

**SUPPORTING STUDENTS IMPROVE THEIR ACADEMIC WRITING
THROUGH ONLINE COLLABORATION**

Mohammad Rejaul Karim

ID:13177004

MA TESOL Programme

BRAC Institute of Languages (BIL), BRAC University

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of TESOL

Date of Final Submission: April 30,2015

Keywords

Academic Writing

Asynchronous

Collaboration

Residential Semester

Scaffold

Self-selected goals

Self-determination

Synchronous

Technological divide

Topic Sentence

Virtual learning environment

Zone of Proximal Development

Abstract

This study examines how students can be supported online with their writing while they are outside classroom. Coming from different backgrounds and media of study, many of the undergraduate students of BRAC University face difficulties while writing in English which results in poor grades at the end of the semester. In this research, 25 undergraduate students from six different departments were selected based on a diagnostic test taken in the beginning of the semester. They all were added on three online groups (Wiki, blog and FB) where they have practiced, in addition to the class works, more on basics of academic writing so that they get additional support to bridge up the existing learning gap with their other classmates. Results have shown that students using the online groups have gotten advantages out of the activities. They also have mentioned that they were benefitted by the comments by their peers, though, according to them, a teacher must be monitoring the whole system to optimize the outcome and increase students' participation. This type of research can be replicated in many other institutions provided they have all required facilities in place. Through this study, English language teaching and learning takes a new form and hundreds of students learn English language with supports from their teacher and peers online.

Table of Content	Page
Keywords	i
Abstract	iii
Table of Contents	iv-v
List of Figures	vi
List of Tables	vii
List of Abbreviations	viii
Statement of Original Authorship	ix
Acknowledgements	x
Declaration	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Background	1
Context	1
Purposes	3
Significance, Scope, and Definitions	4
Thesis Outline	5
Chapter 2: Literature Review	7
Chapter 3: Research Design	15
Methodology and Research Design	15
	iv

Participants	17
Instruments	18
Procedure and Timeline	18
Ethics and Limitations	19
Chapter 4: Results	20
Chapter 5: Analysis	28
Chapter 6: Conclusion	33
Questionnaire	33
FGD Questions	39
Bibliography	40

List of Figures

Figure 1: Research on e-Learning and ICT in Education

Figure 2: Teacher intervention to run group activity

Figure 3: Participants' feedback

Figure 4: Students' impression on the tasks on groups

Figure 5: Groups visited by participants

List of Tables

Table 1: Frequency of visits and time spent

Table 2: Activity ranking by respondents

Table 3: Impacts in real life writing

Table 4: Evaluation of teacher's role

Table 5: Role of peers

Table 6: Suitability of online tools for BRACU students

List of Abbreviations

Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL)

VLE: Virtual learning environment

RS: Residential Semester

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

TS: Topic Sentence

Ac. Wr: Academic Writing

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication

Instructional Design (ID)

Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this dissertation has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

First of all I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Sayeedur Rahman for his support and hands on teaching on Research Methodology since that really has afforded me the with the ability to write this research paper. He kindly has read my research proposal, checked the tools and finally given necessary supports as and when required to carry out the study. As a caring supervisor has gone through the paper from the beginning to the end minutely and offered invaluable and detailed feedback on all aspects including grammar slips, organization and so on.

To mention the support I received, this painstaking task of writing the thesis would not have been possible should everyone at BIL, my beloved department, its esteemed Director, and other colleagues had not supported me in the best possible way.

Last but not the least, I really want to acknowledge the sacrifice and dedication my family has made for me to make this happen.

Finally, I would also like to thank each and everybody who reads my Dissertation and request them to leave valuable comments and feedback on it.

Declaration

I declare that the Dissertation titled SUPPORTING STUDENTS IMPROVE THEIR ACADEMIC WRITING THROUGH ONLINE COLLABORATION is submitted to the BRAC Institute of Languages (BIL), BRAC University in partial fulfillment of the degree MA in TESOL.

This paper is the result of my personal investigation; it has not been presented and submitted wholly or in part for any other degree.

Name of the candidate: Mohammad Rejaul Karim

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor

Coordinator, TESOL Programme

Approved by:

Director, BRAC Institute of Languages

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Nowadays, use of online tools in English Language Teaching has become an increasingly noticeable aspect in most of the areas of the world. Wiki along with some other online tools like Word press blog, Facebook group etc are some of the most mentionable tools widely used in language teaching and learning. Bangladesh, like many other countries has also started progressing towards use those tools since use of internet has become cheap and easily accessible for people which they can use for communication purpose. As for the educational institutions of Bangladesh, use of internet is growing noticeable by the initiative of the government and some other donor funded nationwide projects. Regarding the use of internet in the process of learning and teaching, many private universities, unlike most of the public universities, has progressed significantly to facilitate both learning and teaching. It is also mentionable that most of the undergraduate students of BRAC University, unlike many other private and public universities in Bangladesh, are very exposed to internet technology with all the updated online tools. As a result, teaching of English language through the support of online tools has become the pressing need of the time to make the learning more effective and interesting. Talking about the background of the undergraduate students of BRAC University, most of them are from financially well off sections of society except a few rural and less affluent students coming from different rural or distant parts of the country. Regarding student mix, it is generally found that about forty percent students of BRAC University are from English medium institutions who has passed their GCE A Levels under British Curriculum and the rest sixty percent or so students come from Bangla medium and Madrasha background.

1.2 Context

As mentioned above, the students' mix of BRAC University is of different media and for that reason there are a number of problems teachers of English language courses face while teaching the students from different departments studying the same English language course. Though there are students from both English and Bangla medium institutions, along with many other

problems regarding speaking, there are some common problems students facing while writing their ideas in English. Irrespective of backgrounds, students are found facing problems while writing a Topic Sentence (TS) with a controlling idea, writing a thesis statement in the introduction of an essay, maintaining coherence and unity and so on. On the other hand, the total time students get in an entire semester, if compared with the number of the language items in the syllabus, really seems to be very short. So, students who are really serious from the beginning about their study can cope up with the time and finish it successfully. Calculating time each student get from a teacher roughly, it is found that each student get from a teacher, if one to one time is calculated, is less than two hours in the whole semester. That means, each student has a chance to get the help of a teacher for two hours from the beginning to the end of a typical semester. For this reason, it is evident that most of the students are going to fail to understand many of the important aspects of Academic Writing (A.Wr.) which will be required by the students to write their thesis in their final stage of graduation. Therefore, the use of online tools becomes very important for these students by which they get extended help from the teacher and their friends while working on all the assignments at their own pace while they all are outside the class. So, the use of online tools comes in here and students not only use it to overcome their difficulties but also reinforce their learning by giving and receiving feedback to other people on the group. From teacher's perspective, out of moral obligation, I thought that my students should get the advantages of using all available and familiar online tools to make their learning sustainable.

Now, moving to English language skills, writing skill, among all the four skills, is the most important one as it is the only skill that determines a student's grade or results after the final sit-in examination. Regarding the undergraduate students' requirements in today's situation, academic writing is a must because all the students, at certain stage of their university life, need to write thesis or dissertation. Now, to make the job simple and easier, I have planned to use the web 2.0 tools like PB Works Wiki, Wordpress Blog and a Facebook Group so that students can access to the group from anywhere outside the classroom and play their respective role to improve their academic writing within the stipulated time.

1.3 Purpose

According to National ICT Policy (2009), use of ICT in every sphere especially ‘effective communication and ‘delivery of education’ can play a vital role in raising the economic profile of the country. Keeping that in mind, the purpose of this study was to explore the importance of the above mentioned web 2.0 tools like wiki, blog and face book group and how effectively they can be used in promoting students’ academic writing in English. To be specific, this study is aimed at bridging the learning gap between the slow and quick, more serious and less serious learners. Secondly, this study also focuses on collaborative learning where students read each other’s writing and make valuable feedback and thus get mutually benefitted. Therefore, this practice not only consolidates the learning but also helps them to be grown up as an interdependent individual which is very important to flourish the leadership traits among them from these early days of life.

PB Works Wiki has been used as the main tool primarily to help the group of students who really struggle expressing their ideas while writing. Often it is difficult sometimes to allocate time for each and every student because of tight class schedule of both teacher and students, therefore, this attempt has been taken to see how much the help can be extended through online collaboration. Through the activities done during this study, the participating students have been encouraged to reflect together on their peers’ and own learning. This process helped them build a learning community outside the classroom which was very important since they could carry out the same practice when the classroom learning was over. Participants have worked there on the group on asynchronous environment and that gave them the opportunity to improve their writing fluency by dint of the mutual help and collaboration using the facilities of the online groups. This opportunity of working in group has inculcated in them the sense of self responsibility about their own task. In addition, students have become, by now, better problem solver by frequently commenting on issues and getting feedback from their peers over the time of the study. Being read by the other friends on the group, the writers on the group has got a feeling of community with those who regularly have read and given feedback and this community goes outside the classroom in real life situations.

Through this practice of collaboration, the students not only get over their own drawbacks in terms of dealing their academic writing but also become better users of English language which

helps BRAC University meet its goal to be an English medium University someday in the coming years.

The reason I have decided to use ‘Wiki’ as a tool to extend support towards my students is because of some unique features of this Web 2.0 tool. It is very much controlled and the record of progress can be measured very easily because of its history aspect. Some of its remarkable aspects are like its unique, collaborative approach, having open editing system, simple coding system and finally its revoltingness. In this study, I have used the free version of PB Works Wiki which has allowed me up to 2 gigabyte of space, more than enough to carry out any study in my context. Besides, I have also used WordPress.com as blog along with a Facebook group. All the participating students of my research were included on all the three platforms and the activities carried out were also posted in all the three platforms. The reason to do this was that students get access to the activity from any of the platforms. To be precise, if any students fail to get an access to the Wiki, she can try to get access to Facebook or the blog. Keeping the frequent up and down of Internet Bandwidth in mind, I have decided to post all the activities on all the three platforms.

1.4 Significance

To help students expand their capacity building in terms of the usage of English language, this study has helped them significantly. So, this attempt of using aforementioned online tools not only has helped this group of students improve their proficiency in English but also will help hundreds more in the coming years and thus will leave tangible results in the process of teaching and learning of English language. This study can also be replicated in other institutions of the country since the use of internet has become really far reaching across the country because of its cheap price and easy availability.

According to National ICT Policy (2009), Bangladesh Government aims at expanding and diversifying the use of ICT and for that has established computer labs with internet connections in hundreds of schools, colleges and technical institutes across the country. Taking all these infrastructural facilities into account, millions of learners of English language of all ages could be benefitted if initiative of this type is undertaken at a large scale.

This type of government initiative, if taken, will help many students mostly from the rural areas

of Bangladesh. As a result, they come within the network and avail the sea of information and thus empower themselves significantly. To make this achievement sustainable and more effective, there can be a pilot phase administered in a smaller scale especially in the rural areas and results can be analyzed which I think would be very positive and significant

Since the government of Bangladesh has taken initiatives to turn the country into digital one by establishing hundreds of computer labs for schools, colleges, technical colleges and other vocational intuitions (NICTP, 2009), more and more number of students especially in the rural areas of Bangladesh get within the network and more people get sea of information and thus get more empowered. Because of this affordability and widespread accessibility of ICT tools, this study can even be taken outside the urban areas and even in lower level of institutions like high schools and colleges to bring changes in the existing systems of delivery of education.

To explore the potentials of using online tools (Wiki, blog and Facebook group) the following questions were asked:

1. In what ways will the students be benefitted in their academic writing using online tools?
Specific questions:
2. Are students enthusiast or reluctant to take part? Why?
3. How peer feedback can contribute to develop students' academic writing?

1.4 Thesis Outline

While reading this paper, chapter one provides a brief outlines about the research, its contexts and the purpose of carrying out this research, its significance, scope, and specific research problem and research questions. It also outlines the significance, scope of the research, specific research problem and research questions.

Chapter two is all about literature Review. Here will be a body of relevant materials from relevant body of literature so that it can be shown that how significant the study is in our own context.

Chapter three deals with the methodology carried out to administer the research and its types. This chapter also sheds light on selection of study areas, collection of data and how they have been analyzed with all the possible limitations included with it. Then comes Chapter Four which precisely reveals the results found from the survey and the FGD that were carried out during the time of the study. Finally Chapter Five that reports on the results of the study. It explains in detail both the prospects and challenges I have encountered while studying the data.

Undergraduate students of BRAC University are very familiar with all the updated tools and gadgets that information technologies offer. Irrespective of departments, all the students of BRACU are connected with teacher, other students via online. They mostly use Facebook, and university website for most updated information. Keeping that reality in mind, I planned to apply web 2.0 tools like Wiki and Word press blog in addition to a face book group. As far as writing is concerned, there is a list of aspects of Wiki that need to be explored. Since, the average class time each students get is very short and the weaker students find it very difficult to cope up with the other students in terms of English language proficiency, I planned to use the potentiality of using the aforementioned tools-PB Works Wiki, Wordpress Blog and Facebook as a platform to extend they helping hand via these online platforms. In this connection, as mentioned earlier, the heavy exposure towards ICT of all BRACU students is the biggest strength that persuaded me to explore this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Web 2.0 tools like Wiki, blogs etc are used as platforms for collaborative writing. Wiki is a tool through which anyone can edit or comment on uploaded text: so they are useful for interactive editing and discussion of student-generated texts. They are increasingly used as a basis for class websites. Blogs are used as a way for students to comment on texts or respond to tasks: they often develop into full discussions, with ‘comments’ going back and forth (Ur, 2012).

Now, moving to collaborative writing collaborative writing is such a process where all the learners get involved in the process writing which includes group planning, co-creating written work, peer reviewing, and co-edition etc which can be done in a synchronous or asynchronous time (Chuan, Chao and Lo, 2011). According to Vygotsky’s Sociocultural theory (1978), it can be either among students or between students and teacher. It can be used for assisting each student in advancing through his or her own Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). During this study, we have tried to help students help themselves with very careful and prudent intervention. We studied the students’ personal profile earlier so we have had enough idea about their preferences. This has helped us to select types of activities which would draw their attention and interest more. According to Oxford, R. L. (1997), making a collaborative task especially on group is challenging and if the teachers can make it more involving only “by knowing students’ attitudes then they start to inspire them” to be more involved, thus making student learning more effective.

Collaborative writing has been a widespread idea in many countries of the world and most importantly this idea started getting momentum for last one decade. But countries like Bangladesh has not yet progressed much onto that path since infrastructural facilities are very rare here in this country. But taking both the rural and urban scenario combined, it has been noticed that the country has been experiencing a digital divide since the rural areas have been completely out of internet facilities.

This study has been done through Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). Making a collaborative task especially on group is challenging and if the teacher can make it more

involving only “by knowing students’ attitudes can teachers start to inspire them” Oxford, R. L. (1997) to be more involved, thus making student learning more effective. So, there must be openness and user-driven contents so that students can carry out communication and social interaction very easily and comfortably. If this can be ensured, the platform becomes very vibrant and remains with lot of information for other users of the group who can use them for expressing their own thoughts and ideas.



Figure 1: [Figure adopted from Research on E-Learning and ICT in Education P. 236]

Jimoyiannis,A.(2012).Research on e-Learning and ICT in Education. New York: Springer

One big challenge of integrating online tools in student feedback is to help students use the language when they are outside the classroom. This will not only extend the opportunity to get exposed to the language but also help me find the gap between ‘intention and practices’ (Burns,2009. p.221) so that the potential obstacles can be found and then addressed. With that in mind, one of the frequently seen problems with students individual differences and their learning styles which must be taken into account by the teachers. It even becomes more important for

language teachers while teaching students face to face inside the class. So it becomes more challenging for teachers if they plan to run activities online and try to give feedback via online forums especially using web 2.0 tools..Janette Kohn who is a Queensland adult ESL teacher from Yeronga Institute of TAFE has mentioned (as cited in Burns, 2009. P. 221) that language learners are different from each other in terms of acquiring the language, the speed they acquire it, and finally it is really relative that how far they actually develop in terms of their overall learning of a particular language. In her research she found that collaborative practice can bring a significant change in the learning process of the learners within three weeks into a ten week course, she found the learners more confident in using English correctly.

To get the desired results, it is really very much important to select appropriate materials and task types which will help learners further their skills by doing them at their own comfort especially while they stay outside the class. In case of Janette Kohn contents were selected based on learners' needs where she took some based on students' suggestions. In addition examples of tasks were taken from issues about special local or national interests. As for the activities Janette mentions: "These were based on learners' needs..... In order for the learners to be prepared for the tasks, each task and its purposes were explained and specific language features, vocabulary, and possible scenarios were discussed and the learners were given a task format. (Kohn page 99 as cited in Burns,2009).Regarding the involvement of the learners in selecting materials and types of activities, it might prove both right and wrong decision. If it is the case with adult learners with adequate practical and relevant work experience, their ideas may really help teachers to bring in activities for the group of learners. On the other hand, if the learners are young and without prior experience, the teacher has to play vital role in designing the course and activities so that all the learners choices and likings are catered in the most possible way. In this research, I have have chosen problems regarding academic writing skills by dint of some scaffolding from peers. However, we have selected twenty students of whom fifteen were really in need of help in terms of writing in English and the rest of them were with more writing ability who were there mostly to participate and to give feedback to promote learning on the group. is such a process where all the learners get involved in the process writing which includes group planning, co-creating written work, peer reviewing, and co-edition etc which can be done in a synchronous or asynchronous time (Chuan, Chao and Lo,2011).

In the present study, the notion of the illusion of control is extended to Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) settings, where specific design considerations must be made to produce it. Research in such settings focuses on structuring collaboration, since productive collaboration does not occur when the learners are left to their own devices (Salomon and Globerson 1989). Examples of operationalizing this approach include structuring the problem itself, process scaffolds (i.e., provision of support so as to reduce task management activities in order to allow the learner to focus on tasks related to learning) and scripts (i.e., scenarios that shape the way learners interact with each other), provision of tools, expert help, and adaptive feedback (Stahl 2007; Hadjileontiadou et al. 2010). It is evident that within a CSCL complex social system that incorporates “things”, “people”, and “outcomes” (Gabriele 2010), ID becomes quite complicated. As far as the designing of the support of the collaboration is concerned, it is easily realized that the “things” (e.g., shared workspaces, timetables, information) are designable subsystems, whereas the “people” are not. However, the illusion of control resides at the “people” subsystem and this makes clear the need to identify the “things” to be designed in order to produce and sustain the illusion. (p.142)

To make the learning happen, it is very important that the Instruction is very clearly given so that all the participants get them without any difficulties. Reigeluth (as cited in Jimoyhiannis, 2012. P. 141) has mentioned that instruction is “anything that is done to help someone learn” and it targets the improvement of the quality of the help the teacher extends towards the learners. Therefore Instructional Design (ID) is one aspect to ponder and since it really, according to the recent trends, is helpful in influence learners positively. In recent years the instruction has started changing from ‘system controlled’ to the ‘learner controlled’ one so that there is a role of ‘self-determination’ and ‘self selected goal’ by the learners (Ryan and Deci as cited in Jimoyhiannis, 2012. p. 141).

Regarding effectiveness on online activities, the group has gone in a satisfactory manner since a good number of the participants have taken an active part in the process of doing activities. Our timely success is to give effective feedback which “has more impact than any other factor” (Hattie, 2009). Throughout this study we expected that the participants would give feedback to each other though our role would be very careful and as less as possible. Regarding feedback Hattie (2012) mentioned that teachers should be ‘excellent seekers and users of feedback

information [...] skilled at monitoring the current status of learner understanding'. Though it was intended that the participants would mostly be working on their own and get most of the feedback from their peers, we also intervened and gave feedback in different modes and forms.

A number of researches have been carried out on wiki in the last ten years in Asia, Europe and America where the role of Web 2.0 is emphasized in teaching and learning languages. In the study by Woo, Chu, Ho & Li, 2011, it was found that there were lots of positive outcomes of the use of Wiki which was applied with class five students of a Chinese school. The study also revealed that it nurtured creative thinking skills for generating more original and creative content ideas in their writing.

Hadjerrouit (2012) has given eight types of activities in his project where he found a number of problems which were mentionable. Through the activities he applied were helpful for the students since they take part in the collaborative process of writing. The activities used were:

Add content to existing pages, modify and rephrase content, delete existing content, add link to existing content, delete existing link, fix and correct existing link, format pages or section of pages, and finally grammar, style, and spelling. He found that only one group did very good performance in terms of equal participation of all the members. Another mentionable problem from his study was that most of the students preferred to add information rather than editing their peers write ups. Keeping this lesson in mind, I will devise some strategy so that each and every student takes part in the process of editing peers' writing. To make the job easier, I will attach rubrics for all the activities which might encourage students to take part in the editing process and giving feedback.

Another important aspect to make this initiative effective and successful is effective feedback which "has more impact than any other factor" (Hattie, 2009). On the group this study was carried out, we tried to give feedback throughout the semester and students also took part in the process by giving feedback and writing their own comments. This feedback is an important tool which a successful teacher uses it very skillfully. That means teachers should be 'excellent seekers and users of feedback information [...] skilled at monitoring the current status of learner understanding' (Hattie, 2012).

A study by Oxford, R. L. (1997) showed that there are several ways of providing input for students. He also added “Just as students can learn from their teachers, so they can from and with their peers in carefully designed activities”. Students can learn from the input given by their teachers, but they may also learn by “co-constructing knowledge with their friends” Oxford, R. L. (1997). Such a learning mode is a good example of collaborative learning in that two or more people gather to study something together. The author further explained that as part of 21st century skills, access to knowledge through discovery and co-construction rather than receiving it directly from a teacher is an essential skill in language classrooms since a student should not rely only on the teacher as a source of information to develop language skills.

Collaborative writing is such a process where all the learners get involved in the process writing which includes group planning, co-creating written work, peer reviewing, and co-edition etc which can be done in a synchronous or asynchronous time (Chuan, Chao and Lo (2011)). In this study, this is going to be done through Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). While using CMC, it is very important to maintain a balanced and very effective group formation. Thornbury and Watkins (2007) in their research has clearly mentioned that organization of class into groups is very important since students are in need of working outside the classroom on different collaborative projects, assignments and so on. In this study, I have used wiki where students have worked in groups and tried to help each others with ideas and writing those ideas.

One of the most mentionable examples of maintaining online and blended courses with huge effective collaborative platform is the University of Phoenix in the USA. It is the largest for profit university in the US and a pioneer in delivering courses ranging from Bachelor, Masters and Ph D courses. They have been delivering most of the contents of the syllabus mostly online with very little segment of syllabus on ground or face to face. It has been found that with an integrated and well organized way they have been accommodating thousands of students in their courses. Apart from the common approaches and practices towards education, online modality has really started emerging in the last decade where students’ satisfaction is also remarkably positive. Moskal (2006) (as cited in Shaw, Schmidt, p. 10-17) has found that 83 percent of the learners indicated that they are happy with their programme and the way it has been delivered. To run the courses smoothly, among many other important aspects, they maintain a good

‘pacing’ so that all the students can catch up with the ongoing discussions and finish their respective tasks online in time.

Over the last decade, the area of games-based learning has evolved to provide a stimulating and engaging learning experience for younger learners who have been brought up in a technologically rich environment. Such learners can be termed digital natives (Prensky 2001) or iLearners who have been heavily influenced by the latest highly interactive and individual technologies such as iPods, iPhones, iPads, Wii games consoles, as well as Wi-Fi Internet access and graphic-rich multiplayer Internet gaming. In contrast, many of today’s educators and teachers were largely brought up in a less technologically advanced world. Connolly et al. (2007) observed younger generation learners exhibited a cognitive preference to certain media, for example they liked portability and are more frustrated with technology that ties them to a specific location.

According to Connolly and Stansfield (2007) games-based learning can be defined as the use of a computer games-based approach to deliver, support and enhance teaching, learning, assessment and evaluation. Games-based learning has been applied to a variety of different fields such as medicine, science and mathematics, military training, language learning, computer science and business and knowledge management. Connolly et al. (2004) suggest that computer games are well suited to use within an educational environment because they build on theories of motivation, constructivism, situated learning, cognitive apprenticeship, problem based learning and learning by doing. In addition, it can be argued that the younger generation of “iLearners” prefer video, audio and interactive media and do not read as many traditional books as previous generations and due to shorter attention spans require learning in smaller size chunks. As result of the Internet, learners today learn much more collaboratively than in previous generations, thus there is an important need for educators to embrace and adopt approaches to teaching and learning that are better suited to the learning styles that the younger generation of learners now adopt and provide a more stimulating and engaging learning environment. It is as a result of this need that the next section will explore some examples of how games-based learning and interactive technologies have been used in education (p. 228).

A number of researches have been carried out on wiki in the last ten years in Asia, Europe and America where the role of Web 2.0 is emphasized in teaching and learning languages. In the study by Woo, Chu, Ho and Li (2011), it was found that there were lots of positive outcomes of the use of Wiki which was applied with class five students of a Chinese school. The study also revealed that it nurtured creative thinking skills for generating more original and creative content ideas in their writing. In our study it was found that many participants took it positively and they tried their best out of the project though they all were undergraduate students with lot of other academic and other ELA activities carried out at BRACU RS.

Hadjerrouit (2012) has given eight types of activities in his project where he found a number of problems which were mentionable. Through the activities he applied were helpful for the students since they take part in the collaborative process of writing. The activities used were:

Add content to existing pages, modify and rephrase content, delete existing content, add link to existing content, delete existing link, fix and correct existing link, format pages or section of pages, and finally grammar, style, and spelling. He found that only one group did very good performance in terms of equal participation of all the members. Another mentionable problem from his study was that most of the students preferred to add information rather than editing their peers write ups. Keeping this lesson in mind, we have given eight types of activities on the groups where there were similarities between some types of activities. In our study we have found that some of the activities were preferred more over others and peer feedback was also found only on limited activities.

Though a good number of research have already been carried out with different level of students, it is not found that any research is done especially on improving the academic writing of some weak and selected students. Furthermore, no research of this kind (especially on Wiki) was ever done in Bangladesh. That is why, I think this research is going to be important not for Bangladesh but for any country in the world.

Chapter 3: Research Design

3.1 Methodology

To administer the research, I used questionnaire and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to get the data. As for the questionnaire, there were questions both for qualitative and quantitative data so that I get data satisfying all our research questions. During the research, the participating students got ten weeks to work on the group on given tasks and the survey was done after that. All the students were added on all the three groups by me and given the Sing-In IDs and Pass Words for PB Works Wiki by me to make sure they do not find any difficulties to get into the site. As for the other two platforms- Facebook and WordPress blog, students could enter into them with their own email ids and passwords. After that I decided to carry out activities on the selected ten types of activities over the period of ten weeks so that students did not find that difficult to carry out. The purpose of the FGD was to find clear views on some answers participants had given in the questionnaire. It was administered in the form of informal discussion where all the participants felt free and could speak without any hesitation. To get the most of the ideas on each question, I allowed enough time so that everyone intending to speak could speak and with their permission I recorded the FGD from the beginning to the end.

3.2 Research (Design)

Keeping my research plan in the back of my mind, first of all I collected a writing sample from all the four sections I taught and started reading them with careful attention. Within the first week, I selected twenty five students from all the four sections who really needed help in writing. Then I sat with them one to one and let them know about their problems while writing and asked them if they would like to participate in an extended activity via online. All of the agreed in one word and then I started forming the groups, each consisting of five members. Each group was accompanied by a peer leader who had a fairly good idea in terms of writing correctly.

As for the leaders, they all were of more ability to write correctly in English. Based on their write ups, it was found that they did not have any major problems in the forms of their sentences and

organization of ideas. So, their role in the group was kind of supervisory and for that I sat with all the five of them and explained my plan in details to them. Only after their positive note, I finally decided to put them as a leader for one group.

So, starting from week two, my plan was to run the activities on the group for ten weeks so that I could finish my project in twelve week. That means, first and last -these two weeks were left out of calculation to make the group activity smooth and uninterrupted. To allow the students ample time to work on the group, I was prepared with all the exercises on all the selected contents and posted the activities weekly basis. To cover all the ten contents, ten weeks were taken and after every two weeks, I sat with all the participating students to have a general discussion where my focus was to see if things were running well and if not, then what are the problems evolved. To maintain such a fortnightly sitting, I fixed my consultation time so that all the students know what I sat during the consultation time. Being the first and most important part of the study, I remained very careful and vigilant so that there are no big problems of any type for the participants which might hamper their performance on the group. To be able to reach each and every student, I had collected the email ids and mobile numbers of all the participants so that they are accessible by me at any time. Oppositely, they all also had my email id and phone number to consult any difficulty they encounter.

One of the most important points of keeping the peer leaders on the group was to let them scaffold other members of the group with occasional support from me preferable in the first two halves of the project and then give them the total control in the last part of the project. For that reason, I remained present in the discussion frequently in the first three weeks and then from week four onward up to week seven I lessened my visit to the group. It was done purposefully to see if it went on well without my support and let them help themselves. Initially it was going on smoothly and no big problems occurred up to eight week but after eight week, it was found the the number of visit by the participants started decreasing on the group. Finally, from the very beginning of the tenth week, I again returned on the group and was able to increase the frequency of participants' visit on the group. Regarding my concern about visit of the online groups, it was found that if the participants visited them, they had done some tasks which were really

important. So, paying visit was very important as that turned out to be synonymous to working on the group.

Moving to the final part of the study, it was by the end of ninth week when I surveyed the students with the questionnaire in an informal session conducted outside the classroom. All the students were given instructions especially regarding the name. So, it was found that students did not write the names as per instruction. Regarding the type of data I collected through the survey, both qualitative and quantitative data was collected to find the possible impacts of the study. All the twenty five divided into five groups where one of them was with more ability of writing English. That person was specifically put on the group so that she could give feedback on the write ups of other four members of her group. Same process went on with the other three groups. Finally, I maintained an on overall supervision to scaffold the students from all the groups.

3.3 Participants

A total of twenty participants took part in the experiments that were from six different departments ranging from Business, to LLB to CSE to Architecture. They all were from same semester though their linguistic capacity was different. This group of participants was selected based on a diagnostic test taken in the first week of the semester and most of them needed help in terms of writing a Topic Sentence, Controlling Idea, and as a result a Paragraph, the smallest unit of Academic Writing. Five of twenty five participants were better users of English who were very enthusiastic and serious about their improvement. So they were there on the groups to work for themselves and to see if they could help other members of the group with necessary feedback. As an administrator of all the groups, I discussed the purpose of putting these five students in five different groups earlier so that they remain punctual and careful in doing their tasks properly. They all were also suggested to get back to me to report any problems they would encounter. Regarding their status on the Wiki, I give all of them the status of 'Editor' which allowed them to read and edit other's write ups on the group. This opportunity of editing other's write ups helped them to be more careful in giving feedback to others because they would not give any feedback until they are sure about any particular rule or forms of sentences, etc. Also, while forming the groups, I made sure there was diversity in the student mix in terms of academic disciplines, and media of education.

3.4 Instruments

To administer the study, a questionnaire with twenty questions and an FGD was used which later on was analyzed and matched for wide validity and acceptance of the study. In the questionnaire, seventeen out of twenty were qualitative questions which were done in the form of MCQ, Yes/No types questions, etc. Only three qualitative questions were put in the survey so that there is a combination and I get answers to all our required areas in the study. My instruments were designed keeping in mind four important areas that covered the findings of the Research Question(s). To get data on the use of online tools like wiki, blog, FB group etc item number one, two, three, and sixteen from the questionnaire were used. Regarding the role of peers and their support item number six, ten, and eighteen were used. Then again, to know the importance of the role of the teacher items number eleven and twelve and fifteen were used so that all the required data was found. To know about the Activities and their suitability items number four, nine were used where the participants came up with their ideas on all the activities carried out of the groups.

In addition, the rest three questions were expected of getting some ideas on the part of the participants for further improvement on over all process of the study.

Followed by the questionnaire was a Focus Group Discussion which was taken one week after the group survey was done. It was attended by nineteen participants out of twenty five where they spent about forty five minutes time to answer all the questions. The questionnaire consisted of open-ended and closed questions. Responses to open-ended questions were recorded on a five-point Likert scale to measure the perceptions of the students. Also, some information that remained unclear during the analysis time, were double checked during the FGD by some questions regarding those areas. After FGD was done, it was analyzed thematically and recorded in the analysis part.

3.5 Procedures and Timeline

The process of working on the activities started from the second week of Spring 14, 2014 and students were selected from BRAC University Residential Semester (RS). All the participating students were selected from four of my sections- sections 1,5,6 and 8 section 8 and they started working as soon as they were included into the groups. As I mentioned earlier, all the twenty

students who really needed help in overcoming their existing problems regarding writing in English were selected based on one writing strand taken in the first class of the first week.

we used for our survey. As for the collection of data, it was done at the end of ninth week since students left the campus after eleventh week. It is mentionable that last two weeks students remain busy preparing for their final examination and submission of assignments and so on. So, administering both survey and FGD during ninth week was the only good option this semester.

3.6 Ethics and Limitations

To the best of my knowledge, I tried to analyze data without any attempt of manipulation. I tried to remain objective as much as possible humanly. Also, I have not presented or published any part of this study as it is not yet defended formally. In addition, while selecting the peer leaders, I clearly explained their roles before they were put in the group. While taking the Focus Group Discussion, I took the permission of the participants to record what they told during the session.

Referring to the possible limitation, with all precautionary attempts taken beforehand, some students might give some information to please the teacher (me) though it was not all the situation. Most important limitation of the study was the difficulty faced by the students while accessing to the Internet. Sometimes, because of poor speed, many of the participants could not get access to the group which really made them delay to post their ideas on the groups. Being a collaborative platform, it affected other members' pace of work which was a mentionable limitation to mention.

Chapter 4: Results

In this chapter, I interpreted the results found from the survey and integrated the findings from FGD so that we could compare and contrast wherever it was required. To better interpret the results, we divided the items on the questionnaire into five categories so that the interpretation becomes easy for the readers. Item numbers one, two, three, and sixteen were used for the tools and their effectivity, six, ten, and eighteen were used to get data regarding Peer Role, four, nine for Suitability of Online Groups for BRACU students, and finally the rest three questions were put to get some qualitative data from the survey.

4.1 Student visit of the groups

Findings from the survey reveals that five percent of the respondents visited the group more than six times a week and ten percent of them did not visit the groups not for a single time in one week. As for the total time spent on the group, the study revealed that twenty percent of the respondents spent more than an hour but less than two hours whereas twenty percent spent less than thirty minutes time on the groups.

How often		How long	
Times	Percentage	Minutes	Percentage
More than 6	5	More than 120 minutes	20
4 to 6	25	60 to 120 minutes	35
1 to 3	40	30 to 60 minutes	25
Less than 3	20	0 to 30 minutes	20
Not at all	10		

Table 1: Frequency of visits and time spent

Regarding the activities carried out on the groups, it was found that some of the activities were done more than other activities. Of all the eight different types of activities posted on the group it was found that five

types were done by more people and that indicated respondents considered them more important than other activities. While asked to rank all the activities, it was found that the respondents ranked both “Subject verb agreement and Sentence variation” as the most important one. Of the five most important activities (ranked by the respondents) the rest three were “Discussion on Topic Sentence and Controlling ideas, Writing paragraph and Writing Argumentative Essay”.

Position according to preference	Name of the content
1	Subject verb agreement
1	Sentence variation
2	Discussion on Topic Sentence and Controlling ideas
2	Writing paragraph
3	Writing Argumentative Essay

Table 2 : Activity ranking by respondents

Asked how important those activities are for real life writing in English, the respondents replied that they were important and useful in their real life communication in writing. Thirty five percent of them mentioned the activities as very useful and interesting whereas fifty percent of them mentioned that they were fairly useful. However twenty percent of the respondents mentioned that the activities were not so interesting and lengthy.

Variables	5	4	3	2	1
Useful	35%	50%	5%	10%	-
Easy	30%	30%	40%	-	-
Interesting	35%	20%	25%	20%	-
Lengthy	25%	20%	35%	20%	-

Table 3: Impacts in real life writing (5 indicates Very Useful and 1 Useless)

4.2 Teacher Role on the group

Now, one of the important concerns of this study was to see if the activities on the group could go smoothly without the intervention of a teacher where the findings gave a rather opposite view. The study said that teacher's role as an administrator and overseer was very important. It was found that teacher intervention is a must to run activities on the group since hundred percent of the respondents thought that teacher must be there. While evaluating teacher's role on the group, more than fifty percent respondents mentioned that the role of the teacher was very caring, fair, friendly, and necessary. However five percent of them mentioned that teacher's role was not so fair, friendly and consistent.

Looking at the findings from the FGD, they also revealed that participants preferred the involvement of the teacher in a more active form. It was found that some of the participants were not that reliable on the feedback gotten only from their peers. They find it difficult to integrate in their own writing until it was ratified by the teacher.

Variables	5	4	3	2	1
Caring	55%	30%	15%	-	-
Fair	55%	20%	20%	5%	-
Friendly	65%	15%	15%	5%	-
Consistent	35%	30%	30%	5%	-
Necessary	55%	35%	10%	-	-

Table 4 : Evaluation of teacher's role (5 indicates Very Caring and 1 Careless)

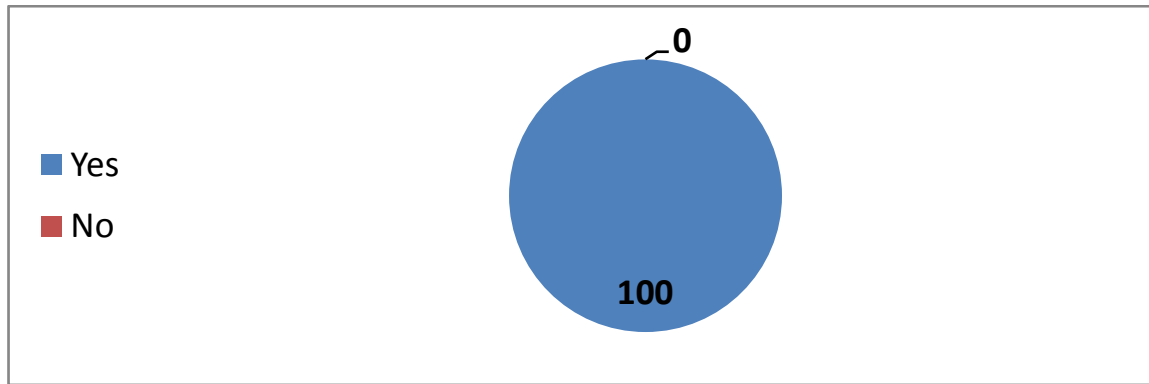


Figure 2: Teacher intervention to run group activity

4.3 Role of Peers on the groups

As for peer role and feedback on the groups, the survey revealed that it was important and useful to get ideas from peers and friends. Fifty five percent of the respondents mentioned that the role of the peers was very useful and though ten percent of them mentioned that it was not necessary. As for feedback given towards peers, the study revealed that fifty percent of the respondents only visited the groups but did not give any feedback whereas the rest fifty percent gave feedback for their peers. Asked how many times they gave feedback towards their peers write ups, it was found that only fifteen percent of them gave feedback more than five times. According to the comments made by the respondents it was found that most of the feedback was given only on four areas namely “Grammar and Structure, Ideas and Organizations, Spelling and Punctuation and Vocabulary”

Variables	5	4	3	2	1
Effective	40%	35%	10%	5%	10%
Useful	55%	20%	20%	-	5%
Necessary	45%	30%	15%	-	10%
Frequent	45%	35%	10%	10%	-

Table 5: Role of peers (5 indicates Very effective and 1 Ineffective)

While delving into the reasons of not giving feedback towards the peers, the responses by the participants revealed that there were a number of reasons behind the inactivity of many of the participants. One of the questions on the survey questionnaire was if they faced any problems with other group members where it was found that twenty percent had problems with other group members while carrying out the activities and giving feedback. Some participants mentioned that people did not really take that seriously and they would only sit and gossip while working on the group online which not only disturbed other people but also discouraged them.

Moving to the findings from the FGD, same type of comments was found from the participants. It seemed that some of the participating members of the group were not serious enough and they did not play an effective role. That, according to the findings, resulted in the less productivity on the group.

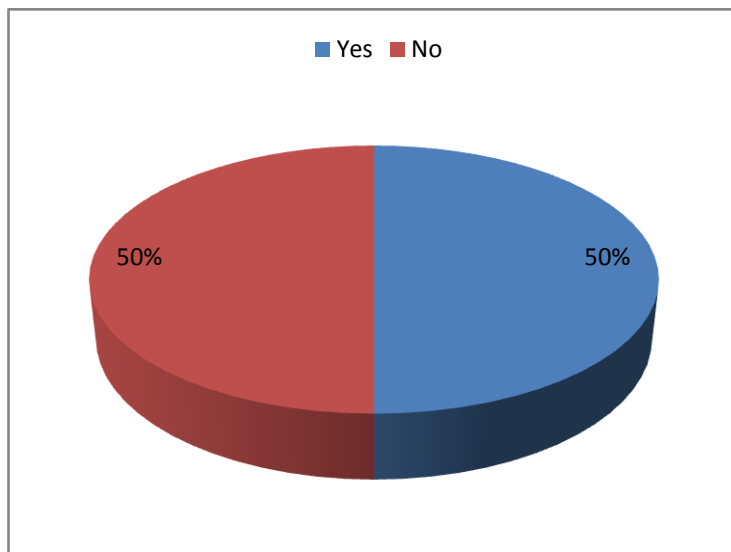


Figure 3: Participants' feedback

4.4 Online tools for BRACU students and students' impression of tasks on them

While considering if such online platform is suitable for BRACU students or not, study showed that it was effective and feasible for them to start working on such online platforms which might expand their learning while they were outside of the classroom. Forty five percent of the respondents replied that use of online tools like wiki, blog and face book group were very

relevant and another forty five percent mentioned that they were effective .But there were ten percent of the respondents who thought that these online platforms and their use in the purpose of learning from BRACU students was fairly irrelevant and ineffective.

Variables	5	4	3	2	1
Feasible	30%	45%	15%	5%	5%
Practical	40%	30%	30%	5%	5%
Relevant	45%	20%	20%	10%	5%
Effective	40%	45%	5%	10%	-

Table 6: Suitability of online tools for BRACU students (5 indicates Very Feasible and 1 Not Feasible)

Regarding the degree of difficulty of the activities and participating students’ impression about the activities, it was found that the respondent more or less remained in a neutral position. Thirty percent of them mentioned that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied whereas sixty percent of them mentioned that the degree of difficulty of the activities were not so difficult nor were they very easy. That means it was more or less suitable for their level of English knowledge. But there were five percent of the respondents who considered that the activities carried out on the group found very easy to do. However there was none mentioning that the activities on the group were either very dissatisfying or very difficult for them.

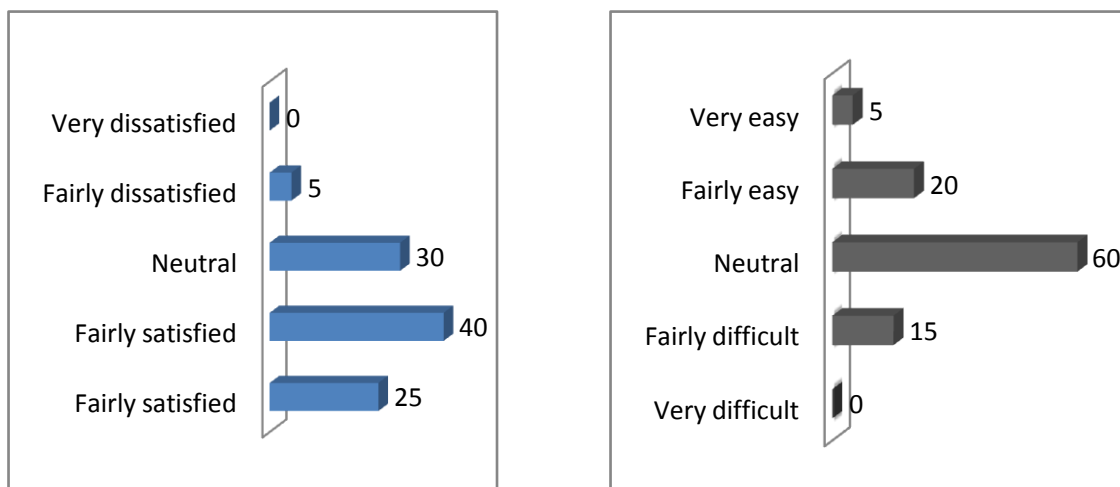


Figure 4: Students’ impression on the tasks on groups

4.5 Tools used and students' visit on them

Of the three tools used to do the study it was found that the rate or frequency of visit on those groups by the students was of varying results. Some groups were visited more than other ones by the participating students. Looking at respondents' visit to different tools used in the study, it was found that majority of them visited Face book group (70 percent) where as Wiki is the least visited group (5 percent). Word press blog was visited by 25 percent of the participating students only.

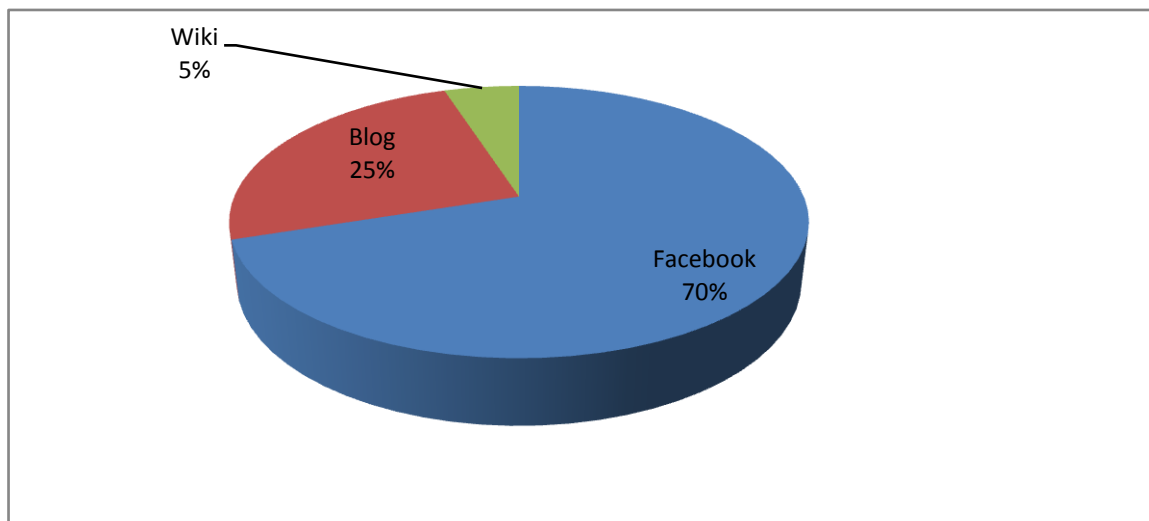


Figure 1: Groups visited by participants

While looking at the problems and conveniences of using the above mentioned tools, it was found that there were a good number of factors in place. Though face book is used by a big majority of respondents, it was found that there were a few respondents who even did not use that either for deactivating the account or for not having a face book account. Added to this were some other technical aspects which could be linked with personal unfamiliarity of the tools and their usages. As for the use of wiki and blog, many replied that they failed to log on in the groups with their own passwords. Another respondent mentioned that wiki was not a reliable source for her since she thought her writing could be altered by other people.

One of the major observations found from the survey was slow internet speed in Residential Semester of BRAC University which is why many respondents mentioned that the speed of network is very slow and for that many of them were not able to use the online tools well. Most of the respondents faced problems while using blog and wiki for a number of reasons. Some mentionable reasons were difficulty in logging on in them, not to know how to handle them, and some even mentioned that they could not enter those platforms, except face book group, when they were outside the computer lab. Last but not the least, many of the respondents mentioned that they did not get enough time to spend on the group because of heavily scheduled tasks at Residential Semester.

4.6 Suggestions to make the group more effective and learning friendly

The respondents came up with a good number of suggestions which could be effective in promoting the usage of the groups and thus helping more people improve their academic writing. Some of the important findings are given below:

Groups should be section wise: This time, we took the students from two different sections from BRACU Residential Semester in Savar and all of them have worked on the same group since we added them directly as members. Survey findings indicated that some of the participants did not take it easily and which is why they did not perform well as they thought that their writing tasks should not be read by other people outside of their sections. So, they preferred their own group where no students from other sections would be allowed.

Next finding was the speed of network which, according to the survey, has been very much disappointing. The respondents mentioned that the speed of network in RS was so slow that they really got frustrated because of the poor speed which hampered their attempt to work on the groups and finish their tasks. In addition to that it was also found that respondents did not like the idea of blocking Facebook whole day and allow them to use Facebook only for two hours or so in a day. Since most of the respondent used Facebook the most, it was a big barrier for them as it was allowed for only a limited time.

Then came the question of more interesting activities since some of the participants thought that the activities carried out on the group should have been more interesting. Some of them even mentioned that there should have been some involvement of games while doing the activities

online. So, some of the respondents expected the integration of more interesting tasks with games in them.

Last but not the least suggestion by some of the respondents was updating of the groups at a regular interval and a strict supervision of the group by the administrator. As for updates, the participants mentioned that the administrator teacher should have updated the group with more visits and through this process he could have maintained a strict policy so that all the students of the class take part in the group activity regularly. They thought that this type of monitoring would have increased the overall performance on the group.

Chapter 5: Analysis

In this chapter, I have interpreted the findings and evaluated the results in reference to the literature written in Chapter 2.

Findings from Table 1(Frequency of visits and time spent) the survey reveals that five percent of the respondents visited the group more than six times a week and none spent more than two hours on the groups. It was an indication that students did not afford to spend more time on the groups. On the other hand, it was also found that twenty percent of the respondents never spent more than thirty minutes in a week which means that a mentionable chunk of the participants remained out of the activity.

Analyzing some responses from the questionnaire, it can be assumed that the participants must have faced some problems of at least two types: firstly ,they had failed to use the tools because of technical difficulties as expressed by them or the administrator should have given more “carefully designed activities” Oxford(1997).If it was the activities, it is assumed that better ,interesting and “carefully designed” activities may draw more people to the groups and more people may spend more amount of time, if such study is carried out in future.

Regarding the activities done by the participants on the groups, Table 2 gives an indication that not all the activities are liked or done by all the participating members of the groups. Five of the activities out of eight were liked and practiced by a good number of participants. Both “Subject verb agreement and Sentence variation” have been placed in the first position by the respondents

which indicates that they have liked these two types of activities most. Trying to analyzing the reasons, it is found that ‘Sentence Variation’ is a component of the course these students have been doing (Eng 101) but “Subject verb agreement” is not in the syllabus. So, question may arise, why that component has been liked as one of the most important items for them. Answer to that questions can be like though “Subject verb agreement” is not there in the syllabus in black and white, it is mentioned by each and every teacher of Eng 101 especially the Writing Teacher as it is very basic and must know thing for all the Eng 101 students.

Regarding the importance of the given activities in real life situations, in the life of the students own writing:

Regarding the activities carried out on the groups, Table 3 gives a clear picture of how much important they are it was found that some of the activities were done more than other activities. Of all the eight different types of activities posted on the group it was found that five types were done by more people and that indicated respondents considered them more important than other activities. While asked to rank all the activities, it was found that the respondents ranked both as the most important one. Of the five most important activities (ranked by the respondents) the rest three were “Discussion on Topic Sentence and Controlling ideas, Writing paragraph and Writing Argumentative Essay”.

5.1 Role of teacher

Now moving to the role of teacher, it has been found very favoured by the respondents. On an average more than fifty five percent of them mentioned it as very caring, fair and sixty five percent mentioned that it was friendly. But consistency wise, it was not very good and the respondents mentioned that it should have been more consistent. As for consistency, it is found that thirty percent of the respondents remained in neutral position which means they have not said either good or bad. We think, we should take it a matter of concern and consistency must be maintained if more projects of this kind are carried out in the coming days.

Again, looking at teacher intervention it has been suggested by the respondents that there must be a teacher in the monitoring process of the group and that teacher should play an active role if everybody works properly or not. If we look at figure 1, we find that hundred percent of the

respondents wanted teacher's intervention and none of the attendants has mentioned that the activities on the group should go without the overseeing of a teacher. Some even has opined that the teacher should make everybody work by properly monitoring on the group.

Regarding strict monitoring of the group, it was really difficult to monitor each and every student and make him or her take part in the discussion took place on regular basis. Part of the study was to see how much peer support is possible here at BRAC University since most of the students were from a good English Proficiency. We hoped that we could use more able students' ideas and knowledge to promote a wide learning environment while students were writing in English. So, it was important for us not to interfere as long as possible and interference was the last resort to the solution. That is why, we did not very much interfere and gave frequent feedback to the participating students since we silently used to wait for their peers to come up and take a lead and give feedback.

5.2 Role of Peers

Drawing peer feedback and support was one of the most important goals of this study since it aimed at collaborative learning. Looking at Table 5, we have found positive note of the participants though it could have been more in percentage. Findings show that fifty five percent of the respondents mentions peer feedback as useful and five percent useless. Looking at the neutral point, we have found that twenty percent of them remain neutral. So, taking "neutral" and "useless" combined it becomes one fourths of the respondents who are not very satisfied with the support and feedback given by their peers. May be because of this reason fifty percent of the respondents has not given any feedback. If we notice figure 2, it indicates that fifty percent of the visitors of the groups give feedback while the rest fifty percent remain away from giving any feedback.

5.3 Suitability of online tools for BRACU students

This change or alteration is highly connected with feedback and interdependency to foster a collaborative learning environment. We think that we could give an orientation to all the participating students on how to use the online tools and what were the reasons of using wiki. Since Wiki is very useful for collaborative writing and students get immensely benefitted by

their peers' and teacher's feedback, they all should feel free to make mistakes there so that they get feedback and ,in the same way, give others feedback to promote a vibrant learning environment beyond the boundary of their classroom.

Regarding the tight schedule, it could be mentioned very early in the beginning of the semester that they were to go through that situation throughout the semester and as days would pass amount of pressure also would mount. So, what we could do was to give them a forecast on the type of pressure they were expected to face in RS. Along with that, we also could give them a total work plan for the whole semester clearly indicating the total time they were expected to spend with a weekly allocation of time so that they would follow that and find the task easier. Regarding the logging on problems, we could take the participants to the computer lab once and give them a good orientation in the beginning of the semester so that that the type of problems evolved would have been escaped and more number of participants would get opportunities to use the tools and thus get benefitted.

Incorporation of Games is really good and we would love to give some to make the activities more interesting and participatory. But being academic writing it was really difficult for us to do so. For example, the activities dealt Topic Sentence, Thesis Statement, Controlling Ideas, Unity and Coherence etc which is why it was very difficult for us to make them very interesting. We had, in the back of our mind, a clear purpose and it aimed at students improvements especially for those who really needed extra help to cope up with other students. Keeping this in mind, we could not really make the activities very interesting.

According to Sharma (2007), there is an opposite situation between the students who do well in the class and who do the same online groups. They are quite opposite- those doing taking an active part in the classroom and face to face situation are found very inactive while wrokig on the group online. On the other hand, those doing very good on online platforms were found inactive or absent in the classroom sessions. Unlike Sharma's findings the participants in our online platforms found active both in the class and while doing their task on online groups. Being a bit with less linguistic ability, there participants took interest equally both in the classroom situations and while working beyond that.

To replicate this study in other institutions of the country, most potential limitations will be the internet connectivity in most of our educational institutions mostly because of frequent power cut. This problem becomes even more severe during the Summer season when power supply becomes the scantiest even in

urban areas. As a result, most of our educational institutions remain out of power supply resulting in a formidable threat in implementing the project nationwide. So, supply of power across the country should be smooth and unfaltering. If that is not possible, the respective institutions where the study goes on must make sure that they ensure their own supply of power so that the computer labs and students involved in the project are not affected.

Then comes the next recommendation which is about the training and familiarization of the teachers with new technologies and their usages. It is the responsibility of the institutions to make sure if the teachers' especially English language teacher is updated with proper training. So, they should be sent to training at a regular interval so that they keep learning and updating themselves and help build the nation through effective teaching. To do that, teachers involved in the process should be financially benefitted after completing up to a certain level of skills and expertise.

Thirdly, all the students taking part in the process of the study must be familiarized not only with the technology but also the rationale for doing that accompanied by all the advantages they are going to reap by the end of the semester/project. This will really motivate them intrinsically or instrumentally and they keep working for their own development.

To be precise, the study reveals the potentiality of the usages of web 2.0 tools in the field of education and it also helps us find possible solutions towards the evolving problems. As for Wiki, the study suggests, it can be used effectively if there is more controlled approach by the administrator in the first few weeks. Also, to diminish the logging on problems, the administrator can use the printed out default ID and Passwords and get them printed before they are handed to the users. Regarding Word press Blog, the administrator can take the learners once to the computer lab to familiarize the using techniques in the very beginning of the study so that there are no problems evolved in the middle of the semester.

6. Conclusion

In the proposed study I hope students will take it positively and try the best out of the study though they all are undergraduate students and have more possibility of showing individual differences. However, this type of study can be carried out in most of the schools, colleges and universities mostly situated in urban areas. If all the existing problems are mitigated, this will be a big supplementary role to the traditional paper based writing works solely presented to the teacher and by the end of the day more number of students will be benefitted. Therefore, it is hoped that more study on Web 2.0 tools will be carried out and more and more number of students will be within the supporting ceiling in terms of academic writing.

Questionnaire for the students

(Topic: Support Students improve their academic writing through online collaboration)

(This questionnaire is made for a group of students who are already added on my FB group, PB Works Wiki and A Blog)

Dear students please read the questions and try to answer all the questions. You are expected to spend about 15 minutes time for this task.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Disclaimer: This information is going to be used only for academic purposes and will not be disclosed to anybody or any organization.

Department: _____ Semester: _____ Gender: M / F

1. How often do you visit the groups a week?

More than six times 4- 6 times 1- 3 times Less than 3 times

Not at all

2. Which Group do you normally visit most?

FB Group Blog PB Works Wiki

3. In a week how many hours do you normally spend in total working on the activities?

0- 30 minutes 30 minutes – 1 hour 1 – 2 hours 2 hours +

4. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the quality of activities you were involved in?

- Very satisfied Fairly satisfied Neutral Fairly dissatisfied
 Very dissatisfied

5. How difficult were the activities you were involved in on the group?

- Very difficult Fairly difficult Neither difficult nor easy Fairly easy
 Very easy

6. How effective and helpful were the feedback you received on the group?

- Very effective and helpful Fairly effective and helpful I knew them all from before
 Fairly unnecessary and ineffective Very unnecessary and ineffective.

7. Order the following activities as per their effectivity and importance to you. The most effective and important one will be number 1.

Name of Activities	Number
Subject Verb Agreement	
Sentence variation	
Discussion on Topic Sentence and Controlling ideas	
Coherence and unity	
Writing paragraph	
Adding ideas	
Discussions on some quotes and sayings	
Writing Argumentative Essay	

8. Effectiveness of the activities in real life writing:

a	Important	5	4	3	2	1	Unimportant
b	Useful	5	4	3	2	1	useless

c	Easy	5	4	3	2	1	difficult
d	Relevant	5	4	3	2	1	Irrelevant
e	known	5	4	3	2	1	Unknown
f	Interesting	5	4	3	2	1	Uninteresting
g	lengthy	5	4	3	2	1	Short
h	Realistic	5	4	3	2	1	Unrealistic
i	suitable	5	4	3	2	1	Unsuitable
j	Consistent	5	4	3	2	1	Inconsistent

9. Suitability of Online platforms for BRAC U Students:

a	feasible	5	4	3	2	1	Not feasible
b	Practical	5	4	3	2	1	Impractical
c	Relevant	5	4	3	2	1	Irrelevant
d	Effective	5	4	3	2	1	Effective

10. Role of the peers

a	Effective	5	4	3	2	1	Ineffective
b	useful	5	4	3	2	1	Useless
c	Necessary	5	4	3	2	1	Unnecessary
d	Frequent	5	4	3	2	1	Rare

11. Role of teacher while the activities went on:

a	Caring	5	4	3	2	1	Uncaring
b	Fair	5	4	3	2	1	Unfair/ partial
c	Friendly	5	4	3	2	1	unfriendly
d	Consistent	5	4	3	2	1	Inconsistent
e	Necessary	5	4	3	2	1	Unnecessary

12. Do you think the activities on the groups could be carried out successfully without the involvement of any teacher? Yes No

If yes, how many times (approximately)

13. Have you given any feedback to anybody? Yes No

If yes, how many times (approximately) _____

14. On what area did you give feedback to other members?

Grammar and Structure Ideas and organization Spelling and punctuation Vocabulary

Others: _____

15. How important is the role of the teacher in the activities carried out on the group?

Very important Fairly important Neutral Fairly unimportant

Not important at all

16. What were the problems you especially faced regarding carrying out the activities on the group?

17. What were the problems in using

Wiki? _____

FB Group? _____

Blog? _____

18. Did you face any problems with any group member(s)? Yes No

If yes, please mention in brief: _____

19. To carry out activities online more effectively what would one most important suggestion from your side?

20. Any other suggestions from your regarding the groups and activities:

FGD Questionnaire

1. How did the activities on the group go on? Which platform was easier to work and why?
2. How important was peer feedback in developing your academic writing?
3. How important was the role of teacher on the group? Can it be run without the presence of a teacher? If yes, how?
4. Were you enthusiast or reluctant to take part in the group activities? Why?
5. What where the challenges you faced while working on the group?
6. What do you think is the impact of such online activities on learning?

References

Abbott, C. (2005). *ICT: Changing Education*. Taylor & Francis e-Library .

Barrett, B. & Sharma, P. (2007) *Blended Learning: using technology in and beyond the language classroom*. Oxford: Macmillan Publishers.

Burns, A. (1999). *Collaborative Action Research for English Language Teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Chao, Y., & Lo, H. (2011). Students' perceptions of Wiki-based collaborative writing for learners of English as a foreign language. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 19(4), 395-411. Doi : 10.1080/10494820903298662

Driver, P. (2011). *Using Apps for Language Learning*. Retrieved from <http://www.cambridgeenglishteacher.org>

General Economics Division Planning Commission, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, (2012). *Perspective Plan Of Bangladesh 2010-2021: Making Vision 2021 A Reality*. Retrieved from <http://www.plancomm.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Perspective-Plan-of-Bangladesh.pdf>

General Economics Division Planning Commission, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. (2012). *Strategic Priorities of Digital Bangladesh (2010-2021)*. Retrived from <http://www.plancomm.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Perspective-Plan-of-Bangladesh.pdf>

Hadjerrouit, S. (2011). A Collaborative Writing Approach to Wikis: Design, Implementation, and Evaluation. *Issues In Informing Science & Information Technology*, 8431-449.

Hadjileontiadou, S., Nikolaidou, G., & Hadjileontiadis, L. (2012). *Research on e-Learning and ICT in Education*. A. Jimoyhiannis, (Ed.). London: Springer. DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-1083-6

Hadjerrouit, S. (2012). Students' uses of Wiki in Teacher Education: A Statistical Analysis. *World Academy Of Science, Engineering & Technology*, (66), 1072-1078

Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing Impact on Learning*. Oxon: Routledge.

Bangladesh ICT (2009). *National ICT Policy of Bangladesh*. Retrived from <http://bdictforum.wordpress.com/2012/03/14/national-ict-policy-2009-of-bangladesh/>

Oxford, R. L. (1997). Cooperative learning, collaborative learning, and interaction: Three

Communicative strands in the language classroom . *The Modern Language Journal*,
81(4), 443-456.

Peyton, J. K. (1993). *Dialogue Journals: Interactive Writing to Develop Language and Literacy*, Washington, D.C.: National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education.
Retrieved from <http://www.cambridgeenglishteacher.org/>

Shaw, M. T & Schmidt, T.M. (2010). *ICTs for Modern Educational and Instructional Advancement: New Approaches to Teaching*. L. Tomei, (Ed.). New York: Information science
reference

Teeler, D., & Gray, P. (2000). *How to Use the Internet in ELT*. J. Harmer (Ed). Edingurgh:
Pearson Education Limited

Thornbury, S., & Watkins, and Peter. (2007). From *the Cambridge CELTA Course Trainer's Manual*. Cambridge University Press 2007. Retrieved from
<http://www.cambridgeenglishteacher.org>

Trentin, G. G. (2009). *Using a wiki to evaluate individual contribution to a collaborative learning project* .Oxford: Oxford University Press

Ur, Penny. (2012) *Of Computer Assisted Learning*. Cambridge University Press 25(1), 43-55.
doi:10.1111/j.1365-2729.2008.00276.x

Ur, P. (2012). *A Course in Language Teaching 2nd edition*. Cambridge University Press.

Retrieved from <http://www.cambridgeenglishteacher.org/>

Woo, M., Chu, S., Ho, A., & Xuanxi, L. (2011). Using a Wiki to Scaffold Primary-School

Students' Collaborative Writing. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 14(1), 43-54.

Woo, M., Chu, S., & Li, X. (2013). Peer-feedback and revision process in a wiki mediated

collaborative writing. *Educational Technology Research & Development*, 61(2), 279-309.

doi:10.1007/s11423-012-9285-y