

SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN AUTONOMOUS LEARNING FACILITY TO ENHANCE WRITING SKILL IN DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the using of social media as part of digital medias to enhance writing skill that to be one of issues of Indonesian students. Internet facilities and social media are becoming increasingly important and take a strategic role in most of human activities included education and learning sector. The study was conducted at Tidar University, explored the experiences of second semester students supported the hypothesis that as students from non-English countries enter the globalization era where English is the norm, they are faced with the challenge of learning a new language especially in writing which has many requirements to make it such as vocabularies, grammar ideas and habit as a prerequisite to successful and further thriving .The fact that Indonesian students often played digital media as online communication stimulates young learners social connectedness. Academic achievement would also benefit from their activities, having access to a teaching material aimed at delivering skills for the use of Internet and digital technology. From the qualitative research done, the writer explored the new trend of digital media especially using social media to enhance writing ability as the facilities in autonomous learning because they are confronted with social media in their daily life anyway where they could use many channels they wanted to receive the information and learnt to share their writing freely and comfortably. From findings, it can be concluded that social media boosts the writing proficiency, influences the autonomy and promotes independent of learning writing, improves the vocabularies references, increases the confidences, explores the experience and styles also solves other academic difficulties such as grammatical rules, exploring and also developing ideas

Keywords: social media, autonomous learning, EFL students, writing skill

Introduction

Many social medias appear to make easier in communication and getting link, some of them such as facebook, snapchat, whatsapp, line,instagram etc. They are able to link unknown people in the world with a group to make communicate by written or orally. However from all the samples, I just took facebook and instagram because it can increase students' motivation and language ability by writing,chatting or commenting to other's posting.

Learning writing in the classroom is not really fostering students' competence. Therefore, the demand of autonomous learning by learning outside classroom is increased. Autonomous learning as defined by Lee (2011) stated that autonomous learning does not require learners to work in isolation; rather, they socially construct knowledge by actively engaging in the process of learning. Through social

interaction, learners develop a capacity to receive information and create a new perspective. It means, to lead students to get their autonomy in learning, the lecturer must be able to create such community that appropriate for this need. The efforts can be done such as (1) Integrate Social Media into Instruction. It's no secret that social media is a central part of many students' lives, a tool for many businesses, and a large societal influencer. While educators have mixed feelings about its presence in the classroom, many are considering ways to embrace it, and leverage it as a tool for student learning. If you're looking to integrate social media into instruction, consider using it as a way to teach writing using technology after all, it's possible that your students will be using social media at one point in their lives for a purpose related to learning or job skills, and the short, concise writing style it demands allows for practice in brevity and clarity; (2) Make Student Work

Visible in the “Real World”. Pending your school’s privacy practices and your students’ comfort levels, explore how you can leverage technology to place student work in the “real world.” When writing in the workplace, students will find themselves with an audience perhaps much larger than a teacher, and you can provide them with time to practice that visibility in the classroom now. Having an audience can also make the work feel more relevant for students; (3) Offer Opportunities for Multimedia Projects. In the workplace, tasks involving writing or argument construction, communication, and other related areas will rarely involve only text. Students will be expected to convey information using a variety of tools, mediums, and channels or using tools like virtual reality, video, and digital timelines in writing instruction and (4) Use Adaptive Technology to Reach Every Student. it’s important to integrate technology into writing instruction to foster creativity, argumentative skills, and digital literacy, there’s also an opportunity to leverage technology to personalize the basics of writing instruction so it will be fixed with what a student knows, needs to know, and is ready to learn next.

This article mainly discusses the use of Facebook and Instagram which as an autonomous learning, they develop students’ preparation process in writing, before they are doing the real writing. Here, facebook and instagram was created specifically for the purpose of providing students with a space where they were in control of the content and the direction of their learning, as well as providing more opportunities for students to write. Here the researcher acted as a facilitator, give feedback and fun interaction that later it can motivate students in improving their writing.

Autonomous learning of writing

Autonomous learning based on Knowel’s research of self-directed learning (1975, cited in Kocak, 2003) is as a leading figure in adult education, as a process in which individuals accept responsibility for all the decisions

concerned with their learning. Language skills especially writing can be developed if the learner develops awareness of his or her own learning, and of the strategies and ways that are available. According with Thanasaulas’s (2000), autonomous learning emphasized as the —path of the learning process in which the learners go through, and it was not a product that can be produced, moreover in the very short period of time. From those description it can be concluded that Autonomous learning can be everything but it can serve about the good output after that so they must have strategic competence means being able to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate one’s learning, and making use of all available opportunities both in and outside the classroom. Therefore, in this learning, every participant is encouraged to response to each other writing, whether to appreciate it or to revise it.

Writing is a task, described by Levy and Olive as one of the most complex activities that people can accomplish (Dion, M. N., 2011). It means that the hardest skill in English learning is writing which require learner’s competency to receipt the information, process it, and at least, produce it. Writing is about the long processes, which require more time, more effort, as well as more guidance. So because it needs many time for learning, learners need to learn more outside the classroom in order to be a good writer, especially English writer.

Today, the developing of social networking spreads not only for public but also in education. This fact must be accepted wisely even it can be a chance to use it as a media to learn and explore the skill especially writing as the focus discussion here. Later, social media such as facebook and instagram can improve improve students’ language competence, as well as improving their motivation because learners enjoy all the time and the way they study.

Research design

Participants

The research was conducted at the second semester students of English Department of Tidar University in Introduction to Paragraph Writing subject. The sample of the research was 27 students.

Data collection

It is qualitative study. There were three major procedures in collecting the data. They were observations, interviews and documents analysis. The research was carried on the Facebook and Instagram then analyzed by the researcher. To begin the conversation flow, the researchers started the conversation through simple and free topics started from free writing to introduce them. They research respondents were free to write anything they would like to such as their activities, and so on.

The observation activities were carried out on Facebook and Instagram Group. The learning process in facebook and instagram group was activated through posting as the instructional learning, and giving the comment as the learning response to one another then documented as an analyzing materials to asses. After that the researcher give the formal instruction and assessment out of the group that later it was analyzed to compare the result of writing before and after using social media in improving writing skill. While to get the detail of qualitative data, the researchers distributed questionnaires to explore about their writing passion, and interest which is proved by how often they write actively in it.

Discussion

The result of observation and analysis

The primary data for this research was the observation data from the Facebook and Instagram group environment, which was more detail and comprehensive. Therefore, all of the participants' postings and comments in Facebook and Instagram become data of the research. In order to analyze and measure the participants' autonomous learning of English

writing development, the researcher use eight steps adopted from Reinder's (2010). Those stages are; identifying needs, selecting goals, planning learning, selecting resources, selecting learning strategies, practice, monitoring the progress, and the last was assessment and revision, which explained detail as follows:

1. Identifying needs

Before the learning, the learners were asked to decide what they need to learn, and what condition they need in order to learn better. Therefore, the researcher asked them to decide the rules of this group learning activities that need to be obeyed by all of the participants. For some of the regulation the most important is all the members must be in active participant and don't be afraid to write although there will be some mistakes.

2. Selecting goals

The learners were asked to decide what the goals of the learning. They need to know and elaborate what they want to learn and what kind of writing to master through the learning media. Here because it must be suitable with the level of learners and with the syllabus, the researcher asked the learners to use descriptive text.

3. Planning of learning

It began with the writing comment learning. The researcher posted a brief basic knowledge about how to write a good comment on the internet. Then, they explored their writing comment competency by commenting on other people's English posting, and reported them to the group, as well as their analysis of other comments in that posting. Then, every of them had to comment and revise each other report about writing comment. Trying to understand the postings and the link given about comment, all of the participants have their own way in learning, as well as their strategy to plan their own learning. The participants wrote a reflection on the problem, the feeling toward the learning, etc. one of the participant

reflected as follows; I like study about write comment, because I can know new vocabulary from other, but sometimes I can't understand all. Nevertheless, in the next learning topic, learning about writing paragraph, almost all of the participants wrote their reflection about learning of writing paragraph.

4. Selecting resources

The learners selected their own learning sources. The participants were free to check and search any others as many as they wanted to. From 27 members all participant were active to explain their selecting resource process.

5. Selecting learning strategies.

There are some of learning strategies to use when they post the comment or post the writing such as by arrange a time to learn, trying to understand the materials giving by guessing and if she failed to guest, she would ask the facilitator directly, trying to find the meaning of the material from printed and electronic dictionary even google translation.

6. Practice

In this stage, it was divided into two sections, in group and real writing in paper assignment. Firstly, the learners are asked to practice their learning by writing based on the task given. The task that was given had been designed based on the autonomous learning development consideration. Therefore, their participation in fulfilling the task by writing showed how their autonomous learning in writing developed. To help them practice writing, in the beginning of the learning, The researcher asked the participants to do free writing about themselves as the introduction. For this activity, all of the participants were participating very well. Furthermore, in the activity of how to write a good commentl material posted the participants practiced writing comment by exploring comments of other people outside the group and posted its report in the group.

Secondly, The researcher asked the students to write in a formal assignment, out of the facebook and instagram to check about the progress and mark after they practiced from the group. The researcher gave the specific theme and instructed them to write in some paragraphs in descriptive text.

7. Monitoring progress

The monitoring progress was seen from questioners, mark and opinions and activeness in group. Interestingly 100% students participated at this stages, but with the detail that 80% of participant were highly participated observing.

8. Assessment and revision.

Here, the learners were asked to assess their peers learning as well as theirs. Therefore, their feedbacks for other participants were observed through their comments, but the feedbacks that assess others' posting will only be counted. Furthermore, after assessment process (assessing others' postingand their own posting) the participants were asked to revise their posting according to the assessment. After all participants giving the comment, the facilitators gave the feedback and revision, both the writing from the group and assignment in paper.

Data interpretation

The result of facebook and instagram observation and analysis shows that both social group media promotes students autonomous learning. The practice stages are considered as the main stages in writing learning, where all of the participants (100%) fully engaged participating. All of the participants actively practice writing. In addition, all of the participants also showed full involvement in monitoring the progress. In addition, the interviews data exposed participants enjoy the learning process and the practice through media (Facebook and Instagram Group). As the fact, the participants showed different level of participation, where for selecting resources,

selecting learning strategies, and assessment, not all participants showed the high enthusiasm and also for planning learning, setting goals, and identifying.

The participants stated that they like this type of learning which is more fun and relax. I can see high enthusiasm of this learning and although some of them is not posting in punctual time, because of some reasons such as, bad connection and stopping idea then they must see first others' posting to rise up again their ideas.

In order to help the participants learn successfully, I provided the instructional process by using scaffolding approach, which was started from the lower level to the next. In this situation, I would start the learning process from the comment writing, and then paragraph writing. To guide the participants to gain better achievement, along with those writing instruction, I provided a slight explanation and basic links, and a rubric, so that they could monitor their learning, as well as their peer learning.

From the data analysis it is got that for 27 participants, 100% said that they love using autonomous learning because it can learn writing by it freely and enjoyable and also when the researcher checked from the mark before and after they used social media, there are significant improvement in this result. From those explanations it can be said that, by using social media, it can facilitate the learners to do the autonomous learning to make better learning, because they write such a habit and they can pour the idea freely without being afraid in making many mistakes that later from the habit hear it will lead them to write progressively.

Conclusion

The demand of autonomous learning in writing is such a crucial issue to be focused on. It's way, this research using social media such as facebook and instagram to promote students' autonomy in learning English writing. It promotes students not only to practice writing more often but also monitor it, besides learning by them is felt free and

enjoy. Therefore, it is really suggested that social media can be best to be the autonomous learning media that lead and motivate students in writing progress and also it can be a tool where learners are encouraged to use their creativity combined with personal expression to improve and strengthen their writing through Consistency, Feedback, Confidence and Collaboration.

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