

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the background of the research, research questions, research purposes, significance of the research, conceptual framework, and previous studies.

A. Research Background

Essay writing is an essential skill in academic writing. Greetham (2022) defines that writing an essay is a significant opportunity for learning. Oshima and Hogue (1998) states that rather than being limited to one or two paragraphs, an essay is a longer piece of writing. Just like a paragraph, it is written about a single topic. Unfortunately, a single paragraph is unable to handle the complexity of an essay's topic. To accommodate each of the main points, the topic must be divided into multiple paragraphs.

Writing essays encourages analytical and critical thinking. Students have to identify and evaluate relevant evidence in addition to create coherent, well-structured arguments. However, students of a second or foreign language frequently struggle with spelling, grammar, vocabulary, or a mix of these (Doró, 2014). Moreover, because an essay is a lengthier piece of writing than a paragraph or two, it is considered to be the most challenging assignment for EFL students to complete (Khuong, 2022).

In addition, Ariyanti and Fitriana (2017) claims that learners faced minor difficulties in essay writing, such as paragraph organization. This research focus on essay writing using pictures on Pinterest, since the students have challenges in paragraph organization. However, learners' difficulties are quite extensive, it is not only about the content of their essay. For example, Cheng (2007) affirms that learners often do not feel confident to do a peer correction with their friends.

Moreover, in writing an essay, learners might have to utilize technology to support their writing. For instance, Shermis and Burstein (2003) state that writing prose could be evaluate and scoring through computer programs, that is Automated Essay Evaluation (AEE). In that case, technology is a common educational tool

nowadays. Technology is used in daily life as well, primarily to increase efficiency and productivity (Singh, 2021). Other than AEE program, Pinterest platform is one piece of technology that can be used in education. Pinterest was introduced in 2010 as a website where users could save or upload pictures (Fung, Blankenship, Ahweyevu, Cooper, Duke, Carswell, Jackson, Jenkins, Duncan, Liang, Fu, and Tse, 2020). The present study supports the idea that features on Pinterest could be helpful for EFL learners, as it is claimed to be assisting learners with their creative interpretation abilities in writing essays (Karyati and Rahmawati, 2022).

Furthermore, Pinterest provides relevant information that the users can be noted and selected in the form of pins or pictures (Kasakowskij and Fietkiewicz, 2020). Ma, Sun, and Zhang (2019) state that Pinterest has grown quickly into a “catalogue of ideas” where users can find, arrange, and share pictures. In line with this statement, the present study chooses to analyze Pinterest as a source for generating ideas.

This present study is supported by several findings from previous relevant research. Chapman, Wright, and Pascoe (2019) explore the use of online platforms, such as Pinterest, as a resource for arts teaching in time-poor and pressured teaching environments. In a similar vein, Schroeder, Curcio, and Lundgren (2019) describe how teachers engage with Pinterest and examine the different ways in which teachers utilize it to improve their teaching methods, share professional practices, and obtain educational materials. In addition, the study by Sashittal (2015) examines the motivation behind college students’ use of Pinterest. This study affirms that Pinterest usage among college students is driven by their desire for an experience of authenticity and enrichment.

While the previous studies above investigated the use of Pinterest by students in the art department, the present study explores the experiences of EFL learners in the language department in writing their essays. For that reason, this present study explores students’ experiences in writing their essays, and also investigates the results of their essays.

B. Research Questions

This study analyzes EFL learners' experiences using pictures on Pinterest as their source to explore ideas for essay writing. Therefore, this study formulates two questions, presented as follows:

1. What are the experiences of EFL learners when using pictures on Pinterest?
2. How are the essay writing results of EFL learners when using pictures on Pinterest?

The first research question requires semi-structured interviews to collect data to investigate students' experiences using Pinterest, especially to explore ideas for their essay writing. Raworth (2012) affirms that semi-structured interviews cover specified topics in an informal style while focusing on particular topics. In order to answer the second research question, the researcher uses document analysis. The participants' essays are the focus of this analysis.

C. Research Purposes

The two distinct aims of this study are determined by the research questions that guide the study's direction. The main goal is to explore the experiences of EFL learners when using picture on Pinterest. In order to determine the results of their experiences, the second goal is to describe the ways EFL learners write essays when they utilize picture on Pinterest.

These two focuses of the study obtain from interview and document analysis. The experiences in using Pinterest should first be explored using qualitative methods through purposive sampling. After determining the experiences of EFL learners, the study conducted a semi-structured interview to more deeply investigate their experiences. Furthermore, their personal essay writing will be analysed as documentation to demonstrate their experience.

D. Research Significances

EFL learners tend to consider essay writing to be challenging. Thus, the aim of this study is to investigate how EFL learners use Pinterest pictures to generate ideas

for their essays. It is significant since it focuses on identifying how Pinterest could enhance EFL learners' writing processes. Furthermore, the findings of this study are expected to have both theoretical and practical implications for the field of education.

On a theoretical level, this study suggests using Pinterest as a resource to investigate essay topic ideas. Specifically, it recommends EFL learners who have not been using Pinterest as a medium to generate essay writing ideas. This study believes that Pinterest is an outstanding tool for exploring essay topic ideas. Moreover, this study could be beneficial for teachers or educators. This study is useful in order to utilize Pinterest to teach the students in generating ideas.

On a practical level, this study provides information regarding Pinterest's impact on the process of writing essays. Pinterest could make it more convenient for EFL learners to discover essay topics. Additionally, the findings of this study are expected to assist EFL learners who have been using Pinterest to use it more frequently to obtain ideas for their essays.

E. Conceptual Framework

This study examines EFL learners' experiences in using picture on Pinterest to generate ideas for their essays. Their experiences could influence the process of their writing. In addition, it could also have an effect on the way they write they essays. The theoretical framework for this study is presented in the figure below.

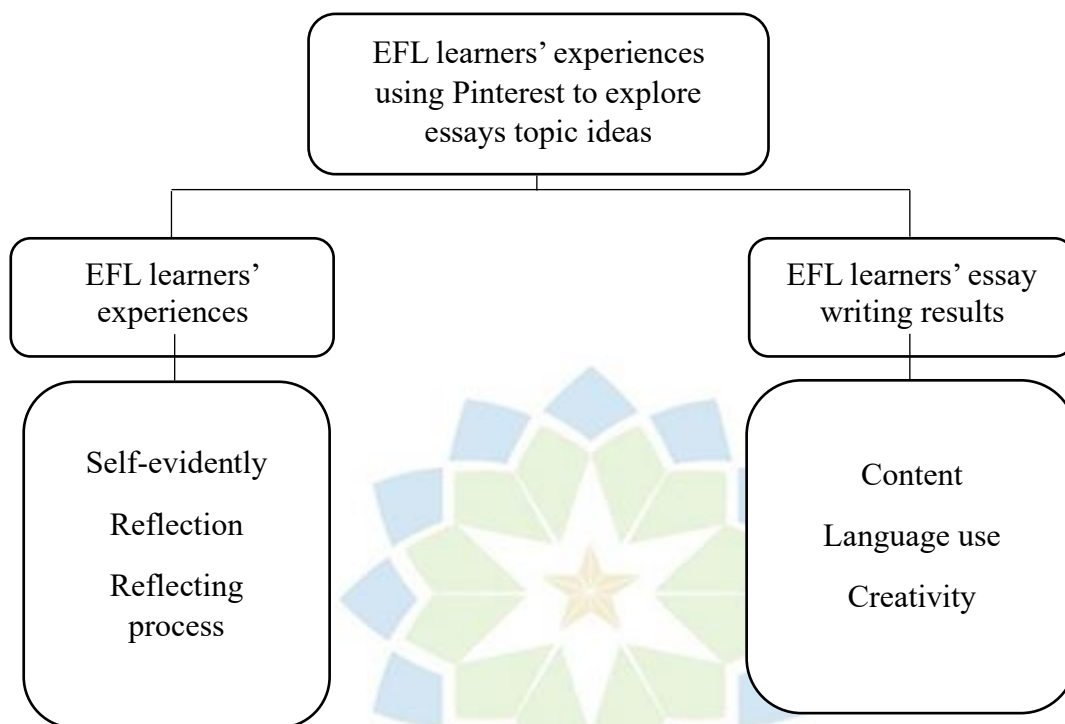


Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is presented in Figure 1.1. It illustrates the relationship between EFL learners' experiences and their essay writing results. EFL learners' experiences include their process, challenges, and insights into using Pinterest. Additionally, good essay writing should be coherent, well-structured, and plagiarism free.

In exploring ideas to select as essay topics, Pinterest provides useful features. Users of Pinterest can create collections of pictures they like or stumble upon interesting ones by using the pinboard features (Miller, 2012). Miller (2012) also defines the process of generating ideas on Pinterest: users locate and select pictures, then click "Pin It" to add them to their pinboards. Moreover, users can create custom boards and categorize these collections based on topics or categories. In this way, it can make it easier and more effective for learners to find inspiration for their essay topic.

Hounsell (1997) states that essays have been considered to primarily present a topic that has been shaped by ideas. Oktavianti, Gusmuliana, and Apriani (2021) also define writing an essay as expressing ideas and thoughts through its content. Considering that an essay is an instance of academic writing, formal statement forms are typically utilized. Other than that, there are several characteristics of well-written content. Ibnian (2011) defines that EFL learners' writing should include being able to construct coherent, well structured, and acceptable words. Therefore, this study focuses on students' essay writing results to identify these characteristics.

The first characteristic is a coherent essay. Megaiab (2023) defines coherence as the orderly explanation of ideas from the discussed topic. The essay ideas will be expressed more logically and flowfully. An essay that employs a coherent structure will be regarded as well-written. The second characteristic is a well-structured essay. According to Bulqiyah, Mahbub, and Nugraheni (2021), the regular structures for an essay consist of an introduction paragraph, a body paragraph, and a conclusion paragraph. Therefore, a well-structured essay should consist of these three structures. The third characteristic is that the writing should not claim someone's idea; it can also be called plagiarism. Students must avoid plagiarism, as Lambert, Hogan, and Barton (2003) define plagiarism as academic dishonesty that is a deceptive action in any academic work.

Through pictures on Pinterest, EFL learners could use it to explore ideas for writing their essays effectively. McClaren (2019) adds that Pinterest can help in an effective and interesting learning process. In other words, Pinterest ensures that using it should not be difficult. Moreover, developing knowledge by using visual media is perhaps the greatest media provided nowadays to further develop skills in writing, especially essay writing.

Three major concepts are emphasized by Boud, Keogh, and Walker (2013) in order to comprehend students' experiences. First of all, self-evidently, although educators offer help and direction, students are the main agents of their own educational experiences. Second, reflection acts as a conscious process of critical analysis and education. Last but not least, the reflective process entails a complicated interaction between mental processes and emotions, in which pleasant

feelings can promote learning while negative ones may inhibit it. Gaining an understanding of different kinds of experience is crucial for learning and personal development. Finally, this study uses these concepts of experience to explore students' experiences using Pinterest to explore their essay writing ideas.

In conclusion, the theoretical framework that has been described provides an outstanding foundation on which this study project may effectively address the two research questions. The framework has made it possible for this study to ensure that it will be able to make a significant contribution to the present knowledge. The framework has also been supported by Ibnian (2011) and Boud, et.al. (2013) theories.

F. Previous Studies

The current study is relevant to several previous studies. Firstly, Yingkunakul (2022) reveals the use of Pinterest to develop recount writing ability, specifically by using the curriculum cycle approach. A descriptive-qualitative method was used in this study. The participants of this study consisted of 33 freshmen undergraduate students with Thailand nationals from Chandrakasem Rajabhat University. The study results showed that pictures on Pinterest influenced students' recount writing development. These pictures helped the students get ideas to describe thoughts related to orientation, body, and re-orientation. This study relates to the current study regarding the use of Pinterest in writing. The difference is that this study focuses on using Pinterest to produce recount writing.

Secondly, Abdullah, Hashim, and Mahmud (2018) indicate the use of Pinterest as an alternative pre-writing strategy and students' perceptions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of Pinterest. This study used an experimental research design. The data was collected from two secondary school students in Putrajaya. In this study, two classes were chosen: the controlled group and the uncontrolled group. The findings of this study revealed that the use of Pinterest as an alternative pre-writing strategy actually helped students develop ideas for writing essays. Students uncover several advantages to using Pinterest as a pre-

writing strategy: developing ideas, gaining new knowledge, and writing better essays. However, students often face challenges when using Pinterest as a learning medium. 80% students claimed that the other features on Pinterest tend to distract them. Other than that, the challenge that they face is the stability of the internet. This study correlates with the current study because it discusses Pinterest as a medium to generate ideas for writing essays. However, the difference is that this study focuses on using Pinterest as a pre-writing strategy.

Thirdly, Amalia, Andris, and Widiyanto (2023) identify the effectiveness of using Pinterest in writing descriptive text, specifically in teaching descriptive text to seventh grade students. This study used a quantitative method with a pre-experimental design. 24 students from classes VII-H became the sample for this study. This study used a non-probability sampling type, the purposive sampling technique. The findings of this study show that there is a significant influence of Pinterest on students' ability to write descriptive text. By comparing the task scores before and after post-test treatment, the findings could be verified. Furthermore, Pinterest not only proved to help students enhance their ability to write descriptive text, yet it also showed students' enthusiasm for learning English. This study relates to the current study because both discuss Pinterest as a source for writing, especially in generating ideas based on pictures on Pinterest.

Lastly, Sulaiman, Yunus, Hashim, Azilah, Kamilia, and Zaireen (2018) investigate students' perceptions of using Pinterest as an ESL pre-writing strategy. This study also identifies students' advantages and challenges when using Pinterest. This study used a quantitative method. The respondents to this study consisted of 50 secondary school students from Menara Gading Academy. This study shows that using Pinterest as a pre-writing strategy helps students expand their ideas. In addition, the majority of the students found Pinterest easy to use. This study correlates with the current study regarding the use of Pinterest to explore ideas for essay writing.

In conclusion, the previous studies above demonstrated that Pinterest is an effective medium to boost students' writing abilities. However, the current study focuses on exploring EFL learners' experiences using pictures on Pinterest to

generate ideas for essay writing. Analyzing students' essay writing results when using Pinterest as a source to explore ideas.

