

EFL Collaborative Writing: Instructors Perceptions on Teaching via Mobile Applications¹

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to loving parents, who instilled in me the love of learning from an early age. Thanks to mom and dad for your endless love, for believing in me and supporting me to strive for my dreams. I also, want to offer thanks to my husband who has offered unwavering support.

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Abstract

Writing as a productive skill in EFL classes is outstandingly significant. This study aims to investigate instructors' perceptions toward integrating Mobile Applications in collaborative writing within EFL classrooms. The participants were (25) instructors in an English Language Center for Preparatory Year at a University in Medinah, Saudi Arabia. The study used Sociocultural, Problem Based Learning and Connectivism theoretical framework to explore instructors' perceptions of using the new technology-tool in writing and experiences of students' collaborations in the process of writing. The instrument used was a questionnaire. Findings revealed that most of the instructors have positive perceptions in teaching writing through mobile technology using writing applications, indicating that students perceived the benefits of the collaborative writing process. Significant social interaction appears to play a meaningful role with regard of integrating new technology tools. Instructors indicated the need to alter

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their traditional teaching to embrace new, technology-enhanced teaching and learning systems.

Keywords: Collaborative Learning, Collaborative Writing, Mobile Applications.

CHAPTER 1

1.2: INTRODUCTION

In the 'tag me' and 'let us chat world of today, there has been no room for conventional methodologies to address the current socially-linked generation. In the context of modern teaching, strategies based on sophisticated mobile applications need to deal with day-to-day teaching and learning situations in which the learners face difficulties (Kinshuk et al. 2009). Otherwise, they could fail to achieve the target. Therefore, in an attempt to focus on enhancing EFL learners' writing skills, a light has to be shed on the areas of modernity outputs and collaborative learning in an attempt to step into the field where attention is focused on enhancing and the EFL learners' writing skills.

Unsurprisingly, it has been found that mobile applications are the most indispensable, accessible and entertaining tools in the hands of this generation. Nonetheless, they support social interaction, collaboration and the construction of learning (Botzer & Yerushalmy 2007). All the previous can efficiently be utilized to deliver information and to serve the goals and objectives of educational operation by delivering a flat piece of information or 'boring' skill in an entertaining manner. Technology is rapidly making peoples' lives easier by meeting their needs through the launching of different programs, applications, and websites. As a result, this has allowed universities to open virtual classrooms which have flourished remote and blending learning (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010). (DeLacey and Leonard, 2002, p, 19), stated that the online classes offer a much less threatening environment to many students, besides that the professor found that 33% of students felt the online sessions were more interactive than face-to-face sessions. Besides, there was an improvement in learners' interactions and enjoyment. Degrees and

authentication boards have also found their way in this parallel academic world. Newly web-designed substitutes of 'soft' products compensated loads of paper and costs of producing hard copies. Naturally, the concept of 'distance learning' virally penetrated. The virtual classroom is a teaching and learning environment located within a computer-mediated communication system (Deal III, 2002). Therefore, unless we utilize the state of these hands linked with these pocket appliances (i.e., smartphones), we will truly miss an invaluable opportunity to display and hand over teaching material if we only rely on conventional means. As a result, a 'smart' syllabus has to be designed, and new styles should be developed to pursue and reach this rapidly moving train of new ideas.

Different platforms that could be utilized for learners and instructors to improve their collaborative skills in learning EFL include, but are not limited to Google Docs, WordPress, Edmodo, Padlet, Evernote, WhatsApp, Twitter, SharePoint, and any other social media platform. The main advantage of these activities is that they deal with outgoing and extroverted students as well as shy and introverted ones equally (Hamid, Waycott, Kurnia & Chang, 2015). In this vein, the whole student body gets involved with all of its sides by receiving the benefit and leaving no one excluded. Another positive aspect is that, unlike traditional classrooms, the learners can contribute to their study material and widen the knowledgeable aspects with their tutor, rather than the tutor merely providing the study material to them (Algasab, 2015).

As a matter of fact, learning would occur through the sharing of opinions, information, experiences, and ideas among a peer group through a mobile-learning of practice. (Dillenbourg, 1999, p,5) defines the term 'Collaborative Learning' as a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together. Within this capacity, a group of interactive writers can pile up, dig, accumulate, and form multiauthored texts. Inevitably, each learner will benefit from the participation and contributions of others. In order for collaborative learning to be active, learning and teaching should be viewed as a developing process in which the learning ability of learners is provoked (UNESCO I., 2013).

All these means of modernity have enhanced collaborative learning. In the context of collaborative writing. It's noteworthy that findings support the idea of positivity of collaborative writing in

developing individual writing performance and enhancing vocabulary acquisition (Algassab, 2015; Storch, 2011; Dale, 1994; Dale, 1997; Mutwarasibo, 2013; Alammar, 2017) In addition, the majority of findings prove the increase of students motivation, mutual of knowledge and experiences, filling the linguistic gap jointly, and going beyond individual ability (ibid.) In this momentum, it introduces itself as a natural output matching the phase and its features. Mobile applications are in the reach of both the teachers and learners. Working jointly on producing a written text provides opportunities for language learning. However, factors such as task type, L2 proficiency, and the relationships that the learners form affect these opportunities and may also affect language-learning gains (Storch, 2011).

Teachers and learners cannot rely only on conventional means. Therefore, a 'smart' syllabus has to be designed, and new styles should be developed to pursue and reach this rapidly moving train of new ideas. Thus, the current research highlights the difficulty of practicing writing in EFL and its solutions such as peer-to-peer learning, social media and other collaborative activities that mobile can provide for ease of practicing. When applying Interaction Approach to Computer Assisted Language Learning, it is apparent that it can be applied through using Computer Mediated Communication (Cummings, 2004).

Collaborative writing, within mobile applications for EFL students, is the primary concern of the current research.

1.3: THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1.3.1: Sociocultural Theory and Collaborative Learning

Sociocultural Theory remarks on the effectiveness of social interaction, in addition to individual advancement. Based on Sociocultural Theory, the learning process occurs through two fundamental aspects, which are communicating and sharing knowledge. The second is organizing the content of individual's reflections (Lantolf, 2000). These two aspects persuasively represent the communicational and psychological parts (Rojas-Drummond, Albarrán and Littleton, 2008).

Sociocultural Theory assumes that language learning is achieved when learners participate and interact in a social environment culture. To exemplify this process, learning through

collaborative activities enhance students to explore deficiency in language (Swain & Lapkin, 2001). As a result of that, learners collaborate to solve the existed problems in linguistic (ibid).

Furthermore, the process of internalization happens when Individual learners learn in environments that involve others (Russel, 2002). Also, it develops the skills to apply the current gained knowledge independently (Lantolf, 2000). Researchers have examined personal writing, in comparison with collaboratively written text, reaching a result, whereas the written texts that produced collaboratively were better than the ones written individually in accuracy, fluency, and all aspects that form high-quality writing (Alammar, 2017).

According to Fasawang (2011), low achievers can share knowledge in collaborative activities, so the contribution of knowledge is not restricted upon the advanced learners.

Sociocultural Theory' aim is providing the collaboration concept as a unique kind of interaction. Similarly, in learning language collaboration comes to confirm that knowledge is gained in the social environment. Sociocultural Theory is concerned with producing collaborative activities in learning languages. Thus, collaboration learning embraces the socio-cultural perspectives. Collaboration definition is, "the process in which two or more learners need to work together to achieve a common goal, usually the completion of a task or the answering of a question" (Beatty, 2010, p. 109).

1.3.2: Communities of practice and Collaborative Learning

Likewise, based on the Communities of Practice Theory, Languages by nature work within the communicative environment, where social interaction makes them inevitably required as essential means of communication and ongoing life steering (Reed, et al. 2010). This social environment appears in different forms. As such, the 'practice' is the factor that connects these communities, neither having a grouping in shared abstract characteristics. Learners can play a significant role to merge in the designed streaming by activating the give-and-take process. This indeed will ease the operations that need networking and collaboration. Linguists wrote about applying this theory in language learning and found that it is ultimately useful to

create sense-making and deepen participants' shared knowledge (Eckert, 2006). The importance of the community of practice lies in language use as a continual process of linguistic construction. Also, Yang, (2009) realized that community of practice, critical reflection, exchanging experiences are enhanced while using a blog tool. To conclude, the community of Practice Theory go along with Collaborative Learning and can employ collaboration well inside EFL classrooms.

1.3.3: Problem-Based Learning Theory and Collaborative Learning

It's noteworthy to mention that theory of Problem Based Learning embraces collaborative learning. Linguists refer to the theory of problem-based learning as a 'way of constructing and teaching courses using problems as the stimulus and focus of students' activity'(David & Feletti, 2013, p.2). Students work in collaboratively (in small groups) and learn what knowledge they required to acquire in order to solve a problem (Silver, 2004). In such an environment, cases arise now and then constituting a field of an experimental empirical source of reference that worth studying in itself (Haworth, et al. , 1998).

It is argued that problem-based learning, above all, promotes the activation of prior knowledge. (Norman, Shmidt and Henk, 1986) . Pedagogical principles characterize this theory as far problems, and learners' ways of dealing with them constitute a cognitive and collaborative shared environment of cases. As well as, it helps students learn to transfer knowledge to new situations. Correspondingly, Donato (1994) found out that learners of L2 who work collaboratively were collecting their partial knowledge together in order to solve the problems they face in the language.

1.3.4: Mobile Applications and Connectivism Theory

It is essential to rethink of our formal education's sources to fit the new orientation and the Millennial learners' lifestyle. The core problem is that our education systems were built for another era. The knowledge nowadays is not restricted and limited as before. The technology plays a crucial role in that changes and shift. As a result, The learner has plenty of tools to gather information, collaborate, socialize and synthesize the knowledge (Siemens, 2005). Researchers

ensured that connectivism is the theory for learning in the current digital age (Downes & Siemens, 2008).

Based upon such ideas, Downes and Siemens (2004) conceptualized their theory (Connectivism). Simply they stated that the knowledge is distributed across the networks. The information is fragmented and distributed, and it is no longer well organized as in the books. So, The learners to gain the knowledge, they have to compose a connection to that network (Glodia, 2016). The strength of the connection with the knowledge resource reflects the magnitude of our learning.

This kind of connection encourages learners to learn more, to form our perception and to think critically about the information (Andrew, 2011).

Furthermore, the learner is demanded to look to the network as a learning environment, so they have to collaborate and exchange the experiences with other learners, and It promotes collaboration and cooperation among learners (Glodia, 2016).

The collaboration among the learners in this approach exceeds the classroom border. It is border collaboration. They exchange ideas, suggest better sources, share experiences, opinions, and points of view.

The connectivism approach encourages self-directed learning, autonomy, creativity, critical thinking and connectivity (Conradi, 2014).

Such an approach supports the flexibility in learning and cares for individual differences. It forces the learners to use technology to gain knowledge, which means supply them with 21st century's skills and digital literacy. Hence, the Connectivism Theory embraces Mobile Application Learning as long as they both represent the modernistic learning setting and neglect the traditional ways.

In addition, the connection between the theory and using Mobile Application is declared in the role of learners, such as: generating online materials that reflect what learners have learned, show connections between their prior knowledge, contents of the course, and their previous experiences.

Embracing connectivism means that we need to consider new design metaphors for future learning that place the learners, their social behavior, and their community at the center of the design process and the resulting networked technologies. As a result, this

theory employs using Mobile Application through collaborative activities to achieve the best outcome of students' writing, as it will be shown in the literature review part.

1.4: LITERATURE REVIEW

This part provides literature critique of collaborative learning as well as, mobile learning applications and their roles in enhancing writing skills. Furthermore, it reviews the related studies and discusses the importance of the current study. This chapter is valuable for the researcher as it extends her knowledge in the field.

1.5: COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

In a collaborative learning environment, the instruction is learner-centered rather than teacher-centered (Cutinho & Junior, 2007). In essence, the instructor's role in collaborative learning is a facilitator for learning who creates crucial learning experiences and stimulate learners thinking (UNESCO, 2013). Collaborative learning is known for its advantages in various areas of education, as it provides positive experiences, achieves a higher outcome, requires social interactions and strengthens assistance amongst group members. Students in groups able to complete tasks they cannot do on their own and they are encouraged to take a risk together (Gillies & Boyle, 2010). In Saudi, various factors make it essential to implement collaborative learning. In a research conducted by Alkhalaf (2011), it is stated that "Collaborative e-learning environments may allow students, especially those who are shy in face-to-face situations, to participate in online discussions and meetings, offer and receive critiques, negotiate, and build consensus.". This advantage may be of particular significance in KSA, where face-to-face interactions between male and female learners are often not an option.

The majority of research findings reported that collaborative learning proves to be useful for EFL learners. Cutinho & Junior, (2007) explored that the wikis have a positive effect over students in a collaborative activity environment. The participants of the study are (16) postgraduate students who attended a program on Research Method in Education. The researchers used an online questionnaire with open and closed questions to assess students' perceptions.

Furthermore, an earlier study conducted by Gokhale (1995) also revealed that students who participated in collaborative learning had performed significantly better on the critical-thinking test than students who studied individually. The population for that study consisted of undergraduate students in industrial technology, enrolled at Western Illinois University, Macomb, Illinois. The sample was made up of students enrolled in the 271 Basic Electronics course during Spring 1993. There were two sections of the 271 class. Each section had 24 students in it. Thus, a total of forty-eight students participated in this study. They were given a simultaneous lecture and worksheet to each group and a questionnaire analysis as well. The results for the post-test revealed advancement in the mean scores for the participants that studied collaboratively among a group.

1.6 COLLABORATIVE WRITING

Collaborative writing facilitates writing a task to students who have difficulties when they find themselves confronting a piece of a blank paper (Nixon, Sutherland & Yarrow, 2000). Collaborative writing has many substantial benefits such as:

1- Mutual Experience:

Different students introduce to a group' members various skills in writing that they shine at such as, brainstorming, generating ideas, organizing ideas, punctuations, structure, time management and usage of vocabulary items. Thus, students who work together in one group input different skills in a singular text with which is written by plural authors. Various abilities will enrich the written text than if written individually (Dale, 1994).

2-Mutual Interaction:

The success of collaborative writing belongs to the interaction between its group members (Dale, 1997). The process of thinking aspects such as generating ideas, gathering ideas, thinking critically, can cause effective interaction among students in writing. In addition, it may cause students to assimilate the task (ibid.).

3- Enhancing Proficiency:

Writing collaboratively enhance proficiency and mastering L2 in so many linguistic areas of skills. 'Students acknowledged having improved their interpersonal and collaborative skills through EFL group writing.

According to Mutwarasibo (2013) students also indicated that, while discussing and interacting with group members and with the support from the instructor, they improved their English vocabulary, gained new ideas and perspectives, and enhanced their learning about text coherence, all of which led to the improvement in their EFL writing.

Studies proved widely that collaborative learning has a positive result in enhancing writing skill and students' rapport. One finding is by Alammar, (2017) whose study aimed to examine collaborative writing in appose to individual writing in enhancing academic writing for Saudi learners. The study research method was a combination of qualitative & quantitative that used three instruments; pre/post writing tests, questionnaire, and semi-structured interviews on (58) participants. The study explored the positive influence on students who used collaborative writing. Before the experimental study was applied, 60% of learners stated that they prefer collaborative work in writing tasks. Surprisingly, the percentage rose up to 80% after conducting the study. Correspondingly, the learners were asked if they prefer collaborative writing and only 50% agreed. Then, the percentage increased to 70%. Moreover, the learners in the experimental group improvement result' advanced the control group in the post-test.

Stoch, in 2005, claimed that there is a limited number of studies that investigate collaboration writing. Correspondingly, the researcher aimed to investigate collaborative writing in terms of giving the students the freedom to choose whether they prefer to write collaboratively or individually. The instruments used were writing text task, audio tape and an interview for pair work. This was applied on (23) ESL adult students in a completing degree course at an Australian University. Interestingly, most students chose to write in a group form, and few chose to write individually; thus, the result revealed positive reflection according to the experience towards collaborative writing.

It is noteworthy that the majority of studies which were conducted after Storch' claim, reported the positive effect of collaborative writing. Some of the studies are as the following ; (Lamb & Johnson, 2007; Kessler, 2009; Shehadeh, 2011; Dobao & Blum, 2013; Mutwarasibo, 2013; Algassab, 2015; Khalil & Abdulbaqi, 2017; Alammari, 2017; Alsubaie & Alshuraidah, 2017)

1.7: MOBILE LEARNING

Using technology in education is revolutionizing and becoming wider during recent time. Online learning technology and instructional methods endorse individual and collaborative learning. Mobile learning transforms education from the traditional way into more flexible education that is not restricted to a specific time or place. According to Cavus & Ibrahim (2008), mobile learning is the acquisition of any knowledge by using mobile technology, at any place and any time where this process ends in the qualification of learners behavior.

Traxler,(2005: page 262) defines Mobile Learning as "Any educational provision where the sole or domain technologies are handheld or palmtop devices." Another definition stated in the UNESCO document guideline (2013) determines in its preface topic as it "involves the use of mobile technology, either alone or in combination with other information and communication technology, to enable learning anytime and anywhere. Learning can unfold in a variety of ways: people can use mobile devices to access educational resources, connect with others, or create content, both inside and outside classrooms."

1.8: MOBILE APPLICATIONS

Smartphones, those light hand-borne appliances are being packed up with every possible need for users. Obviously, chats, forums and debate platforms have found their strong existence in this virtual world. WhatsApp, Snapchat, Telegram, Twitter, Edmodo, WordPress, Padlet, Google Docs, Google Classrooms...etc. are now becoming the dominant time absorbers of Mobile users. Therefore, aiming to assess these products (applications) is inevitable.

Khalil and Abdulbaqi (2017) have found that collaborative writing shows a positive influence when the mobile application is used (WhatsApp). The aim of the study is developing collaborative writing using (WhatsApp). The population of the study is 3rd-year English major students at Misr University. The research method is quasi-experimental, and the instruments are pre/post collaborative writing test and a reflection sheet. The result confirmed the positive influence of students' reflections after the experience of collaborative writing. Among studies related to the use of the mobile application in education, a study was carried out in order to find the effect of mobile learning by Awaludin, Karin & Saad (2017). This study aimed to investigate the students' perception and attitude toward mobile learning (Padlet) in ESL classrooms within a descriptive method where a questionnaire was used. The participants were 50 undergraduate students in a public university in Malaysia. The study explored positive attitude and using (Padlet) was encouraged.

1.9: WRITING COLLABORATIVELY USING MOBILE APPLICATIONS

Many related studies reported the effectiveness of using M-applications in enhancing writing collaboratively. Alsubaie & Alshuraidah, in 2017, aimed in a study to examine the effectiveness of using Google Docs on writing outside the classroom. They used a mixed method approach using (3) types of instruments; Writing samples that were collected from learners' portfolios before using Google Docs, two writing samples after using Google Docs and questionnaires (pre-questionnaire at the beginning of the study and post-questionnaire after the end of research application). Semi-structured interviews were conducted on (22) female Saudi students fifth academic level at the Arabic department (Imam Muhammed Ibn Saud University) at the end of the study. The result of the study showed an increase in mean scores in students' writing which used GoogleDocs and large numbers of learners who reported their enjoyment and interest in using the application.

In a similar vein, Suwantarathip & Wichadee (2014). aimed to compare writing abilities of students who work on writing assignments collaboratively via Google Docs with students who write in groups inside a classroom in a private University in Thailand. This experimental research used two instruments which were writing tests

and a questionnaire which was used to show how well using Google Docs was accepted by the learners. The study found a significant difference between the two groups. The group that used Google Docs outperformed the one that did not use Google Docs.

Moreover, Fattah (2015) quasi-experimental research was conducted to investigate developing students writing using WhatsApp. The total participants were (30) students in second-year college, English department from a private university in Saudi Arabia. The participants were divided into two groups: (15) for the experimental group and (15) for the control group as the instrument was pre/posttests. The result showed a positive influence on writing by using WhatsApp.

Furthermore, Abadi, Ahmadi & Meherdad (2015) investigated the effect of using Edmodo on learners' writing. A quasi-experimental research approach was used. The participants were (40) female advanced level students, attend advanced writing classes at Irana English Institute, in Iran. The participants were divided equally into two groups; experimental group and control group. The instrument used was a pretest and a posttest. Researchers stated there was a positive effect of using Edmodo on students' writing.

Aghajani, (2018), conducted a study comparatively investigated the usage of Telegram compared to a conventional method; face-to-face in the cooperative writing. The method adopted in this study, as being experimental and descriptive, was thus of a binary nature. A sample of 70 male and female post-intermediate ESP learners had been selected using Quick Placement Test, divided into two groups, namely experimental and control groups. A post-test was given to participants. Then, a questionnaire was given to the students in order to investigate the effect of Telegram on the attitudes of ESP vocabularies and expressions by the ESP learners. The data were then analyzed and the findings showed that participants in Telegram Cooperative writing groups displayed slightly higher scores compared to face-to-face Cooperative writing groups. However, despite the differences between Telegram and face-to-face Cooperative writing groups were not significant in the post-test writing scores, but still the study, after running SPSS analysis, concluded to find that social networking platforms like Telegram increased students' writing ability and helped them performed better.

The uprising of Mobile Assisted Language Learning triggered the researchers Susanti and Tarmuji (2016), in a study to explore the possible techniques in optimizing the application of WhatsApp for teaching English writing in Indonesian senior high schools. MALL is characterized by its ability to facilitate social interaction, data exchanging and collaboration with other learners. The study is aimed to Developing EFL Writing Materials using. The method used was experimental, where different techniques had been used. The sample was classrooms of grades X, XI and XII. Modes implemented were: 1. Brainstorming, Group-drafting and Teacher feedback; 2. Quick writing and Peer feedback; and 3. Information Gathering – Elaboration Exercise – Checklist. Collaboratively, the students do group drafting. They draft by completing the template and work like a snowball. One student drafts and shares, the other students complete and share again. The researchers concluded that cheap and flexible WhatsApp brings potentials to help English writing learning. The three techniques presented optimize the features in the WhatsApp: share audio, video, picture, links, document, create groups, and text.

In the same domain, Shukor, (2014) also highlighted a study of another form of online platforms. This study investigated the effects of Facebook collaborative writing groups on ESL undergraduates writing performance. An experimental method was adopted where a total population of 33 second year ESL students were divided into two groups: treatment group (4 males, 12 females) and comparison group (5 males, 12 females). By paring lower and upper values of pre-test to determine the collaborative writing groups for both comparison (face-to-face), and treatment (Facebook turn-taking) groups. After analysis of findings derived in pre-test and pro-test, results showed that participants in Facebook collaborative writing groups obtained higher scores compared to face-to-face collaborative writing groups. This result was attributed to the nature of Facebook being as easy and fun where commentary feedback occurs synchronously and asynchronously.

All of the previous studies indicated the positive effects of using mobile learning in enhancing EFL learners writing. The studies flash the obstacles a researcher may face in conducting related research. As noticed, most of the researches to date are using the mixed research methods of qualitative and quantitative as well as experimental. Since there is a lack in descriptive research on the

topic, this research is going to be conducted to add to the research efforts, and to fill the present gap in an attempt to reflect answers for writing problems specifically in Saudi Arabia. To sum up, this research aims to find out the influence of the collaborative activity on writing tasks, using mobile learning, from the instructors' perspective. Indeed, in order to pursue new trends and get the advantage of these inclinations, it is quite essential to enrich this field with similar descriptive research works in a variety of populations and educational contexts. Eventually, that will participate in burying the gap of such studies in Saudi contexts as it is needed.

1.10: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Writing is a complex cognitive activity (Becker, 2006). Also, it is a challenging and demanding task. It involves the intellectual use of various mental operations and skills a writer deals with in order to meet the need of the reader. A crucial role in avoiding writing restrictions is to implement adequate instructions for students who face writing difficulties to achieve better results in improving writing (Graham, MacArthur, & Fitzgerald, 2008).

According to that, Abu Seileek (2006) reported in a study that was conducted at King Saud University, one of the largest and oldest universities in Saudi Arabia about the most difficult EFL skill, in which declared that 67% of students consider the writing skill the most complicated part in learning language and 60% of professors agreed with same opinion. Therefore, one of the common problems EFL learners face in K.S.A is writing skill (Alsubaie & Alshuraidah, 2017). In addition, the EFL learners misuse correct rules because of the traditional ways which have a crucial role in causing writing difficulties (ibid.). The difficulties EFL learners face are not limited to organizing ideas, but also how to articulate those ideas into clear and comprehensible writing. (Opt. Cit. 2006). In this momentum, Saudi EFL learners are not efficient in writing skills, and they do not even reach the intended goals of the courses by the end of each semester. Therefore, there is a need for developing new approaches, methods, and techniques for teaching EFL writing.

Since the 1990s, people around the world have started using mobile technology on a daily basis. It has been indispensable and in easy reach during all daytime. Hence M-learning goes along with this

sustainable means of communication. Such a characteristic of having an easily reachable source of learning represents a great process for learning. According to Khodi (2015), M-learning enables long term memory of EFL learners when this M-learning takes place daily. Khan (2011) stated that the unfortunate result in English in Saudi Arabia is mainly due to the traditional approach to teaching. Thus, using M-learning can enable instructors to promote motivation, make learning experiences more meaningful and provide them with newer and more powerful tools that will activate their interest in technology. Recently, there has been some light shed on collaborative learning in educational contexts due to the significant role it has played in improving learners' results. Some researchers have argued that students may not engage in group work (Alghasab, 2015). Having reached contradictory findings, Ashman & Gillies (2003) reported the second half of the (20th) century ensured that an individual's behavior is changed when working in a group form. It was found that a group can think more efficiently than the group's best member individually (ibid.) Researchers believe a collaborative activity could be an effective way of EFL writing. Based on that, (Alsubaie & Alshuraidah, 2017) reported that only 5% of learners prefer the individual work to the collaborative work. In consideration of that view, the researcher is inspired to conduct a study to reveal teachers' perception toward the use of mobile applications within collaborative learning to enhance writing skills.

This study aims to investigate instructors' perceptions of the role of mobile applications in collaborative writing.

1.11: RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This study aims to investigate the perceptions of university instructors toward using mobile applications in collaborative writing within EFL classrooms.

1.12: RESEARCH QUESTION

The current study aims to answer the following questions;

- What are the perceptions of university instructors toward using Mobile Applications in collaborative writing within EFL classrooms?

- a- What are the perceptions of university instructors toward usability of Mobile Applications?
- b- What are the perceptions of university instructors toward students' and instructors' satisfaction with using Mobile Applications?
- c- What are the perceptions of university instructors toward Collaborative Writing?
- d- What are the perceptions of university instructors toward the improvement of writing quality with using Mobile Applications?

1.13: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The current study is very important for many reasons:

1. It may help instructors to play an effective role in advocating students' interaction using mobile learning collaborative writing activities.
2. It may provide information for Saudi teachers on the integration of mobile learning in classroom.
3. It may add to the studies as a descriptive study amongst a large number of experimental and mixed-method studies in the field.
4. It will put into consideration for educational practitioners about the importance of integrating technology in teaching -learning process
5. It will contribute to the research related to technology-enhanced language learning particularly mobile technology.

1.14: DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is concerned with the perception of instructors toward using collaborative activities via mobile applications to enhance EFL learners' writing. The location of the study is in Almadinah Almunawarah at Taibah University and was conducted in the second term 1440 - 2019. The sample is delimited to (25) university female instructors.

1.15: DEFINITION OF TERMS

Collaborative Learning (UNESCO, 2013, *p,12*) a process through which learners at various performance levels work together in small groups toward a common goal. It is a learner-centered approach derived from social learning theories as well as the socio-constructivist perspective on learning collaborative learning is a relationship among learners that fosters positive interdependence, individual accountability, and interpersonal skills.

Collaborative writing: is one of the methods of writing contemporary learners are divided into small groups ranging from two to five working together in light of the organizational structure of the work of all members to achieve a specific educational goal (Writing). Students through this process acquire thinking skills and knowledge experiences while practicing writing through mobile applications (Whatsapp, Padlet, GoogleDocs, Edmodo, WordPress, Evernote, Twitter and others).

Mobile-Learning (Corbeil, 2007, *p,52*) defined mobile learning as " the intersection of mobile computing (the application of small, portable, and wireless computing and communication devices) and e-learning (learning facilitated and supported through the use of information and communications technology)".

1.16: RESEARCH ORGANIZATION:

This research consists of three chapters: the first is the introductory pages including the research design and review of literature. The second chapter covers research methodology and procedures. The third consists of results and discussions, the summary, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

2.1: METHODOLOGY

This part provides practical procedures. It reviews in details the necessary process of the current study such as design, sample, instrument, data analysis, validity, and reliability. It discusses in further details the way the current study was conducted.

2.2: DESIGN

The present study is conducted through the quantitative descriptive approach. To define descriptive research, Koh and Owen (2000, pg.4) stated that "descriptive research is a study of status; and widely used in education, nutrition, epidemiology, and the behavioral sciences. Its value is based on the premise that problems can be solved, and practices improved through observations, analysis, and descriptions. " Also, Leedy, Ormrod (2005, pg.146) stated that" it is a type of research that involves either identifying the characteristics of an observed phenomenon or exploring possible associations amount two or more phenomena."

2.3: POPULATIONS & SAMPLE

The sample of the study is (25) EFL university instructors (Female). The population consists of (85) instructors (male and female). The number (25) would constitute almost 25% of total instructors. It is a representative sample. Their ages range between (25-45) years old. The sample is selected as a random representative sample type from Taibah University which is located in the city of Almadinah, Saudi Arabia.

2.3.1 Sample Demography

Demographic Characteristic:

Age	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD	Direction
25-35	10	40%	1.72	0.678	25-45
36-45	12	48%			
46-55	3	12%			

+55	0	0%			
Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD	Direction
32%	8	0-5 years	6-10 years	1.221	2.36
24%	6	6-10 years			
24%	6	11-15 years			
16%	4	16-20 years			
4%	1	+20 years			
Academic Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Mean	SD	Direction
Bachelor	4%	1	Master	0.577	2.20
Master	76%	19			
PhD	16%	4			
Other	4%	1			

T(2)

The most common age group in the sample is 25 - 45 years old. Most teachers are having at least 6-15 years of experience in teaching field. Most of the teachers are Master holders and there are some of PhD holders.

2.4: INSTRUMENT

A questionnaire that consists of (31) items is distributed among (25) Female EFL instructors. The rating scale used is Likert scale including the following options: Strongly agree, agree, neutral, strongly disagree and disagree. The questionnaire was developed to be divided into four dimensions.

The last part includes a few questions in order to assess the instructors' perceptions of collaborative writing using mobile applications experience and its potential as a learning tool. Thus, there was a need to ensure the classes are equipped with a very good internet connection. Moreover, there was a need to consider that the instructor uses mobile learning in the classroom are familiar with interacting with students using this technology. For this sake, a question prior to the questionnaire asks if instructor use mobile applications. Those who answered "No" were excluded from the sample.

2.4.1: Validity of the Instrument

To test the content validity of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was referred by a jury formed of (4) individuals in the field of teaching English as a foreign language. Some necessary modifications were

done to the instruments. Such as; language corrections and dividing the questions into four dimensions;

- Usability of Mobile Applications; What are instructors perceptions toward usability of Mobile Applications?

- Teachers and Students Satisfactions; To what extent instructors and students are satisfied with using Mobile Applications?

-Collaborative Writing Activities: What are instructors' perceptions toward Collaborative Writing?

-Writing Quality Improvement: To what extent writing quality is improved with using Mobile Applications?

2.4.2: Reliability of the Instrument

The researcher calculates the questionnaire reliability of a pilot sample consisted of (5) questionnaire, by applying the Cronbach's Alpha method using *IBM SPSS 23 statistics* program. A scale of Alpha was 83.6, which indicates acceptance fitting of all questions in the questionnaire that are characterized by high stability.

The following tables show the scale of Alpha Cronbach' for all questions and for the four dimensions.

1- For all Questions:

Cronbach's alpha	Validity	Number of items
83.6	91.4	31

T(1.a)

2- For the first dimension (Usability of Mobile Applications)

Cronbach's alpha	Validity	Number of items
83.2	91.2	8

T(1.b)

A scale of 83.2 indicates proper fitting of all questions in the first dimension.

3- For the second dimension (Teachers' and Students' Satisfaction)

Cronbach's alpha	Validity	Number of items
80.4	89.6	6

T(1.c)

A scale of 80.4 indicates acceptance fitting of all questions in the second dimension.

4- For the third dimension (Collaborative Writing Activities)

Cronbach's alpha	Validity	Number of items
87.6	93.5	4

T(1.d)

A scale of 87.6 indicates proper fitting of all questions in the third dimension.

5- for the fourth dimension (Writing Quality Improvement)

Cronbach's alpha	Validity	Number of items
91.7	95.7	4

T(1.e)

A scale of 91.7 indicates excellent fitting of all questions in the fourth dimension.

2.5: PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

This subsection is found to spot the light on all the study’s procedures and illustrate in brief the steps that had been achieved.

The Procedure	The Goal
Reviewing literature on collaborative learning, mobile learning, mobile applications and enhancing EFL learners writing.	to have an idea about the current study and review relevant information
Conducting instrument on Collaborative Writing Using Mobile Application.	To receive correct questionnaire results and statistics.
Establishing the validity of the instrument by a jury of TEFL professionals	To confirm the homogeneity of all questions and to receive correct statistics later on.
Distribute the questionnaire at Taibah University (ELC)	In order to analyze the data and answer the research questions.
Analyzing the result statistically and reporting the results.	To reach answers on research questions
Treating results statistically and providing discussion and interpretation.	
Providing recommendations and suggestions.	To guide further studies.

2.5.1: Data Analysis

The questionnaire reliability was calculated by applying the Cronbach's Alpha method. The statistics program IBM SPSS 23 statistics was used to obtain the results. Since the question of the research is exploring the perceptions of university instructors toward using mobile applications in collaborative writing within EFL classrooms. The data descriptive Statistic table was used for the questionnaire, which is descending the ranking scale of statements

based on the mean score. Furthermore, directions were presented for the four dimensions separately. Conversely, the direction for all axis together is presented. Then, presented the primary questions and lastly the correlations between the four dimensions.

2.5.2: Data Descriptive Statistic for Questionnaire:

Descriptive statistics use the questionnaire' results to give certain data information and support the researcher to provide the significant scores. The following table displays the information about the mean score, standard deviation and the statements' ranking based on instructors' responses. In analyzing the data researcher used (SPSS) program to statistically analyze the questionnaire' result. Each item in the questionnaire is given a value. The items include positive and negative statements. Positive items are scored for (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) not sure, (4) disagree and (5) strongly disagree. However, negative items are scored for (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) not sure, (2) disagree and (1) strongly disagree.

CHAPTER 3

3.1: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

This study focused on instructors' perceptions of the value and efficacy of integrating Mobile Applications with collaborative EFL writing. Several themes emerged from the researcher's questionnaire data, as discussed below. This can be noticed from the following table :

S	Statements	N	Mean	SD	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rank	Interpretation
1	Mobile application bring the real world into the writing classroom	25	2.32	0.980	20%	44%	20%	16%	0 %	18	agree
2	Mobile application are a useful resource for writing activities	25	2.40	0.866	12%	48%	28%	12%	0 %	21	agree
3	Mobile application help learners to generate ideas using critical thinking	25	2.28	0.792	12%	56%	24%	8%	0 %	17	agree
4	in the prior writing tasks, mobile applications are effective in group-discussion activities	25	2.24	0.970	20%	48%	24%	4%	4 %	16	agree
5	using mobile applications in group work within the writing class is time consuming	25	3.20	0.913	4%	40%	28%	28%	0 %	22	Not sure
6	the use of mobile applications promote exchanging knowledge	25	1.92	0.909	36%	44%	12%	8%	0 %	7	agree
7	The use of mobile applications increases interaction among learners	25	2.16	0.987	28%	40%	20%	12%	0 %	14	agree
8	Using mobile applications promotes the collaborative learning environment	25	2.04	0.889	28%	48%	16%	8%	0 %	11	agree
9	Using mobile applications makes the writing classroom environment more interesting	25	1.88	0.927	40%	40%	12%	8%	0 %	6	agree

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10	Students prefer writing using mobile applications to writing using the traditional method	25	2.16	0.746	16%	56%	24%	4%	0%	12	agree
S	Statements	N	Mean	SD	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rank	Inter-pretation
11	Students enjoy writing when mobile applications are implemented	25	2.32	0.900	12%	56%	24%	4%	4%	19	agree
12	Mobile applications help learners to be creative	25	2.16	0.987	24%	48%	20%	4%	4%	13	agree
13	Using mobile applications in writing activities increase students' learning satisfaction	25	2.20	0.764	16%	52%	28%	4%	0%	15	agree
14	Learners like to see their peers interact with the content they post via mobile applications	25	1.96	0.676	24%	56%	20%	0%	0%	9	agree
15	Writing collaboratively increases learner's participation	25	1.76	0.779	40%	48%	8%	4%	0%	5	Strongly agree
16	Learning occurs when learners exchange information with their group members in collaborative writing	25	1.76	0.723	36%	56%	4%	4%	0%	4	Strongly agree
17	Collaborative activities are a useful way in brainstorming for writing	25	1.64	0.569	40%	56%	4%	0%	0%	1	Strongly agree
18	Collaborative writing influences learners' communicative ability positively	25	1.68	0.690	40%	56%	4%	0%	0%	2	Strongly agree
19	Collaborative activities in writing may help EFL learners focus their attention on the topic	25	1.96	0.539	16%	72%	12%	0%	0%	10	agree
20	Collaborative activities enrich learners' use of vocabulary in writing	25	1.96	0.790	24%	64%	4%	8%	0%	8	agree
21	Collaborative activities promote learners' use of grammar in writing	25	2.32	0.748	8%	60%	24%	8%	0%	20	agree

22	Feedback and editing from peers are useful in improving learners' writing skills	25	1.68	0.627	40%	52%	8%	0%	0%	3	Strongly agree
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The statements were ranked according to the mean score. It is evident that the statement which got the highest rank is *Collaborative activities area useful way in brainstorming for writing* (M 1.64/ SD 0.569). 96.66% of the teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that collaborative activities are decisive for brainstorming. No doubt, students who work together in a group input various ideas before conducting a text. This result comes in agreement with that of Dale (1994), who found that each student in a collaborative group attained different skills in writing. As a result, some students can excel in brainstorming. Additionally, it was found in Murtiana' research (2017) that students' responses showed they were pleased when brainstorming.

The second item regarding the ranking scale is *Collaborative writing influences learners' communicative ability positively* (M 1.68 /SD 0.690). The results point out that the majority of instructors (96%) agreed or strongly agreed that collaborative writing encourages communication amongst learners. This result affirms Dale's statement that all thinking aspects in writing tasks assist students in interacting and responding to each other. Beside, Algassab (2015) stated that unlike traditional classrooms, the learners take the initiative to contribute to their study material and widen the knowledgeable aspects covered with their tutor on standby, rather than the tutor providing the study material to the learners. All the previous strengthen the communicative ability among group members.

The third item, The feedback, and editing from peers are useful in improving learners' writing skills (M 1.68/ SD 0.627), indicates that 92% of instructors agreed or strongly agreed that feedback and editing from peers improve learners' writing skills. It notably enhanced their knowledge about text coherence which in turn improved their EFL writing as Mutwarasibo (2013) stated. The majority of instructors (92%) realized that learning occurs when learners exchange information with their group members in collaborative writing (M 1.76/ SD0.723). No doubt, students in small groups can help each other by exchanging ideas and different

experiences. In the same vein, Laal (2017) found that collaborative learning occurs when small groups of students help each other to learn. Additionally, Siraj, Dewitt, and Elyas (2013) point out that interactions on collaborative tools may be useful for learning.

The fifth item is *Writing collaboratively increases learner's participation* (M 1.76/SD 0.779). 88% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that learners participate more when they write collaboratively. This result represents Alkhalaf' (2011) findings of collaborative e-learning environments which allow students who are shy to participate in face-to-face or online discussions. Also, students can offer and receive critiques, negotiate, and build consensus. This advantage may be of particular significance in KSA, where face-to-face interactions between male and female learners are not often available.

The sixth item is *Using mobile applications makes the writing classroom environment more interesting* (M 1.88/ SD 0.927). According to 80% of the instructors, writing classroom environments are more interesting when using mobile applications. This result comes in agreement with the result of Awaludin, Karin & Saad (2017), in which the study explored positive attitude after the use of the mobile application (Padlet). It is noteworthy to mention the result of Suwantarathip & Wichadee (2014) that showed affirmative acceptance by learners regarding the use of Google Docs.

The item that ranks seven is *The use of mobile applications promotes exchanging knowledge* 80% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed (M 1.92 / SD .909) that the use of mobile applications evokes exchanging knowledge amongst learners. This result was found in a previous study by Laal (2017), which indicated that students who work collaboratively exchange diverse beliefs and question other conceptual frameworks.

Regarding enriching learners' vocabulary item, 88% of instructors agreed that *The use of vocabulary is enriched within collaborative activities* (M 1.96 /SD 0.790). This result supports the finding of Algassab, (2015) who stated collaborative' activities enhance vocabulary acquisition.

According to the statement of *Learners like to see their peers interact with the content they post via mobile applications* (M 1.96 / SD 0.676), a total of 80% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that learners like to see their peers interact with items they post using

Mobile Applications. It is a known fact that learning would occur through the sharing of opinions and information primarily via the fascinating world of learners (Mobile applications). The act of sharing gives the learner the responsibility of thinking fast and ensuring the posted information. There is a finding by Siraj, Dewitt, and Elyas (2013) where students were interested in seeing their friends' comments, and sharing on the platform of mobile applications.

The item that ranks tenth is *Collaborative activities in writing may help EFL learners focus their attention on the topic* (M 1.96/ SD 0.539). It indicates that 88% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that learners focus more on the writing topic when they participate in collaborative activities.

The eleventh item is *The use of mobile applications promote the collaborative learning environment* (M 2.04/ SD 0.889). 76% of instructors believed that when Mobile Applications are used inside classrooms, the collaborative learning environment is boosted. Concerning this fact, Cheong (2012) presented a communication app that allows students to engage so that they can practice high order-thinking and social interaction. The results of the app significantly supported collaborative learning in a lecture-like environment.

The twelfth item is that *Students prefer writing using mobile applications to writing using the traditional method* (M 2.16/ SD 0.746). It indicated that 72% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that learners preferred using Mobile applications in writing classrooms instead of traditional ways. This result emphasized on Rambe & Chipunza's (2013) findings of WhatsApp that students are given possibilities to express themselves in a non-restricted environment. Similarly, Kinash and Mathew (2012), reported that the majority of students prefer to visit sites while in-class. Posting on Facebook was one of their most preferable activity. Moreover, Fattah's result (2015) showed that students were pleased with the freedom of writing whenever so wherever they wanted.

The thirteenth item, mobile applications help learners to be creative (M 2.16/ SD0.987) indicates that 72% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that learners are more creative when using mobile applications.

The fourteenth item, *The use of mobile applications increases interaction among learners* (M 2.16/ SD 0.987), indicates that 68% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that learners interact more

when using Mobile applications. Cheong (2012), emphasizes that it is a matter of fact that using Mobile Application connects others emphasizes that of Cheong (2012) when presented an app whereas communication is typically used.

The fifteenth item, *Using mobile applications in writing activities increase students' learning satisfaction* (M 2.20/ SD 0.764), indicates that 68% of the instructors agreed alternatively strongly agreed that students' learning satisfaction is increased when using Mobile Applications during writing activities. It is noteworthy to mention that large numbers of learners reported their enjoyment and interest when using the application as reported by Alsubaie & Alshuraidah (2017).

The sixteenth item is in the prior writing tasks; *Mobile applications are effective in group-discussion activities* (M 2.24/ SD 0.970). It indicated that 68% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed or that students' group discussion is enhanced when using mobile applications. Susanti & Tarmuji's (2016) research findings showed that WhatsApp brings successful group-discussion in a pre-writing activity. Especially, when the techniques presented the features in WhatsApp, such as; share audio, video, picture, links, document, and text.

The seventeenth item, *Mobile applications help learners to generate ideas using critical thinking* (M 2.28/ SD 0.792), indicated that 68% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that Mobile applications help learners generate ideas using critical thinking.

The eighteenth item, *Mobile applications bring the real world into the writing classroom* (M 2.32/ SD 0.980), indicates that 64% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed.

The nineteenth item, *Mobile applications bring the real world into the writing classroom* (M 2.32/ SD 0.980), indicates that 64% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that Mobile applications bring the real world into the writing classroom.

The twentieth item, *Collaborative activities promote learners' use of grammar in writing* (M 1.96/ SD 0.790), indicates that 68% of the instructors agreed or strongly agreed that learners use grammar more when writing collaboratively. This result agreed with that of Nabati's (2018), which found that the writing performance of Telegram' participants was improved. In other words, Telegram was

shown to have a significant effect on improving EFL learners' writing accuracy.

The twenty-first item, *Mobile applications are a useful resource for writing activities* (M 2.40/ SD 0.866), indicated that 60% of the instructors agreed that Mobile applications are a useful resource for writing activities.

The twenty-second item, *Using mobile applications in group work within the writing class is time consuming* (M 3.20/ SD 0.913), indicated that 44% of the instructors agreed that using mobile applications during group work within the writing class is time-consuming. 56% of the instructors are between 'not sure' and 'don't agree.' As a result, this indicates that more teachers don't believe it is time consuming considering that they are aware of mobile applications' evolvement over the years. It is obvious that students love mobile applications. They can use the apps' features to enhance the depth of learning. Moreover, students can do their homework in the apps while at home, as it is not restricted to the use inside the classroom. Another advantage of using mobile applications is that the students can do their writing assignments at any time and any place directly through their mobile phone. For example, they can do their assignments at home, in the cafeteria, in the early morning, in the afternoon or at midnight. There is no limit in time or space. As a matter of fact, learners can't actually catch every point in the lecture while it is being delivered in the classroom.

Findings of the First dimension: (Usability of Mobile Applications):

The table below shows the results of first dimension (Usability of Mobile Applications) related to the opinions' of the teachers towards the usability of the mobile application in learning the result shows that mobile applications can be used for learning by the final direction of (agree) with mean of 2.32 and SD of 0.686, and the most teachers who answer the Questionnaire about 22 of 25 use mobile applications in teaching EFL by mean of 1.12 and SD of 0.332.

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Question number	Scale	Strongly agree	agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Direction
Q6	Frequency	5	11	5	4	0	2.32	0.980	Agree
	Percentage	20%	44%	20%	16%	0%			
Q7	Frequency	3	12	7	3	0	2.40	0.866	Agree
	Percentage	12%	48%	28%	12%	0%			
Q8	Frequency	3	14	6	2	0	2.28	0.792	Agree
	Percentage	12%	56%	24%	8%	0%			
Q9	Frequency	5	12	6	1	1	2.24	0.970	agree
	Percentage	20%	48%	24%	4%	4%			
Q10	Frequency	1	10	7	7	0	3.20	0.913	Not sure
	Percentage	4%	40%	28%	28%	0%			
Q11	Frequency	9	11	3	2	0	1.92	0.909	agree
	Percentage	36%	44%	12%	8%	0%			
Q12	Frequency	7	10	5	3	0	2.16	0.987	agree
	Percentage	28%	40%	20%	12%	0%			
Q13	Frequency	7	12	4	2	0	2.04	0.889	agree
	Percentage	28%	48%	16%	8%	0%			
Total	Frequency	40	92	43	24	1	2.32	0.686	agree
	Percentage	20%	46%	21%	12%	0.5%			

T.(3)

Findings of the second dimension: (Teachers' and Students' Satisfaction):

The table below shows the results of the second dimension (Teachers' and Students' Satisfaction). Regarding instructors' opinions towards their satisfaction of using mobile applications in learning. The table shows that most are satisfied with using mobile applications in learning and they are aware of its crucial support in teaching and learning by the final direction of (agree) with mean of 2.11 and SD of 0.550.

Question number	Scale	Strongly agree	agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	mean	Standard Deviation	Direction
Q14	Frequency	10	10	3	2	0	1.88	0.927	agree
	Percentage	40%	40%	12%	8%	0%			
Q15	Frequency	4	14	6	1	0	2.16	0.746	agree
	Percentage	16%	56%	24%	4%	0%			
Q16	Frequency	3	14	6	1	1	2.32	0.9	agree
	Percentage	12%	56%	24%	4%	4%			
Q17	Frequency	6	12	5	1	1	2.16	0.987	agree
	Percentage	24%	48%	20%	4%	4%			
Q18	Frequency	4	13	7	1	0	2.20	0.764	agree
	Percentage	16%	52%	28%	4%	0%			
Q19	Frequency	6	14	5	0	0	1.96	0.676	agree
	Percentage	24%	56%	20%	0%	0%			
Total	Frequency	33	77	32	6	2	2.11	0.550	agree
	Percentage	22%	51%	21%	4%	1%			

T.(4)

The Findings of the third dimension: (Collaborative Writing Activities):

In the third dimension related to the opinions' of the instructors towards the Collaborative Writing Activities using mobile. It shows strong agreement, which indicates the role of mobile in supporting collaborative writing with mean of 1.71 and SD of 0.529. Most of instructors, about 60%, describe their experience as enjoyable and effective experiences. On the other hand, most instructors, about 80%, see that collaborative writing using mobile application improve critical thinking. Also, 54% of teacher see a positive influence of collaborative using mobile application on learners' teamwork.

Question Number	Scale	Strongly agree	agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Direction
Q20	Frequency	10	12	2	1	0	1.76	0.779	Strongly agree
	Percentage	40%	48%	8%	4%	0%			
Q21	Frequency	9	14	1	1	0	1.76	0.723	Strongly agree
	Percentage	36%	56%	4%	4%	0%			
Q22	Frequency	10	14	1	0	0	1.64	0.569	Strongly agree
	Percentage	40%	56%	4%	0%	0%			
Q23	Frequency	10	14	1	0	0	1.68	0.690	Strongly agree
	Percentage	40%	56%	4%	0%	0%			
Total	Frequency	39	54	5	2	0	1.71	0.538	Strongly agree
	Percentage	39%	54%	5%	2%	0%			

T.(5)

The Findings of the fourth dimension: (Writing Quality Improvement):

The table below shows the results of the fourth dimension related to the opinions' of the instructors towards the ability to use mobile application in improving the Quality of writing. The final direction shows a mean of 1.98 and SD of 0.529 with the final direction of (agree), and according to the primary questions, 50% of instructors see it enhances the quality of writing.

Question Number	Scale	Strongly agree	agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation	Direction
Q27	Frequency	4	18	3	0	0	1.96	0.539	Agree
	Percentage	16%	72%	12%	0%	0%			
Q28	Frequency	6	16	1	2	0	1.96	0.790	Agree
	Percentage	24%	64%	4%	8%	0%			
Q29	Frequency	2	15	6	2	0	2.32	0.748	Agree
	Percentage	8%	60%	24%	8%	0%			
Q30	Frequency	10	13	2	0	0	1.68	0.627	Strongly agree
	Percentage	40%	52%	8%	0%	0%			

Total	Frequency	22	62	12	4	0	1.98	0.529	Agree
	Percentage	22%	62%	12%		4%	0%		

T.(6)

The table below is briefing the final direction of the whole questions in the questionnaire. The Final direction of all dimensions shows that instructors perceive mobile applications to be very useful in the learning process and can be applied and have their effect in improving critical thinking and collaborative writing and others by mean of 2.03 and SD of 0.504 and final direction of (agree).

The axes	mean	Standard deviation	Direction
Usability of Mobile Applications	2.32	0.686	Agree
Teachers' and Students' Satisfactions	2.11	0.550	Agree
Collaborative Writing Activities	1.71	0.538	Strongly agree
Writing Quality Improvement	1.98	0.529	Agree
Final Result	2.03	0.504	Agree

T.(12)

According to other questions such as; *do you use mobile applications in teaching EFL* (M1.12/SD0.332) indicating that 88% of the instructors use mobile application in EFL classroom. On the other hand, only 12% of instructors do not.

Regarding the learners' experiences of the question *How do you describe your experience when learners in your classroom wrote collaboratively using Mobile Applications* (M 3.61/SD1.438) indicating that 86% think it is enjoyable, effective and insightful, while none of instructors believe it's boring.

The following question, *To what extent does collaborative writing using Mobile Applications influence learners critical thinking ability. (Critical thinking is defined here as the ability to create more ideas and identify potential problems)* (M 3.44/SD 0.814) that indicates that 43% of instructors believe that collaborative writing using Mobile Applications influence learners critical thinking with a percentage of (80%). This finding supports the results of previous studies on learners' thinking ability, especially on critical thinking skill. According to Conradi (2014), from the *Connectivism* perspective,

she stated that thinking critically is enhanced when a learner is interacting with skilled social partners.

The next question; *How do you evaluate the influence of collaborative writing using Mobile Application on learners' teamwork* (M 2.00/SD0.780) indicating that 78% believe it's very positive or positive. Team-working in a virtual context provides along with privacy, the freedom of turn-taking and ways of expressions that encounter many difficulties in the direct face-to-face contexts. The tendency of today's world is explicitly prevalent in the outcomes shown in the findings of the previous studies (Aghajani, 2018; Tarmuji, 2016; Shukor, 2014)

The following question *To what extent do you believe collaborative writing using Mobile Applications enhances the quality of learners' writing* (M3.44/ SD0.892) indicates that 50% instructors believe collaborative writing using Mobile Applications enhances the quality of writing with a percentage of (80%).

By considering this result, it is crucial to mention that some critics of online education argue that online environments are not able to provide students with the same quality of learning that traditional classes can provide. From their perspectives, online environments require too much from learners, also it may cause failure for students who lack experience of using technology. On the other hand, there are many studies proved that students writing performance was improved in collaborative writing by the use of *Facebook* (Noordin, 2014), *Whatsapp* (Susanti and Tarmuji, 2016 ; Fattah, 2015), *Telegram* (Aghajani and Adloo, 2018), *GoogleDocs* (Suwantarathip & Wichadee, 2014 ; Alsubaie & Alshuraidah, 2017), *WordPress*, *iWrite* (Amir, Ismail and Hussain, 2010). Besides, other studies were conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of other mobile applications, such as *Helipad*, *iNetWord* and *Zoho Notebook* (Orehovacki, 2011).

CONCLUSION

This study is an attempt to infer the perceptions of EFL instructors upon applying Mobile Applications, in particular, towards integrating these applications with collaborative writing within EFL classrooms. The study conducted a questionnaire among a population of (25) instructors in an English Language Center in Madinah, Saudi Arabia. The questionnaire reliability was conducted by applying the

Cronbach's Alpha method using *IBM SPSS 23 statistics* program, where the scale of Alpha was relatively high (83.6), which indicated acceptance fitting of all questions in the questionnaire that were characterized by high stability. Findings confirmed the positive attitude towards integrating mobile applications with collaborative writing. Indeed findings confirmed derived from so many diversified previous studies conducted worldwide without exception in similar instance. Those previous studies explored many perspectives related to an independent application and its impact on enhancing EFL learning especially writing skill, and it appeared that the tendency of today's world is explicitly prevalent in the outcomes shown in the findings of each of the studies we evaluated. Therefore, it is indispensable to adopt an orientation within curricula designers to cope with this interchanging world. Observations concluded from so many studies conducted on web-generated contexts: Blogs, Telegram, WhatsApp, Facebook and others, showed findings that reflect a massive effect and remarkable output when using these modern tools with different techniques in an attempt to enhance collaborative writing in particular. Collaborative writing is now getting a step-forward to pursue modernity features. EFL benefits from these applications quantitatively (in their pervasiveness) and qualitatively (in their convenience). In this study, a four-dimensional questionnaire was designed to cover these areas: Usability of Mobile Applications, satisfaction with using Mobile Applications, instructors' perception towards collaborative writing and whether writing quality has improved when using these applications. The social interaction when practicing collaborative writing played a meaningful role in adopting this trend and integrating these new technology tools. Smartphones are now equipped with applications covering different aspects of life, they have been introduced in the manner of 'touch and grab'. In this instance, education thinkers rushed to get advantage of this trend, in the process of 'quest for the best'. Collaborative writing is not an exception in this regard. This study revealed collaterally that acceptability of Mobile Learning can be attributed to its nature of combining joyful and interesting mode with learning process, the thing which led to browse positive attitude among students, consequently appeared in the perceptions of instructors. A bottom line, this study recommends EFL instructors to pursue and integrate Mobile Applications with collaborative writing and other lingual fields

of teaching foreign language skills and to conduct experimental studies to investigate the effectiveness of using these applications in teaching or learning various language skills and aspects. Also, the attitudes of students require further investigation to have a full image of impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations could be made in the light of the findings;

- To connect learning processes with the rapid changes of peoples' interests, it becomes inevitable to continuously have a look at the modern virtual environment to which eyes are stretched 24/7, (pointing at our smartphones). Educational thinkers have to urge curricula designers to introduce intakes that cope with the characteristics of each software.
- Teachers should act selectively in addressing writing skills' problems to meet the needs of learners in the best way. Currently, a range of platforms for instance blogs (Wordpress, Blogspot), microblogs (Twitter, Posterous, Tumblr), social networking sites (Facebook, Academia, LinkedIn), photo-sharing sites (Instagram, Cymera), instant messaging (Whatsapp, WeChat, LINE), and many more. A need for benefiting from these platforms is quite pressing.
- E-learning must assign educational programmers to instantly drag the curricula intake into these applications. Billions around the world found their way to display their services accordingly, logistics, delivery services, banking, e-governments, etc. Nevertheless, education thinkers are still hesitant to compare these new environments with the traditional peers and face-to-face conventional tools. It's obvious to suggest to start with half the way: To divide the schooling hours between (1) direct traditional face-to-face nature, which is in some areas very crucial and necessary; and (2) virtual environment where instructions to be dealt with interactively. In the latter, it's better to start with assignments and homework tasks.

- Exams and evaluative tools can also become partially online and interactive.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Further research suggested in the following areas:

- Future studies can highlight the capabilities of latest mobile technologies and finding out the best practices in writing to formulate and develop mobile learning and teaching theory.
- Future studies can examine specific mobile applications designed for EFL learning to provide advantages and disadvantages of these applications.
- Further research can examine the students' perceptions of mobile applications. This can be conducted before and after integrating the use of mobile technologies in learning and teaching in EFL learning, as the individuals' acceptance and perceptions are changing over time especially after the experience.
- Further research could also examine to what extent the teacher behavior promote student mobile applications collaboration.
- Research tools like questionnaires, opinion inferences and quizzes are better to be designed for online or software answering. Response to modern presentations proves to be higher.

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