpose of the study are:

- 1) How is the reflective writing process helpful in using English to carry out expressive writing?
- 2) What are the critical thinking processes involved in reflection writing?

The research questions were structured to examine the pedagogy in Reflective Writing approach and examine how far the process of constructing one's own learning took place in this activity via Edmodo which supports the theory of Reflective Writing through Connectivism.

In this EAP class, reflection materials were uploaded or posted on Edmodo by the researcher which could be retrieved by the learners at any time in order to reflect and write. The researcher introduced a variety of materials which could be obtained easily online in order to spark students' interest on the English reflection materials and bring out the creativity and critical thinking skills in them in order to promote autonomy and engagement in learning which leads to learning retention.

Figure 1 and 2 below are some examples of the reflection materials posted by the researcher.



Figure 1. Screenshot of the reflection material from Instagram, posted on Edmodo

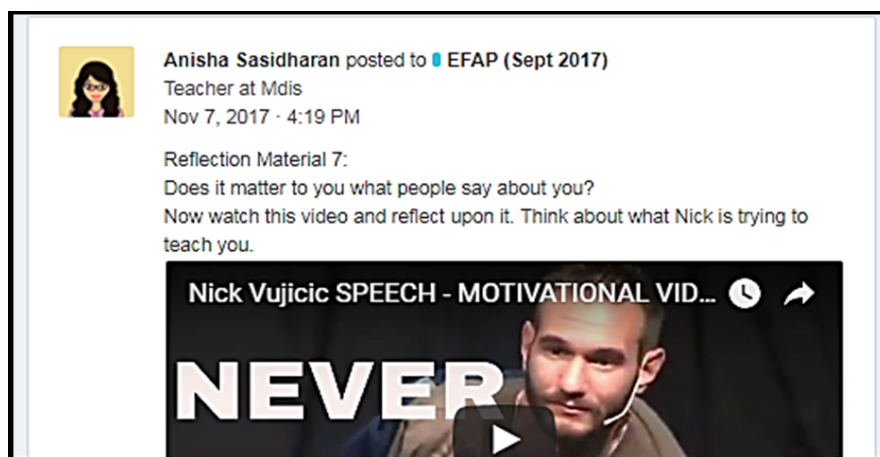


Figure 2. Screenshot of the reflection material from YouTube, posted on Edmodo

Introducing different materials in English for learners was done to explore learners' authenticity in the form of expressive writing as well as assess their critical thinking skills. Learning through reflecting the materials uploaded on Edmodo largely emphasised the concept of learning outside the classroom walls through Connectivism. This is believed to be an essential part of learning chosen by the researcher to further support the student-centered learning; providing the learners with the much needed freedom to construct their own learning and allowing the tertiary level learners to grow into autonomous learners (Noor Zainab, Fauziah, Azian & Babikkoi, 2012; Thamarana & Narayana, 2016). This concept was also championed by Oxford (1990) who indicated that meaningful learning occurs when learners are encouraged to take more responsibility as a part of language learning strategies that a teacher ought to know.

Methodology

This study used the qualitative method to investigate the strength of reflective writing in producing meaningful learning amongst students of EAP. Reflective writing in light of expressive writing were examined. As mentioned, students will retrieve their reflection writing material uploaded on Edmodo based on the asynchronous learning ground, reflect upon the various materials and write their

reflections. Students were also exposed to a set of guidelines on how they could approach reflective writing during their classroom lecture session.

The qualitative method used comprised of focus group discussions and semi-structured, face to face interviews. The participants of the study consisted of 15 EAP students of a private college in Johor Bahru, aged between 17- 20 .The participants were randomly picked from two different cohorts based on their availability to attend the focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. These participants who have written ten reflections throughout their semester participated in the focus group discussions were separated into three groups of five participants each and semi-structured interviews which were carried out one to one.

Interview Questions

The open-ended semi-structured interview questions were aimed at eliciting students' experience and their mental process through the reflection writing activities assigned to them.

Questions asked were such:

- 1) How did you find writing the reflections posted for the class? Was it difficult or easy? Why was it difficult or easy?
- 2) Was there any reflection which you enjoyed writing? If yes, which one and why?
- 3) Was there any reflection which you did not enjoy writing? If yes, which one and why?
- 4) Did these writings improve your English language? How?
- 5) What were the (mental) processes that you had to go through in reflecting each material posted?
- 6) Did the practice of writing reflections change your view on your learning or studying process? If yes, please explain how. If not, please explain why (Shih, 2011).

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed in this study. It specifically used the deductive analysis which was data-driven. The discussion and interview responses were analysed according to the themes revealed using emergent coding and reported in the form of students' original responses; their grammar mistakes and fillers were also not rectified to maintain the authenticity of their responses.

Results and Discussion

The following themes emerged from the analyses; engagement and active participation, language development, reflective writing, critical thinking and mobile learning. Direct quotes from the participants were presented to support the identification of emergent themes. Responses which denote similar meaning were not repeatedly presented.

Engagement and Active Participation

Learners' active participations were seen as most of them could indicate the reflection materials which they liked and enjoyed. As for the materials which the participants liked, there was a sense of engagement, enjoyment and involvement which sees their development as a mature writer as indicated by Bilton and Sivasubramaniam (2009) in expressive writing.

“The reflection that I enjoyed the most was the video from TED Talk where the little girl was giving her speech. The reason I enjoyed it so much was because it really inspired me to think and I still remember one of the points was the learning between adult and children should be reciprocal.” Participant A

“The second video...the speech by Michelle Obama where she says never view your challenges as disadvantage. I very agree that. I feel a light passed in my brain because this is talking about life experience...and I think this is an interesting topic...and I very agree that. We must take the challenge as an advantage.” Participant D

The positive responses were collected for the two Youtube videos which links were shared on Edmodo for reflection purposes. The Youtube site was chosen as a reflection material to suit the Connectivism learning theory which takes the digital era of learning into great consideration.

Active participation in learning also happens when learners become more responsible towards their own learning by being in charge of their own learning and displaying the ability to construct their own learning which ultimately leads them to become autonomous learners. Problem solving skills were also apparent as students use the Google browser to look for examples, samples and words that they do not understand. Some of them also use Google to research more about their materials. This in turn, promotes meaningful learning which positively influences learning retention in learners (Noor Zainab, Fauziah, Azian & Babikoi, 2012; Oxford, 1990; Thamarana & Narayana, 2016). An example of engagement and active participation from a fluent participant is as such:

“When I explored the material, I tend to discover my strengths and weaknesses along the way. For example, my strengths are my thoughts. I can like explore my critical thinking, analysing and so on...but my weakness was putting my thoughts into words. So, as I go on, one by one, I tend to overcome my weakness as the process goes on.” Participant G

On the other hand, the response below came from a participant whose language proficiency was not high yet demonstrated active learning when she was asked about the mental processes involved in reflection writing.

“...because my grammar and language not very good... after that, I find about some articles about the reflection, think about the people say...say what... I take some samples and I write it loh...” Participant E

The researcher then further probed Participant E to explain how she looked up for more information and the participant responded: *“Yes, have find. I go to Google and find.”* Other responses which evidently showed engagement and active participation in learning were:

“I plan... I collect the resources, I search from Google what I don't understand and then plan my writing....” Participant H

“I did some research on Youtube when I watched the Michelle Obama's speech and searched for the words I don't know.” Participant L

The response from Participant L implied that students actively looked up the words that they did not understand while writing out the reflections. This indicated that the learners were not only constructing their own learning and trying to improve their language but also engaged in meaning-making activities through reflection writing as suggested by Berlin (1988) as well as Bilton and Sivasubramaniam (2009).

Language Development

Usage of English is perceived as important as it acts as a medium in expressive writing through reflection writing. Learners tend to cogitate, explore and discover themselves through expressing their thoughts, feelings, and opinions using a language. This reflective writing also assisted the participants in critical reading and language learning as mentioned by some of them.

“I managed to learn many new things and gained new knowledge. Actually this reflection writing is good...it helped me to improve my writing and speaking skills” Participant M

“I think that my writing skills have improved through the reflections as it helped me to learn how to structure my thoughts before I start writing” Participant B

“I think the reflections helped me to improve my English language as I started reading more to do the reflections and the materials that I read...the quality of English is better...like the grammar, sentence structure and these kinds of things” Participant J

Although the Expressivist approach in reflective writing emphasises more the construction of meaning and fluency in writing compared to the structural rules and accuracy, these expectations were not fully met as some of the participants had a poor level of English language proficiency. Hence, it was

discovered through this study that poor language proficiency does inhibit learner's self-expression and the expansion of their semantics.

"I think the video on the argumentative essay ... (portrayed in the form of a) burger is difficult... because I understand what they talk but is difficult for me to explain well in my own words."

Participant O

"... (some reflections were) difficult to do because too many thing want to explain and (it was difficult for me to) structure the words." Participant F

"Yes, so I know how to write reflection (after looking through the lecture notes provided on reflection writing guidelines) but it also difficult to me lah because my grammars were not good so it were difficult about me for make the sentence." Participant E

Reflective Writing

A few participants indicated that the variety of reflection materials posted allowed them to express themselves. Some could relate the materials to their own experiences whereas some even enjoyed the expressive writing process. The sense of engagement, enjoyment, confidence, motivation and love for writing (Bilton & Sivasubramaniam, 2009) were evident from these participants:

"I could write what I felt and it was a stress reliever." Participant A

"I get to really express myself as I try to be truthful in my thoughts because I think that that's the point in reflection" Participant K

*"I know how to relate how I feel about certain matters or subjects (now) as this was something that I did have a problem with... like emotions like happy, sad, irritated...I feel that I can communicate better in those terms (now) ..."*Participant N

*"I did get a chance to express myself through the reflection (writings). I did put adequate amount of thoughts, opinions and suggestions...in fact I was encouraged to do that..."*Participant C

The responses elicited from the participants went on to show the underlying principles of the Expressionistic approach; writing is an art everyone is capable of and it allows one to discover oneself through authentic expressions which is considered as important as the writing product itself (Berlin, 1988).

Critical Thinking

One participant expressed her thoughts critically when she could analyse why she did not like certain reflection materials posted.

*"I would say the last two...but actually not because they were difficult but it was because I procrastinated...I had shortage of time and some other classes to attend...so yea..."*Participant G

The researcher further prompted the response of this participant by asking if the participant would have enjoyed the reflection writing if the participant had allocated more time for the reflection writing.

"Yes, I would have enjoyed them (writing the reflections) because they were interesting...especially the one on the quotes on the BBC site on Instagram website...we can learn in a fun way. As a student, I enjoyed reading and exploring things...it was fun. But since I was lack of time and concentration, it was difficult for me to extract and put in more words to make my reflection more interesting." Participant G

The responses presented showed that reflection writing allowed participants to reflect overall on practising taking a critical stance, analysing challenges, understanding lessons learnt and constantly evaluating and reviewing one's practice for improvement (Moon, 1999; Schon, 1983). It also showed that the participant understood her weakness in time management in order to carry out the reflection writing tasks which indirectly allowed her to reflect upon her own ability in the process of becoming an autonomous learner.

Participants also pointed out that this habit of reflection writing has changed the way they learn as they mentioned,

“I would say that in some ways, this reflection writing has changed my way in studying or learning for instance, there are a lot more subjects which I would write down whatever that comes to mind to just get my thoughts out there and I would organise them accordingly after that.” Participant B

“...it has given me an entirely new approach to studying...” Participant K

The responses provided are evident that the reflective practice is a mental process which allows critical and analytical thinking and unlocks new possibilities to the way one learns, allowing longer learning retention and bringing them towards life-long learning experience (Asiah & Siti Zaidah, 2017).

Creativity

Creativity cannot be separated from the Reflective Writing process. Creativity arises from the need to be critical. It is evident from the responses below that participants had to put their critical thinking skills into practice while they tried to be creative in order to make their reflections interesting.

“If (using) the quote (as a title) of every entry in the reflection is considered creativity, then yes, I was creative because I really enjoyed thinking and searching for the right quotes to be used as the entry (title) of my reflections as it depicts my feelings and thoughts.” Participant J

“I did put in a few jokes I thought would be relevant, contextually...” Participant I

“I also had to think out of the box to make my (reflection) writing interesting.” Participant C

Mobile Learning

The Connectivism learning theory allows learning to happen easily without restrictions on venue and time (Siemens, 2005; Trust, 2012; Holotescu & Grosseck, 2011; Lehner & Nosekabel, 2002). This is also the case with the virtual learning platform, Edmodo, which allows mobile learning. Most participants' responses clearly indicated the flexibility and relevance in their learning process. Here are two examples:

“I think Edmodo is a good platform, in the sense that the students can contact their lecturers, anywhere and are able to get the notes (any required materials) and it saves time.” Participant M

“I think it was easy and exciting to use Edmodo compared to giving the reflection writing (materials) by hand, email or other social media.” Participant I

Asynchronous learning through Edmodo is relevant in today's digital world as supported through the responses of Participants M and I. In the current world where knowledge will be obsolete, learners must be prepared to be able to navigate for information (Siemens, 2005). Thus, it is vital that learners are able to use effectively online learning platforms which are mobile as a part of their 21st century learning requirement.

Conclusion and Limitation

The present study presents the strengths of reflection writing as a practice in the Malaysian EAP classroom to promote critical thinking, creativity, engagement, active participation and autonomy in constructing one's own active learning as sought in Education 4.0 (Yoke, 2018; Md Abdul Haseeb, 2018; Muresan, 2014). The usage of Edmodo also denotes that the reflection writing activity can be done using an online platform and accessed via mobile devices. However, the findings of this study are limited by the small sample of participants and the short duration of 14 weeks allocated for understanding reflection writing and embarking on it. Learners probably would have undergone extensive meaning-making and construction of own learning with more valuable insights if they were given more time to write the reflections critically. Additionally, the aspect of feedback is not emphasised in this study. Constructive feedback from peers as well as the lecturer should be further

explored in future research. Finally, future research should also emphasise the collaboration aspect of the Connectivism learning as it is also a vital skill in the Education 4.0 (Ernst & Young LLP, 2017).

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