

## **PERCEPTION OF USING “PADLET” AS A MULTIMODAL TEXT TO ENHANCE THE FIRST YEAR UNDERGRADUATES’ ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS**

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The foundation of the multimodal approach to literacy is the idea that meanings are created through a variety of representational and communicational resources, including verbal, visual, auditory, gestural, and unique designs. Therefore, the possibility of incorporating all the means of meaning-making into efficient learning techniques has been made clear by the use of technology-based multimodal texts. To enable the integration of technology into the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classroom, a shift in literacy pedagogy from traditional teaching approaches to modern teaching approaches is necessary. In the online teaching context to inspire the students and improve learner engagement, teachers can incorporate a variety of multimodal texts. Therefore, the present study is attempted to identify the perceptions of using “Padlet” as a multimodal text to enhance the learners’ academic writing skills for the first-year undergraduates of the Faculty of Science at a recognized state university in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The study is consisted of two research questions; a) what are the perceptions of the undergraduates on the usage of “Padlet” as a multimodal text to improve learners’ academic writing skills? b) what are the learners of attitudes towards the “Padlet” as a collaborative interactive tool in the online class context? The sample was 50 first-year undergraduates from the faculty of Science who follow the EAP course in their first semester. The course was completely conducted online for 15 weeks and all the writing tasks were carried out using “Padlet”. The qualitative data were gathered using questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and the review of the student’s writing tasks. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The analysis of the data indicated that the learners have positive attitudes towards “Padlet” as a multimodal text to improve learners’ academic writing skills and interaction and engagement, collaborative work, and feedback provider have been identified as the main opinions related to “Padlet”. The findings of the present study will inform teachers on the usefulness and efficiency of integrating “Padlet” to enhance not only academic writing skills but also writing skills in general in both online and physical teaching contexts as a way to raise students’ motivation, interest and engagement in the subject matter.

**Keywords:** Academic Writing, Multimodal Texts, Online Teaching, Padlet

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