

Schoology as Learning Media to Improve Students' Writing Skill

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Abstract

The development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) offers many solutions for the teacher to use an effective learning platform to improve students' writing skills. Schoology is a learning application that can be used by teachers and students to teach and to learn writing. This paper aims to explain the use of Schoology in teaching writing and its benefits for students' writing skills. Literature study was used as the method of this study in collecting the data. The study found that: 1). Students who were taught by using Schoology had better writing skill than those who were not. 2). Schoology was found effective media for teaching writing due to its easiness and friendly display. The findings are expected to be an alternative learning media used by both teachers and students in supporting the teaching and learning process in writing.

Keywords: Learning media, schoology, writing

Introduction

Writing is one of the four English language learning skills that is considered an influential communication model. Rao and Durga (2018) state that writing takes a significant role in communication because message or information is transmitted more through writing than any other media type. The importance of writing skills makes students need to develop their writing skills for their personal development and academic success. Yi (2009) and Kassem (2017) emphasize that writing becomes a prerequisite for international opportunities to study abroad and success in all academic fields and workplaces.

However, according to Nunan (2020), writing is a complex cognitive activity. The students need to simultaneously express various sentence-level variables, including control of content, spelling, letter formation, sentence structure, and text. It can be defined that writing is a complex activity that makes students can face several problems during writing's activity. According to

Yusuf et al., (2019) students have several difficulties in writing, such lack of knowledge of English vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. The authors further explain that those problems will contribute to the students' lack of interest in writing. Thus, it makes writing become the most challenging skill among the four skills of English language learning.

Besides, the complexity of the writing process can be a problem for students and is also a problem for teachers. Teachers are often confused in selecting the suitable teaching methods or media to overcome the students' difficulties in writing. It makes teachers have a clear understanding of how to apply appropriate techniques, methods, or learning media so that the students can be good at writing. As stated in a study by Alsmari (2019), teachers' role in overcoming students' writing problems is very significant because they need to identify the appropriate techniques, methods, or learning media to help them develop their writing skills. Teachers should be creative and innovative in teaching writing. Using appropriate learning media for teaching writing is a solution to develop student's writing skills and overcome students' problem in writing.

The rapid development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) also gives the teacher benefits to develop student's language skills, particularly in writing. As Yunus et al., (2013) mentioned, ICT tools in the writing classroom make a supportive and encouraging environment for students to increase their writing skills in quality and quantity. Furthermore, teachers are provided with more chances to increase students' abilities to write more detail, grammatically correct, and stimulate students' interest in writing. Sandolo (2010) also stated that the use of ICT is helpful to build students' interest in writing due to its features that give easiness.

One of the ICT tools as learning media that can improve students' writing skills is *Schoology*. According to Rama et al., (2019), *Schoology* is a web-based K-12 learning environment that allows teachers and students access to class material and information through the internet. *Schoology* is a free application that enables the teacher to share material and create discussion and board assignments. On the other hand, *Schoology* allows students to access the material without limitation of time. As Rama et al., (2019) explained, by using *Schoology*, students can interact with each other online, which means students can participate in discussion anytime and anywhere. Besides, students can post comments on their friends' work, do the quiz, and upload the assignment. Hence, this paper aims to explain the use of *Schoology* in teaching writing and elaborate its advantages to improve students' writing skills.

Method

Literature study was used as the method of this study in collecting the data. The researchers conducted several steps. The first step was collecting the data from the primary and secondary resources. In primary resources, the researcher collected data from studying the research papers

relating the use of *Schoology* in language teaching and learning writing. Meanwhile, in the secondary resources, the data were collected from articles and books used to support this study. Classifying the data was the second step in which the researchers classified the data related to the use of *Schoology* in teaching and learning writing, focusing on its implementation. The next step was analyzing the data. After analyzing the data, the researchers conducted the last step, such as drawing the conclusion based on the data analysis.

Findings & Discussions

According to Permana and Santosa (2018), *Schoology* is one of Learning Management System (LSM) that enables teachers to connect with students through a social network. Muhammad (2020) stated that *Schoology* is one of the e-media platforms which offers online environment and pedagogical experiences in learning. Students are able to interact with their friends without a face-to-face interaction in the classroom. *Schoology* also allows the teacher to manage the teaching and learning process, including the material, discussion, and assessment. Moreover, it can present videos, pictures, documents, and websites as sources of learning. The features are accessible for teacher and students. Crisientia (2017) emphasizes that *Schoology* supports the teachers by several features in that application, such as video, audio, and images, which can attract students' interest. It is one of the learning media used to convey information provided by the teacher to students. Additionally, *Schoology* belongs to asynchronous learning because students can access the material without time limitations, and there is no live communication between students and teachers. As Jose and Abidin (2016) mentioned, asynchronous learning is included in one of the important methods in online learning because it is anytime accessible, beneficial for students who have different learning styles, and minimize classroom pressure.

Apriliani, et al. (2019) explained how the teacher implemented *Schoology* as a learning media to teach writing, as follows; 1). The teacher could post the explanations of the material and the students could write some comments or respond on the comment feature. By using *Schoology*, students were allowed to participate in the writing lesson by asking questions and commenting on classmates' work. 2). Teacher could create a wall group of class to allow students to post their writing in the *Schoology*. Then, the teacher can evaluate students' writing assignments by giving some suggestions and comments.

Another example was found from the study conducted by Zainnuri and Cahyaningrum (2017) regarding the topics used in writing. They stated that the teacher could ask students to make an argumentative essay. The steps were explained as follows: First, the teacher explained all materials using the Project Based Learning (PBL) teaching method, then assign the students to write an argumentative essay as a project or final assignment. Second, the students were asked to do some activities in the form of discussion in *Schoology*, namely (a) Teacher asked students to practice the topic by developing a good topic sentence, (b) Students were asked to make pre-

writing of possible position, reason, evidence and counter arguments based on the chosen topic, (c) Students made a list of position, reason, evidence, and counter arguments. (d) Students made an outline of a paragraph. (e) Students evaluated the draft (f) Students revised the draft of paragraph (g) Students evaluated the revised paragraph (h) Students posted a work in the *Schoology*'s discussion page and then provided feedback to other students' work in *Schoology*'s discussion page.

Additionally, there are several advantages of the implications of using *Schoology* as learning media in teaching writing including (1) The students will get opportunity to revise their writing so that it can improve students' motivation in learning writing (2) The students will get some benefits from self-assessment and reflection. Self-reflection make students know their learning progress (3) Students will easily to understand the material because they get feedback or comment from their teacher (Zainnuri & Cahyaningrum, 2017: 336). Several previous study conducted by experts about the use of *Schoology* as learning media in writing's process. The first study was proposed by Masyhudianti et al., (2018) which aimed at analysing the effectiveness of *Schoology* to teach writing viewed from students' creativity. The findings of this study revealed that *Schoology* was an effective learning media for teaching writing. The students who were taught by using *Schoology* had better writing skill than those who were taught by using Picture Series.

Those advantages were supported by the previous studies which proposed the use of *Schoology* as learning media in improving students' writing skill. A study proposed by Apriliani et al., (2019) showed that the implementation of *Schoology* as an alternative media in writing skill helped teacher to improve students' learning achievement. *Schoology* became essential variable on students' learning achievement. Moreover, in 2019, Hastomo conducted a study which analyzed the effects of *Schoology* on students' writing ability and investigate students' curiosity. This study used quantitative and qualitative or mix method to obtain the data. It has proven that the findings of the quantitative data indicated that the use of *Schoology* were more effective than the use of non *Schoology*. Besides, the result of qualitative data revealed that *Schoology* was an attractive and engaging platform for teaching and learning. In addition, this study mentioned that *Schoology* had a greater impact than the use of conventional media. Conclusively, the aforementioned studies showed the same result. *Schoology* was found effective media for teaching writing.

Furthermore, *Schoology* also promotes students' autonomous, whereas learners can stay in touch with the teacher in writing class. It is because they can get feedback and comments from their classmates and teacher. *Schoology* provides active leaning and increase students' writing skill. Another study proposed by Rosalina (2018) aimed at analysing the use of *Schoology* as learning media as supporting media toward students' learning motivation and finding out students' opinion relating the use of *Schoology*. This study revealed that students were felt motivated using *Schoology* during the learning process. *Schoology* made students interested and enthusiastic in learning because the students were given opportunity to learn. This study also found that students were happy to learn by using *Schoology* because of its easiness and friendly display.

Conclusions and Suggestions

Schoology is effective to be used as a media for teaching writing due to its easiness and features. Schoology is useful both for the teachers and the students. For the teachers, it can be used as a media for teaching writing. The teachers can utilize the features to create assignments and check students work. Meanwhile, for students, Schoology can motivate them to do writing because they can easily access the material. The current study suggests for the teachers to use Schoology in teaching writing.

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