

## Virtual Task-Based Situated Language-Learning with *Second Life*: Developing EFL Pragmatic Writing and Technological Self-Efficacy

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### Abstract

This paper reports on an experimental research study that aimed at investigating the effectiveness of employing a virtual task-based situated language learning (TBSLL) environment mediated by Second Life (SL) in developing EFL student teachers' pragmatic writing skills and their technological self-efficacy. To reach this goal, a control-only experimental research design was employed to compare between participants' performance in two groups: a control group (n=10) exposed to a traditional lecture-based writing course; and an experimental (SL) group selected purposively (n=10) and exposed to the virtual SL situated language learning environment (online sessions). Procedures were guided by a *five-stage instructional-technological design framework* suggested by the researchers, which involved those stages: (1) analysis, (2) design, (3) production, (4) experimentation, and (5) use & development. Measurement tools included: (a) Pragmatic Writing Skills Post-Test; (b) Academic Self-Efficacy Scale; and (c) E-portfolio for formative assessment. Results indicated the effectiveness of the virtual task-based situated language environment in developing participants' pragmatic writing skills in English, and that SL participants' technological self-efficacy was significantly higher than that of the control group participants. The paper presents recommendations and suggestions for improving English language learning (ELL) – especially writing – through using virtual situated environments in general, and SL in particular.

**Keywords:** Pragmatic writing, second life, situated language learning, task-based learning, technological self-efficacy, virtual language learning