

# **Integrating Online Blogging with Theories of Process Genre Approach: A suggested Approach to Improve Teaching in EFL writing and Enhancing Learners' Skills in EFL Writing in Saudi Arabia**

**Sultan Samah A Alenezi**

*PhD candidate in Linguistics, School of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics*

*University of Limerick, Republic of Ireland*

## **Abstract**

Writing in English for Saudi learners, considered as most difficult skill to be mastered. Accordingly, many statistics confirm that the international tests such as TOEFL and IELTS confirm the poor performance and low grades they achieve in these tests. These problems can be attributed to the traditional method that used in teaching writing in Saudi Arabia that heavily depends on the teacher without any interaction between the students. Thus, online blogging as an interactive technology viewed as a technology to have the potential to engage the student in social interactions to learn in EFL writing which in turn can enhance peer collaboration and scaffolding for the development of student's writing skills from the perspective of sociocultural theory based on Vygotsky's ideas that emphasise social interaction and collaboration considered as key concepts for an effective learning process. In Saudi Arabia, the students are taught writing in traditional methods fully dominated by the teacher where they are spoon-fed in a passive method that lacks any form of interaction or collaboration between peers. So, this study investigated the effectiveness of online blogging in EFL writing instruction with adopting progressive/developmental tasks through integrating genre-process approach newly coined by Badger and White contrasted to product approach that is widely used by Saudi teachers. This study involved 30 second-year undergraduate students were studying in the department of Languages in one Saudi university. This study employed action research by adopting a mixed research methods design where it integrated qualitative and quantitative approaches to identify the perceptions and experiences of Saudi students with online blogging technology as an innovative approach in writing teaching, their advantages in addition to the challenges they faced while doing their blogging activities where it included a questionnaire, interviews and blog entries posted by students. The findings of intervention showed that online blogging with integrating genre-process approach was an effective approach and the Saudi students formed extremely positive attitudes toward their experience with online blogging experience.



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Additionally, the online blogging enhanced sociocultural theory constructs that Vygotsky emphasises such as scaffolding which was social assistance in the form of peer and teacher feedback, collaboration, and social interaction that positively reflected the development of their writing, reading, social and thinking and collaboration skills and their attitudes towards writing in English. However, the students faced some challenges that affected their experience with blogging including technical challenges like internet connection problems and weakness of learner's skills in some areas such as computer skills and time management skills.

**Keywords:** blogging, Saudi learners, perceptions, sociocultural theory, effectiveness