The Effectiveness of Using Electronic Portfolios as a Learning Tool in Enhancing the Writing Performance of Saudi Female Intermediate Students at Taif University: Teachers’ Perspectives

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Abstract:
One of the most challenging skills to master for intermediate English language learners is writing skill because it requires them to have a profound knowledge of the structure of the language, vocabulary, and style of writing. Therefore, this study investigated the effectiveness of using electronic portfolios as a learning tool to enhance the English writing skills of Saudi female English intermediate-level students from their teachers’ perspectives. This study used mixed methods in which a Zoom interview of five questions was used to gather qualitative data, and a Yes/No questionnaire of 10 questions was used to collect quantitative data. The participants were teachers who teach English intermediate-level Saudi female students at Taif University. The data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitively. The study concluded that teachers believed that there are many advantages for the incorporating of e. portfolios when teaching that would account for the development of the language learning process. Further, there are some challenges that encountered the participants.

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Masters’ Degree of TESOL.

Department of Foreign Languages, College of Arts, Taif University, Taif, Saudi Arabia

Supervised by:
Dr. Haifa Al-Nofaie

Academic Year 2023
أُهدي هذا البحث

إلى من لا يضاهيها شيء في الكون .. (نجاة) أمي

من وفَّرت لي الدعم المادي والمعنوي لإكمال مرحلة الماجستير

إلى رفيق دربي وصديق أيامي .. (مصعب) زوجي الغالي

إلى من كانت لها أذن صحاغية لا تمل .. (رنا) أختي

إلى من قرَّت بها عيني .. (مبار) ابنتي من شاطرني كتابة هذا البحث وهي في رحمي

إلى جميع إخوتي وأخواتي ومشاريفي وجميع أصدقائي والمشاركين في البحث

إلى جميع من ساعدني لإتمام هذا البحث
Glossary

1. **Portfolio**

   According to Barrett, (2006), a portfolio is a paper-based collection of students’ works that are collected by students to show their progress and accomplishments over time.

2. **Electronic Portfolio**

   An electronic portfolio (e. portfolio) is a collection, or a selection of students’ works. They are gathered as evidence for students’ accomplishments or developments in which they are stored and edited digitally (Challis, 2005).
Abstract.

One of the most challenging skills to master for intermediate English language learners is the writing skill because it requires them to have a profound knowledge about the structure of the language, vocabulary, and style of writing. Therefore, this study investigated the effectiveness of using electronic portfolios as a learning tool to enhance English writing skills of Saudi female English intermediate-level students from their teachers’ perspectives. This study used mixed methods in which a Zoom interview of five questions was used to gather qualitative data, and a Yes/No questionnaire of 10 questions was used to collect quantitative data. The participants were teachers who teach English intermediate-level Saudi female students at Taif University. The data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The study concluded that teachers believed that there are many advantages for the incorporating of e-portfolios when teaching that would account for the development of the language learning process. Further, there are some challenges that encountered the participants.

Keywords: English, Foreign language, portfolios, electronic portfolios, technology, learning tool, alternative assessment.
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1. Introduction

English is becoming one of the most learned languages around the world due to the development of the economy and technology. Hence, teaching English language as a foreign language is one of the fields that has a huge interest among educators. In trying to master this international language, many learners struggle to develop their language skills, especially their writing skills (Nenotek et al., 2022). One of the proposed ways to enhance the writing skills of English language learners is the use of electronic portfolios when teaching writing.

There are three different purposes to use electronic portfolios. The first purpose, it can be used as a showcase in which students present their best works. The second purpose, it can be used as an assessment tool in which students’ work will be assessed based on some criteria throughout the course of teaching. The third purpose is that it can be used as a learning tool in which all of the students’ work will be gathered as evidence and evaluated throughout the semester (Barrett, 2005). This paper’s focus is on the third purpose, which is to use e-portfolios as a learning tool, in which the focus will be on the process of writing, not on the product of writing.

1.1 Problem statement

One of the skills that English intermediate-level students consider challenging is the writing skill because knowing how to write appropriately requires them to have sufficient and profound knowledge in multiple areas of writing (e.g., choice of words, style of writing, and grammar) (Nenotek et al., 2022). It is a major productive skill, as it is considered to be the skill of the most educated people.

1.2 Gap of the study
There is a paucity of research regarding the use of electronic portfolios in enhancing students’ writing skills in terms of its application in Saudi Arabia and its investigation from teachers’ perspectives.

1.3 **Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of using e-portfolios to enhance the writing skills of Saudi intermediate-level students from teachers’ perspectives.

1.4 **Research questions**

- How can the use of an e-portfolio enhance intermediate-level students’ writing skills from teachers’ and instructors’ point of view?
- What are the challenges of using e-portfolios in Saudi Arabia for teachers and Saudi English intermediate-level students?

1.5 **Significance of the study**

The findings of this study provide insights for teachers, institutions, and researchers.

2. **Literature Review**

2.1 **Process-Writing Approach**

Over a period of time, the focus of writing was only on the product, and less attention was given to the process of writing in traditional classrooms. The Process Writing Approach focuses on the steps needed to reach the final product of writing pieces (essay, paragraph, letter…etc.). It offers some advantages for students. For instance, it offers them the ability to check on their writing repeatedly, so their writing will be evaluated, revised, and corrected constantly until they reach the final product, which will be marked. In addition to that, providing the students with the steps of how to compose a written piece will facilitate the
process of writing for them because this will allow the students to have an outline to follow (Brown, 2001).

2.2 Advantages of Electronic Portfolios

Recent studies have had positive results that proved the effectiveness of using e-portfolios in enhancing students’ language writing skills. For example, a study conducted by Eleni Meletiadou (2021) investigated the efficacy of using Padlet as an electronic portfolio in improving the writing performance and motivation of 200 students. Also, it explored students’ perceptions regarding the use of e-portfolios. This study administered an implementation cycle of four stages for 13 weeks. The author found that their writing skills along with their motivation had improved. In addition, most of the students have expressed positive opinions about the integration of Padlet with their learning. However, it did not investigate teachers’ perceptions regarding the use of electronic portfolios when teaching the writing skill in Saudi Arabia as did the present study.

Another study conducted by Jirayu Kongsuebchart and Suksan Suppasetseer (2018) investigated the influence of e-portfolios on Thai students’ writing skills, and their perceptions. This research used mixed methods (pre- and post-tests, a questionnaire of a five-point scale, and reflective journals). It has been found out that students’ writing performance improved, and students have expressed positive opinions about the use of weblog-based e-portfolios. The proposed study, on the other hand, investigates electronic portfolios’ effectiveness from the perspective of teachers through questionnaires and interviews.

Additionally, apart from the effectiveness of electronic portfolios on the learning process, it also helps students develop their sense of self-assessment, self-confidence, and reflection (Rhodes, 2011; Gonzalez, 2009). Students who use e-portfolios are autonomous learners
because the use of e. portfolios encourages them to be responsible for their work. It allows
them to generate and organize their own ideas using artifacts features (Gonzalez, 2009).
Further, it provides the students and the teachers with the opportunity to track progress and
comment on students’ work (Reese & Levy, 2009).

2.3 Challenges for Implementing Electronic Portfolios

Despite the advantages of e. portfolios, there are some challenges teachers and students
might encounter. This section of the paper presents some studies regarding the challenges that
might face both teachers and students when incorporating such a tool.

A study conducted by Barrot (2016) explored the effect of using Facebook as an e. portfolio
on students’ writing skills and the challenges of implementing such a technological tool from
the perspective of the learners. The study used a self-reported questionnaire. Results showed
that using Facebook as a form of electronic portfolio has affected students’ writing skills
positively, as it motivated them to post their best work to the class. As for the challenges that
face students were related to technical problems and students’ perceptions. The current study,
nonetheless, investigates the challenges and the efficacy of using e. portfolios on students’
writing skills from the perspective of teachers.

A descriptive study conducted by Lombardi (2008) described some of the challenges that
teachers and students face. The first challenge is ‘lamentation’ which refers to the creation of
e. portfolios merely for self-aggrandizement. Secondly, ‘heavy lifting’ which refers to the
workload that e. portfolios demand and whether it is worth it or not. Thirdly, ‘trivialization’
which means when people upload materials that do not serve the reflective purpose of e.
portfolios. Fourthly, ‘perversion’ which is related to the nature of alternating the scoring
system of e. portfolios into a more objectified system in which that e. portfolios might not be
suitable to evaluate individual differences. Finally, ‘misrepresentation’ refers to the idea of focusing on students’ best work and ignoring the true level of learner competency.

2.4 Teachers’ attitudes toward the use of electronic portfolios

There is one study that is similar to the current study in that it investigated electronic portfolios’ effectiveness from the teachers’ perspectives. It was conducted by Ahmet Erdost Yastibasa, and Saban Cepikb (2015) in Turkey, and it investigated the perceptions of teachers regarding the use of electronic portfolios to enhance English speaking skills of students. It used semi-structured interviews, and the data was analyzed qualitatively. Results showed that teachers have expressed positive opinions towards the use of electronic portfolios to develop students’ speaking and listening skills. Further, it concluded that e. portfolios can have some challenges relating to teachers’ unfamiliarity with e. portfolios and students’ boredom. The present study, on the contrary, investigates the perception of teachers who teach English towards the use of electronic portfolios to enhance the writing skills of intermediate-level students in Saudi Arabia. Thus, it uses both questionnaires, which will be analyzed quantitatively, and interviews, which will be analyzed qualitatively.

3. Methodology

This descriptive study investigated the effectiveness of using electronic portfolios for the enhancement of the writing skills of intermediate-level Saudi female students from their teachers’ point of view.

3.1 Participants

The participants of this study were Saudi female teachers of English for intermediate-level Saudi female students at Taif University. They were reached through WhatsApp teachers’
groups. The number of participants who answered the Yes/No questionnaire was 26 female teachers of English who teach intermediate-level students at Taif University. However, the number of participants of the interviews was 4 female teachers of English who teach intermediate-level students at the Language Center of Taif University.

The first interviewee is Rana. She has been teaching general English all levels (A1, A2, B1, and B2) and English for Specific Purposes for Business in the Language Center. The second interviewee is Raghad who has taught at a profitable institution and a private school for one year. Currently, she has been teaching English for two years at English Language Center at Taif University. The third interviewee is Fadwa who has been teaching English for a year now at English Language Center at Taif University. The fourth interviewee is Fatimah. She started teaching immediately after graduation, where she taught young learners at a private school for one year and a half. Currently, she has been teaching English in the Language Center for almost four years.

All the participants have graduated with a bachelor’s degree in English language from the department of foreign languages at Taif University. Then, they continued their higher studies, and now they have a master’s degree in TESOL. Two of them (Rana, and Fatimah) are CELTA holders.

3.2 Instruments

This study used a mixed-methods approach. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data, whereas interviews were used to collect qualitative data. The questionnaire had 10 questions, and it was designed by the researcher herself using Google Forms. It was distributed to teachers at Taif University via a web link. The interview questions were 5, and it was designed by the research herself. The interviews were conducted on Zoom, and the
participants were 4 teachers from The Language Center at Taif University. The use of two research instruments was to validate the results.

3.3 Validity and Reliability.

Both instruments were validated by 2 PhD professors at Taif University and 2 teachers (who have master’s degree in TESOL) at Taif University. Also, the questionnaire was distributed to a random population, and the reliability of its results was tested by using SPSS. The result of the reliability test is shown in table 1 below.

| Table (1) |
| Reliability Statistics |
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .789 | 10 |

3.4 Procedure and Analysis

First, the researcher sought permission from Taif University to conduct the study. Second, the Yes/No questionnaire was distributed to Saudi female teachers of intermediate- level Saudi female students using social media. As for the participants of the interviews, the researcher contacted some of the teachers in The Language Center who answered the questionnaire, and four of them agreed to be interviewed. Since this paper used mixed methods, the data will be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. While SPSS was used to analyze quantitative data, thematic analysis was conducted on qualitative data.

3.5 Ethical considerations

All the participants had agreed to participate in this study. There was a consent statement that participants had to approve to continue answering the questionnaire. However,
interviewees had signed a consent form to participate in this research. Moreover, all the interviewed participants were given fake names in the analysis to ensure confidentiality.

4. Results

Both research instruments are used to answer both research questions as they are used to answer the research questions quantitatively and qualitatively. The first research question is how the use of electronic portfolio would enhance the writing performance of the students who are intermediate-level of English proficiency. However, the second research question is addressing the possible challenges of incorporating electronic portfolios in English classrooms of intermediate level students.

4.1 Results from the Yes/No questionnaire:

It can be seen from table (2) and table (3) that the questionnaire’s elements investigated the advantages and the challenges of implementing electronic portfolios.

Table (2)

Descriptive Analysis for Teachers’ Perceptions on The Use of Electronic Portfolios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions on The Use of Electronic Portfolios</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Do you have experience with teaching intermediate-level students?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Have you used alternative assessments when teaching (e.g., portfolios, presentations)?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Have you used traditional portfolios when teaching English?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Have you used electronic portfolios when teaching English?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Do you think electronic portfolios are useful?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Do you think that electronic portfolios can affect students’ writing style, choice of words, language structure?</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you think that using electronic portfolios in classrooms can affect other aspects too (e.g., attitude towards technology, critical thinking, motivation, self-assessment, autonomy, confidence?)

Does the lack of knowledge and skill in using technology can affect the use of electronic portfolios?

Does using electronic portfolios require special skills (e.g., IT skills)?

Do you think that your students will welcome the use of electronic portfolios, if you are not using it already?

---

Table (2) illustrates the mean value of the responses from the Yes/ No questionnaire. “‘Yes’” is replaced by the number (2) while “‘No’” is replaced by the number (1). Accordingly, most of the responses were positive as the mean value is approaching number (2) which stands for “‘Yes’”. Also, it can be noticed that the first statement’s mean score is 2.00 which means that all the participants have experience with teaching English intermediate- level learners.

**Table (3)**

The Percentage of Teachers’ Perceptions on The Use of Electronic Portfolios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>The Percentage of Teachers’ Perceptions on The Use of Electronic Portfolios</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Do you have experience with teaching intermediate- level students?</td>
<td>96.2%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Have you used alternative assessments when teaching (e.g., portfolios, presentations)?</td>
<td>80.8%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Have you used traditional portfolios when teaching English?</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Have you used electronic portfolios when teaching English?</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Do you think electronic portfolios are useful?</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Do you think that electronic portfolios can affect students’ writing style, choice of words, language structure?</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you think that using electronic portfolios in classrooms can affect other aspects too (e.g., attitude towards technology, critical thinking, motivation, self-assessment, autonomy, confidence)?

Does the lack of knowledge and skill in using technology can affect the use of electronic portfolios?

Does using electronic portfolios require special skills (e.g., IT skills)?

Do you think that your students will welcome the use of electronic portfolios, if you are not using it already?

Table (2) indicates the percentages of teachers’ perception responses regarding the use of electronic portfolios that were taken from the Yes/ No questionnaire. As the table shows that most of the percentages are approaching to 100%. However, there are three statements that are not the most preferable by the teachers. They are statement three, four, and nine.

4.2. Interview Results:

The interviews were conducted on four female teachers who teach at the English Language Center at Taif university. The results show that not all the participants use portfolios or electronic portfolios, but all of them were in favor of using it. After conducting thematic analysis to the interviews, some major themes have emerged. They are the advantages of electronic portfolios, and the challenges of electronic portfolios.

4.2.1 Advantages of electronic portfolios:

All the four interviewees believe that e. portfolios can be beneficial for students’ writing performance. For instance, teacher Fatimah said that she used the Blackboard as a form of e. portfolio. Thus, she thinks that e. portfolios have some prevalent advantages. She said that she
can keep a record of their progress for her and for her students. She also said that e. portfolios provide her with the chance to give them direct and indirect feedback. Moreover, she stated that e. portfolios allow for reflection. And it motivates students, and it makes the learning process enjoyable. Further, she explained what aspects of writing have been improved.

‘’It keeps a record of everything their tests, their homework, their activities, and the content that they share, from the start of the year until the end. It also shows them their progress when I mark them their assignments, their tests, the vocabulary, tests, and the writing. It provides me with the opportunity to give them indirect and direct feedback. It also gives me a chance to share their contents with other students. So, it keeps the learning exciting, and it keeps the students motivated. It gives the students a chance to progress or to enhance their level. For me or for my own experience, I think that students’ level has been enhanced, specifically in their writing skill in the aspect of structure, punctuation, choice of words.’’

However, teacher Fadwa has not used electronic portfolios before, but she is in favor of using it. She thinks that when students have e. portfolios, this can help them in the future as they can present it with their resume.

‘’I find it an interesting and useful way for them later. And besides the writing skill, it will be a record for them, such as experience. When they graduate, they will find something to present with their resume.’’

Further, teacher Raghad said that she used Padlet as an e. portfolio. She thinks that it encourages students to participate, and she states that it raises students’ confidence and
motivates them. She also explained that she used it because of its features as an electronic tool. She, furthermore, said that it is helpful because students can reflect and assess on their work and on their classmates. Also, she can give feedback to them and keep track of their progress. She also commented that their writing has been enhanced.

‘’An app that is called Padlet I am sure you know it. I use it because I love it as it encourages the students to participate because students can post anonymous responses, and no one can know who has posted this piece. And when I find the piece interesting, and I start to praise the person who wrote it and the student says yes, it is me. This action motivates them and encourages them even more to participate. I also use it because I do not like paper-based assignments. And I want them to practice writing, but we do not have much time in the class, so I incorporate Padlet to practice writing so they can write in their homes. I find this interesting and helpful because students can learn from their mistakes and each other’s mistakes. I use it to help students enhance their writing skills, engage them all, write and track their practice. So, I can make general comments for them inside the class to help them. And it also helps them to self-assess themselves. Their writing has been enhanced in the aspect of structure and organization, appropriacy and register.’’

Teacher Rana has never used an e. portfolio, but she asks her students to prepare a paper-based portfolio. And she believed that this helped them improve their writing skills.

‘’I encourage my students to prepare a collection of their (unevaluated) written work to submit at the end of the course so I can give them feedback on how to
improve. I think this process helped them in scoring better scores at their final writing test”.

4.2.2. Challenges of using electronic portfolios:

Teacher Fatimah said that students’ perceptions and attitudes toward electronic portfolios might be an issue.

“I think the only challenge is meeting the deadlines, so whenever they have an e. assignment, I think that they do not take it as seriously as an actual assignment a few students actually not most of them they miss the deadline. Because they know that it is electronic, and I can reopen it for them they can upload it again, so I think this is the only problem.”

Teacher Raghad said that students’ perceptions regarding electronic portfolios might also be an issue, and the absence of internet connection in the classroom.

“The issue is the use of Google translation. I usually tell them to stop using google translation. And express their ideas. The existence of internet connection is also a problem.”

Teacher Fadwa stated that the workload they face is a challenge.

“Lack of time is problematic because I teach here at the Language Center at Taif University, and I have a lot of work to do with students already. I do not think I would be able to check their electronic portfolios because, as you might know, students have
a lot of writing mistakes. So, it would be difficult for me to check all their works, correct them, and give feedbacks.’’

Teacher Rana illustrated that students’ attitude towards learning general English is a challenge.

‘’ University students who take general language classes are usually unmotivated to learn. They view learning English as an unnecessary requirement since they might not use it in their fields of study. Thus, it can be difficult to get students to work on class activities such as creating e-portfolios.’’

5. Discussion

Based on the analysis of the results, it was found that there is a correlation between the use of e. portfolios and the enhancement of students’ writing performance, based on their teachers’ opinions. Hence, the results of this study are encouraging because most of the teachers are in favor of using electronic portfolios to enhance the writing skills of intermediate students. This finding is consistent with the study of (Yastibas & Cepik, 2015), which investigated teachers’ perspectives regarding the use of e. portfolios on their students’ listening and speaking skills.

The current study used mixed methods in which questionnaires and interviews were used to answer both research questions. Based on the thematic analysis of the interviews and the analysis of the Yes/ No questionnaire, two main themes have emerged. They were the advantages of electronic portfolios, and the challenges of incorporating electronic portfolios, which are in line with the studies of (Yastibas & Cepik, 2015; Barrot, 2016).
5.1 Advantages of electronic portfolios

Some of the results from both instruments were matching. Most teachers who answered the questionnaire believed that the use of e. portfolios could not only be beneficial to the writing performance, but also it could be beneficial for their personalities as it builds students’ self-confidence, fosters self-assessment, and fosters reflection. This finding was also found in the results of the interview. Two of the interviewees believed in its benefits as it can enhance the writing skills of students. While one of them was using the Blackboard as a form of e. portfolio, the other one was using Padlet. The use of Padlet here and its significance supports the study of (Meletiadou, 2021) which investigated the effectiveness of using Padlet as an e. portfolio. Moreover, using a portfolio is helpful because teachers can keep track of their students’ progress, provide feedback, motivate, and encourage students. Also, students can self-assess and reflect on their work and of their classmates’. Thus, this is how their writing will be enhanced accordingly. These findings are in line with the studies of (Meletiadou, 2021; Kongsuebchart; Rhodes, 2011; Gonzalez, 2009; Reese & Levy, 2009).

Further, according to teachers’ perspectives that students’ writing skill had improved due to the practice, and the constant feedback they had. This finding supports the writing as a process theory in which it states that when learners are asked to write more often, provided with the steps to write, and provided with the feedback they need, their writing will be enhanced before they submit the final draft (Brown, 2001).

Although not all the interviewees used an e. portfolio, most of them were in favor of using it. For instance, teacher Rana is used to asking her students to prepare a paper-based portfolio to evaluate and assess their unevaluated works. She said that this has helped her students to
improve their writing performance. Similarly, teacher Fadwa commented on the importance of keeping an e. portfolio. This also emphasizes the effectiveness of keeping a portfolio or an e. portfolio when learning the language.

5.2 Challenges of electronic portfolios

In the same sense, as for the challenges of implementing e. portfolios, some of the results from the questionnaire matched those of the interviews. Teachers believed that there are some challenges that can affect the implementation and effectiveness of e. portfolios. They are students’ attitudes and perceptions, and teachers’ workload. These findings were in line with the findings that are found in the studies of (Barrot, 2016; Lombardi, 2008, Yastibas & Cepik, 2015). Moreover, the absence of Internet connection in classrooms is a challenge found in the interviews. Nevertheless, it is different from the results of previous studies.

The findings were expected by the researcher because Internet connection and students’ perceptions and attitudes towards technology are important and crucial for the success of e. portfolios integration with language learning. Students’ perceptions and attitudes can best be seen when two of the interviewed teachers have implemented the use of e. portfolios. For instance, some students miss the deadlines because they do not think that electronic assignments are as important as paper-based assignments. Some others use Google translation when answering electronic assignments for the same reason.

5.3 The significance of the study

This study is significant because its findings encourage teachers nationally and internationally to use unconditional approaches when teaching English as a foreign or as a
second language to achieve better outcomes. It can be beneficial when teachers desire to implement e. portfolios, they would have a better understanding of the advantages and the issues of implementing from teachers who used this tool. Second, it encourages educational institutions to assist English teachers by providing them an access to up-to-date materials. Third, future researchers can benefit from the findings of the results of this study as it encourages them to search and examine the effects of using different technologies on English language learners’ skills.

6. Conclusions and future implications

Since there is no study in Saudi Arabia, to the best of our knowledge, that investigates the perception of teachers who teach English intermediate-level students regarding the use of electronic portfolios to enhance the writing performance of their students, this study explored their perception in the Saudi context. It used mixed methods to assure valid results. It concluded that teachers believed that there was a correlation between the use of e-portfolios and the enhancement of students’ writing performance and their learning personalities. This study calls for future research to cover up the perceptions of teachers regarding the use of e. portfolios when teaching other language skills. Further, it calls for future research that investigates possible solutions for the problems that students and teachers faced in the current research.

6.1 Limitations of the Study

There are some limitations for this study. First, the time frame for conducting this study was approximately 3 weeks, which is a short period of time. Further, the focus of this study was on one language skill, namely writing. Secondly, the focus of this study was on one specific
purpose of using electronic portfolios. That is the use of e-portfolios as a learning tool, where the focus is on the process and not on the product of writing.

Moreover, it is a small-scale study, as the number of participants is small. The researcher was aiming to have approximately 50 participants for the questionnaire and 10 participants for the interviews. However, not all teachers at Taif University wanted to participate due to the large number of questionnaires they were asked to complete. Another reason might be related to the fact that most people want to be entertained when using their phones, not to be participants in a study. Thus, the number of participants who answered the questionnaire was 26 teachers from Taif University and four participants for the interviews from the Language Center of Taif University.

In addition, this is the first time for the researcher to conduct a study, as it is a requirement to complete her master’s degree in TESOL. Therefore, the researcher was struggling to conduct and write the study through self-learning, seeking guidance from the supervisor, and reading about the topic. Furthermore, the researcher was in her postpartum phase, so she was not in the best condition to conduct and write the study as she was sleep-deprived.
7. References


https://doi.org/10.1080/07908318.2016.1143481


https://doi.org/10.22492/ije.9.5.04


Appendix A: Questionnaire items

- **Bioinformation of the Participants.**

  1. **Age:**
     a. 25 to 35
     b. 35 to 40
     c. Above 40

  2. **Years of Experience in teaching:**
     a. Less than 3 years
     b. More than 3 years
     c. Above 10 years

  3. **Technology skills rate (self-assessment):**
     a. Beginner
     b. Intermediate
     c. Expert.

- **Yes/ no survey:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>Yes/ No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you have experience with teaching intermediate-level students?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Have you used alternative assessments when teaching (e.g., portfolios, presentations)?

3. Have you used traditional portfolios when teaching English?

4. Have you used electronic portfolios when teaching English?

5. Do you think electronic portfolios are useful?

6. Do you think that electronic portfolios can affect students’ writing style, choice of words, language structure?

7. Do you think that using electronic portfolios in classrooms can affect
other aspects too (e.g., attitude towards technology, critical thinking, motivation, self-assessment, autonomy, confidence?)

8. Does the lack of knowledge and skill in using technology can affect the use of electronic portfolios?

9. Does using electronic portfolios require special skills (e.g., IT skills)?

10. Do you think that your students will welcome the use of electronic portfolios, if you are not using it already?
Appendix B: Interview Questions

- **Interview Questions:**

1. Which levels of English proficiency have you experience in? Please provide a detailed answer.

2. When teaching, have you used any alternative mode of assessments (e.g., portfolios, e-electronic portfolios, presentations...etc.)? if yes, what are they? Why do you use them?

3. Which English skill did you incorporate with the use of the electronic portfolio? How did you usually incorporate it into your class?

4. Do you think electronic portfolios enhance the writing skills of intermediate-level Saudi female students? If yes, which aspect of their writing has enhanced (structure, choice of words, unity, coherence, motivation, confidence, autonomy, self-assessment... etc)? Please elaborate.

5. What do you think are the challenges of implementing electronic portfolios that are used with intermediate-level Saudi female students? How do you overcome them in your point of view?
Appendix c: Interview Answers

- **Fatifmah:**

1. i have been teaching English language center students and they are from different levels. Some of them are beginners, intermediate and advanced students. I have been teaching general subjects and ESP subjects related to their majors.

2. First of all, I haven’t used electronic portfolios specifically, but I have used bb which is closer to … because it keeps a record of students’ progress from the start of the year until the end of the year. It keeps a record of everything their tests, their homework, their activities, and the content that they share, everything. Which is considered this is the closest I have ever got into an electronic portfolio. The blackboard to keep track of students’ progress. Why? I rely on bb because again as I said it provides me the opportunity to keep track of students’ progress from the beginning of the semester until the end of the semester. It also shows the students, the students, their own progress so it is not only for me. It shows them their progress when I mark them their assignments, assessments their tests the vocabulary tests the writing and everything. It provides me with the opportunity to give them indirect and direct feedback. it also gives me a chance to share their contents with other students. so, it keeps the learning exiting and it keeps the ss motivated.

3. I have used it with all of the skills especially the ones that they get tested on. Such as vocab, grammar, writing. No, it is not writing because writing they got tested on face to face. But I have used it also with writing assignments, not in the tests. Basically, in all of the skills.

4. I have used it in an online form, so we do not discuss the electronic portfolio inside the classrooms, it is just an offline process. We incorporate it in the assignments. Whenever I upload something to them and I reply to it and whenever I give them feedback and tell them to
edit the assignment. When I have speaking tests or speaking activity and I want them to share it with the rest of the group. And this is how I use it basically in assignments and tests and if we have a small project a group project or whatever they can upload it on bb.

5- I think yes, the electronic portfolio or any kind of e. technology we incorporate in class. It gives the students a chance to progress or to enhance their level. For me or for my own experience, I think that ss their level have been enhanced. specifically in their writing skill in the aspect of structure, punctuation, choice of words. I think that it has been a good strategy to use with the students because they have a lot of mistakes that are common among the group. Such as, ending the sentence with a comma and at the end of the paragraph they write a full stop. Starting sentences with verbs like Arabic. Such as using phrases and thinking that they are sentences. And other common mistakes that I have been facing. I can give whether it is direct or indirect the ss feedback on the bb and I share it on the bb for everyone to see and learn from their own mistakes.

6- I think the only challenge is meeting the deadlines, so whenever they have an e. assignment, I think that they do not take it as seriously as an actual assignment a few students actually not most of them they miss the deadline. Because they know that it is electronic and I can reopen it for them they can upload it again so I think this is the only problem. My solution for this problem is to just remind them of the importance of deadlines and not actually give them a chance to reopen the assignment again just tell them that it is one time and everyone will submit on time. Tell them they have to take it seriously and I should incorporate it from the beginning of the semester. I should also tell them that The marks are distributed in the assignments in the electronic portfolios as well as in the actual class. So, they can take it seriously.
- **Rana:**

1. I have been teaching for almost four years in TUELC. And here, we have courses for A1, A2, B1, and B2 and I have taught all of them.

2. The modes of assessment I follow are provided by the institution I work for. We use mostly traditional means of assessment, such as quizzes. However, I have used some alternative ways of assessment like presentations and E-learning activities.

3. I have never used portfolios as a means of assessment. However, I ask my students to submit a portfolio of their written assignments about the writing topics we discuss in class to provide them with feedback on their writing skills.

4. As I mentioned before, I encourage my students to prepare a collection of their (unevaluated) written work to submit at the end of the course so I can give them feedback on how to improve. I think this process helped them in scoring better scores at their final writing test.

5. As a teacher of general English courses, I think the only problem I might face when implementing e-portfolios can be students’ attitude towards learning English in general. University students who take general language classes are usually unmotivated to learn. They view learning English as an unnecessary requirement since they might not use it in their fields of study. Thus, it can be difficult to get students to work on class activities such as creating e-portfolios.

- **Fadwa:**

1. I have taught students whose level of language ranges from beginner to experienced.

2. Presentations were used frequently to assess their performance in the language. As for my use of electronic portfolios, I have never tried it. It is always a matter of time. And when my
students face academic pressures, I mean the large number of assignments and tests. That's why I do not ask them for this type of assignment.

3. I think it mainly focuses on their writing skills, and I find it an interesting and useful way for them later. And besides the writing skill, it will be a record for them, such as experience. When they graduate, they will find something to present with their resume. In this type of skill, I like to use teamwork and assignments to develop their writing skills.

4. I heard this a lot when I was preparing for the IELTS test that to develop any skill you must practice for 30 minutes every day. I think this is a good way to develop their writing skills.

5. Lack of time is problematic because I teach here at the Language Center at Taif University, and I have a lot of work to do with students already. I do not think I would be able to check their electronic portfolios because, as you might know, students have a lot of writing mistakes. So, it would be difficult for me to check all their works, correct them, and give feedback.

- **Raghad.**

1. I have taught all the four levels in the language center (A1, A2, A3, A4). I have been teaching for 2 years.

2. It is not for assessing them. It is for helping them to practice. I have not used e. P but I used something similar. And app that called Padlet im sure you know it. It is similar to portfolios. I use it because I love it as it encourages the students to participate because students can post anonymous responses, and no one can know who has posted this piece. And when I find the piece interesting, and I start to praise the person who wrote it and the student say yes, it is me. This action motivates them and encourages them even more to participate. I also use it because I do not like paper-based assignments. And also, I want them to practice writing, but we do not have much time in the class, so I incorporate Padlet to practice
writing so they can write in their homes. And if I tell them to practice in class, I usually ask only for 4 sentences or 5 maximums. But if it was a task that they do at home, they have to submit a whole piece of writing. Also, we comment on their writings together. I find this interesting and helpful because students can learn from their mistakes and each other’s mistakes. I have also used presentations, story- telling, and games (e.g., guess who).

3. I use them to help students to enhance their writing skills.

   Padlet, I use it for writing skill I use it at class and also for them at homes. Engage them all and write and track their practice. So, I can make general comments for them inside the class to help them.

   4. I can say yes. It can help them a lot because some of the ss use google translation and they write everything they have in their mind in Arabic and translate it into Arabic and paste it in Padlet. They are motivated and I can post pictures to encourage them to think. For example, if the topic about Money i would post pictures about money and it encouraged them to talk about the theme i identify. It can help it motivate because in Padlet no one can know who wrote this especially when i praise the written piece and then a student say yes, I wrote that. This would motivate ss to write and enhance their writings. And it also helps them to self-assess themselves. Their writing has been enhanced in the aspect of structure and organization, appropriacy and register.

   5. The issue is Google translation. I usually tell them stop using google translation. And express their ideas. Internet connection also.
Appendix D: Some Screenshots of the Questionnaire’s Website

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Settings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you used traditional portfolios when teaching English?</td>
<td>28 responses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you used electronic portfolios when teaching English?</td>
<td>25 responses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have experience with teaching intermediate-level students?</td>
<td>26 responses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you used alternative assessments when teaching (e.g., portfolios, presentations)?</td>
<td>26 responses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consent:
I have already known the purpose of the study, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.
25 responses

Age:
### Different types of electronic technology

**Advantages of electronic portfolios**

### Its usage

### Examples of ss mistakes.

### Challenges

### Solution

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Appendix F: Samples of consent forms