

THE USE OF WIKI WEBSITE: A SOLUTION TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' WRITING PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: This paper aims at sharing merits of wiki as one of fruitful educational technology in facilitating students to improve their writing's performance in language classrooms. In implementing, this paper recommends CBLM with the stages are combination of positive input from the previous study: (1) training of using wiki, (2) grouping the students, (3) drafting, (4) revising, (5) editing, and (6) publishing. The results reveal Wiki and its merits can encourage students to be independent learners because they are able to effectively participate and contribute in writing their essays by sharing ideas, editing, and supporting to each other. The teachers, especially in Indonesia, can implement wiki by using CBLM in all level of students. However, teachers must adjust and consider some important aspects before utilize it in the classroom depend on students' need and classroom environment.

Keywords: merit, wiki, CBLM.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching writing in twentieth first century is not as simple as write words or topics on the board to start the process of students' writing. In this era, a good teacher is the one who can combine conventional teaching in the classroom with educational technology. Technology has influenced the way teachers and students in communicating, collaborating, and learning especially in higher education (Neuman & Hood, 2009). These activities, which used to be the main part in the classroom, can be observed in social networking sites (SNSs) such as blogs, Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Flickr, Wiki and Twitter as a new medium where teachers and students interact.

Wiki emerges as a new site, which can be fruitful in collaborative learning especially writing. It is an easy website to be incorporated in the learning process because it is an extremely simple online database (Leuf & Cunningham, 2001). This collaborative website is a major component of Web 2.0, which can be designed as learning environments where the students as the writers are part of active learning community (Franklin & Van Harmelen, 2007) since they can easily create and edit web pages collaboratively (Chao, 2007). Regarding these merits, this paper aims to suggest collaborative blended learning model

(CBLM) with modification in its steps to since the implementation of wiki in the previous research need to be more structurally order. In this model, students can hopefully include in collaborative activities encompass updating wiki pages, adding new information, and creating links between pages which can make them help to each other in writing process. Furthermore, in wiki, students are not only learning incorporated material on the web but also sharing ideas among them related to the given topic of writing. These activities are needed to create social situation since learning is both of social and personal phenomenon (Jarvis, 1987). When students have good social situation in learning, students' motivation in improving writing performance will be increased.

Writing Performance

The teachers must successfully encourage students to improve their writing performance. It is reasonable since writing is important as foundation of education and the basic requirements for all academic disciplines (Heffernan, Linclon & Atwill, 2001). For this purpose, students are required to learn how to write technical texts in particular types, which are apposite to the fields they are studying (Graefen, 1996). For instance, the students must be able to write a kind of proposal, research report, thesis, article or as simple as written a certain text to fulfil their final assignment.

However, writing, as well as speaking, is a productive skill, which requires students' high effort and time rather than reading and listening (Nation, 2001). It impacts in the teaching process in the classroom where students tend to get bored even at the beginning of writing process. This situation gets worse when students face some problems in their learning process such lack the knowledge of language (Chakravarthy & Dwivedi, 2015), and grammar (Jabur.et al, 2013) which decrease their motivation to make their writing performance better. A good teacher certainly, tries to find out part of teaching to be improved in order to engage their students in writing process. The change will be in the part of teaching strategy, classroom atmosphere, or the material that can increase students' motivation in improving their writing performance.

Collaborative Learning

In increasing students motivation in the classroom, collaborative learning can be a good solution. Collaborative learning is the term which includes many activities where students are the center in the process of learning while teacher tend to be an expert designer or facilitator for them. Attainment of higher achievement, higher motivation, positive social relationship among students and teacher, and positive attitudes to discipline study has been addressed in this type of learning (Fantuzzo & Miller, 2003) because collaborative learning involves students together in the learning process and encourage them to do assignment cooperatively in a team. In learning and sharing, they will learn about how to voice actively and listen to carefully other opinion or ideas so the teacher indirectly make a bridge between students with low proficiency and high proficiency. This bridge hopefully can increase students' motivation in improving their writing performance.

Collaborative learning covers wide territory of approach with various activities. Some of them are (Smith, & J.MacGregor,1992):

a. Cooperative learning

In cooperative learning, the importance of learning has the same place with interpersonal skills. Social skills become very important in cooperative learning since it is the key to get high quality of group work which is represented in academic and social objectives in its task. The strategies used in this approach also assign roles within each small group to ensure good social skills and make students able to adapt in different teamwork.

b. Problem-centered instruction

It is a kind of approach which encourages students to have problem solving abilities by using guided design, cases and simulation as forms of problem-centered instruction. The students will be involved in the complex problems that must be faced and solved in a teamwork where they must be able to make a quick decision in an uncertain situation.

c. Writing groups

It is also known as peer response group. In this approach, students works in a small group at every stage of writing from formulating ideas until final draft. Then, one of the group will share their idea while other groups become response group which gives suggestion for improvement. This activities are done in turn before students revising their draft.

d. Peer teaching

It has possibility as the oldest form of collaborative learning in American education. Peer teaching is usually applied in a university for undergraduate students who will become a teacher. The three most successful and broadly used peer teaching models are supplemental instruction, writing fellows, mathematics workshop, and discussion groups and seminar

e. Learning communities

This approach is in terms of intentional reconfiguration of the curriculum. There are various curriculum structures among different campus. However, in general, they have two common purposes. First, providing intellectual coherence for students by linking classes together and building relationships between subject matter. Second, aiming to build both academic and and social community for students by enrolling them together in a large block of course work

Web 2.0

In 21st century, teaching and learning process cannot ignore the spread of technology. Collaborative learning that has been applied researchers must be combined with relevant technologies in this era. The unity of collaborative and educational technology such web 2.0 can make participatory learning possible in and out of the classroom (Pacific Policy Research Center, 2010). Web 2.0 is an umbrella term used to describe a variety of online collaborative and interactive tools which are characterized by ease of use and rapidity of deployment, making possible powerful information sharing and straightforward collaboration (Solomon and Schrum, 2007). This collaborative environment in web 2.0 emerges opportunity for students in contributing to grow knowledge in online communities assisted by web based tools.

Web 2.0 which consists of wiki, facebook, blog and twitter, offer affordances of interconnections, content creation and remixing, and interactivity which may facilitate an increased interest in learners' creative practices, participation, and production suggesting new ways of thinking about the digital-age competencies (Greenhow, et al, 2009). First, interconnection means the changing of way researchers and educators think about learners' participatory and creative practices with various Web 2.0 technologies, especially about what, how, with whom, and for what purposes learning occurs through such practices.

Second, Content creation and remixing, Its capacity for content creation and "remixing" practices, in which a range of found or original online materials are cut, spliced, edited, reworked, and mixed into new creations. Graphics and text can be repurposed and rearranged, blurring the lines between information consumption and production and between individual and group authorship of expression in richly visual and social media. Third, Interactivity, it facilitate by features that do not require sophisticated technical expertise but allow users to publish, share, consume, and remix content.

Wiki Website

The paramount consideration to make a change in the classroom is how to lead students to be independent learners who consciously learn outside the classroom without teacher's monitor. Using wiki as a new way in teaching writing is a good alteration for teachers. Wiki can keep track of students' learning processes outside class time (Mak & Coniam, 2008). Teachers' role can be as facilitators who create the material and other supporting material on the web. Therefore, the students are able to learn about a certain topic anywhere and anytime and practice their writing by typing it on the website. This flexibility makes increasing of students' engagement in writing process (Hood and Neuman, 2009).

Wiki has been considered as a new tool to contribute in writing process (Warschauer, 2010) not only by its flexibility but also its use in collaborative writing by a

team for joint writing (Tonkin,2005). In wiki, a group of students can gather into one space to share information related to the writing topic given by the teacher, motivate, and empower to each other. These activities are better for students than peers being recipient of finished written product. Students can communicate and discuss their problem related to writing's topic provided on the website. Moreover, sharing writing with other students in the class is one way to add authenticity of writing itself (Brown, 2015). In other words, the collaborative process on wiki website can increase the quality of writing product. By the increment of writing's quality, students will feel that they have the same chance and ability to create a good writing. It means that wikis can enhance asynchronous communication and cooperative learning among students, and promote cooperation rather than competition (De Pedro et al., 2006). As we observe in every writing process in traditional class, some students feel unconfident to create their own writing. The competition between students who has higher and lower ability hopefully can be diminished by implementing wiki in English language teaching.

Utilizing Of Wiki In Some Countries

In utilizing the wiki in the classroom to improve students' writing performance, many researchers around the world have applied wiki depend on the need of their class. Kessler (2009) use wiki by providing an online courses at Mexican university to improve teachers' competence to correct their own and others' grammar and the accuracy of their writing in general. He found that students' willingness to collaborate was high, but their priority was the content, with less emphasis on language structures. This result might be emerged because the researcher directly give the teacher online course without explanation at the beginning of the course. In Japan, Miyazoe & Anderson (2010) provide their students an online writing by using wiki where they are encouraged to detect different writing styles after exposure to online writing. Mak & Coniam (2008), conduct such collaborative writing with wiki by emphasizing in drafting and revising for secondary school students in Hongkong to enhance and develop their writing skills. They found that wikis open up the possibility for the design of innovative collaborative writing approaches. From this research we know that drafting and revising are important steps in applying wiki although it needs to be completed by some other steps. In Indonesia, Mulyani (2012) improve junior high school students' motivation in writing recount text by including more steps such: 1) creating a wiki, 2) Initial writing, 3) revising the first draft, 4) proofreading and 5) publication. She found that wiki is very useful to improve the quality and motivation of students in writing. If we sum up the finding of the researchers above, Kessler, Miyazoe & Anderson, use wik as an online course to improve writing performance whereas Mak, Coniam and Mulyani collaborate wiki and their teaching activities in the classroom with some stages. In attaining better improvement of students' writing performance, the better systematic way is needed to combine between wiki and teaching learning process.

CBLM and Its Modification

To make more explicit and systematic, we can implement wiki website by using CBLM (Collaborative Blended Learning Model). The Collaborative Blended Learning Model is a combination of Collaborative and Blended learning. Collaborative learning is a kind of learning strategy which believes that collaboration among two or more people who work together can increase students' achievement, motivation, positive student-student relationships, and more positive attitudes towards the discipline of study (Fantuzzo & Miller, 2003). In improving writing performance, this strategy has gotten considerable attention in terms of its applicability in developing students' writing skills (Loudermilk & Hern, 2006) because it can enhance student's motivation to be actively involved in the process of writing where they can learn to each other and give beneficial contribution. On the other hand, Blended learning is an approach to use technology that seeks in integrating different tools and methods and employ them in one program (Perifanou, 2010). In implementing this approach, teacher must recognize students' need in choosing the methods because blended learning is not just a blend of online and face-to-face training but is based on the use of a range of learning material and methods to engage, excite and satisfy the learner (Barry Wilding-Webb, 2011).

The combination between collaborative and blended learning results the Collaborative Blended Learning Method which refers to "webquest 2.0 collaborative projects that take place less as face-to-face meetings but mostly online, supported by (a)synchronous Web 2.0 technologies combining at the same time collaborative learning with self paced learning" (Perifanou, 2011). From the definition, CBLM offer the teacher to combine between face-to-face meeting and using of educational technologies. To improve students writing, web-based social networking platforms that can provide the learning space through group writing and enable peer and teacher feedback is needed. We can use wiki because this website can enhance writing competencies and interest in language learning (Wang, 2014). Besides, wiki also offer student-teacher communication and peer learning (Zorko, 2007).

A combination between collaborative and blended learning in CBLM is a good formula to improve students writing. Teacher can use collaborative technologies in delivering attractive topic for students, providing prompt feedback, encouraging students to revise their writing autonomously based on the teacher feedback and accepting further questions for explanation in an apropos ti

me (Xia & Sun, 2010). Nevertheless, teacher needs some structured stages in applying the CBLM in the classroom. Teacher can carry out CBLM by following six stages.

The first stage of CBLM is an introduction of wiki to students, which is held at the first meeting in the classroom. In this section, teacher will train students about how to write on wiki page, edit an existing page on wiki and view previous pages edited on wiki. In this stage, the teacher also explains the characteristics, uses, and benefits of wiki in improving their writing skills in order to activate their motivation.

The second stage is grouping and brainstorming. The teacher divided the students into some groups, which consist of five students before teacher shares topics of the writing. For instance, teacher will teach the students to make argumentative essay, the students are provided some topics, which must be chosen by them, depend on their interest. Next, teacher will encourage students to brainstorm and generate ideas about the chosen topic where the students will take a position as pro or contra sides of the topic. After that, the teacher asks every group to record their information gathered from brainstorm on charts.

The third stage is drafting, where teacher will train the students to make a draft of their writing process. However, the teacher must have created wiki page before trained the students. The teacher can choose free and easy web such Wikispaces (www.wikispaces.com). The pages are created for every group of students so they will have their own page. Then, the teacher encourages every group to organize the charts they wrote in the second stage before they write their drafts on their wiki pages. After every group write their draft on the website, the teacher ask students to read drafts of other groups on the wiki pages to give improving suggestion for essay's elaboration .

The fourth stage is revising. The teacher train students to revise their writing on the last stage. Teacher will explain how to organize ideas into coherent paragraph that starts from deciding the topic of every paragraph to arranging strong statements, which support the topic of each paragraph and choose the accurate words in the sentence. Then, every group will be asked to check their group page on wiki and revise it based on the teacher explanation. After revising, teacher instructs students in every group to consider possible questions and comments of the readers about their written work on wiki pages. This critical section is important to train students in reflecting their work before criticize draft of other groups. Next, teacher encourages students to read all drafts of every group and give improvement suggestion for them.

The fifth stage is editing. This section includes the training of students in reviewing and indicating the common mistakes in their written product. The teacher instructs students to check their spelling, grammar, and sentence structure to modify and rearrange ideas. To help students, teacher can provide mini-lessons depend on their errors in specific areas such as punctuation, spelling and grammar. The teacher role is also helping students to ensure that they have achieved the content style and goals of writing. Then, the students were asked to concentrate the most important information of their writing and reduce unimportant one of their writing.

The sixth stage is publishing. The students are involved in the training to publish their final writing on the wiki website. After publishing, the teacher encourages students in every group to read each other's essays and to write comments and suggestions for published written essays. Next, students are instructed to discuss the comments and suggestion in their group to consider revision of the published essay. After students have published their final writing, the teacher assesses every written essay and gives the score.

CONCLUSION

A combination of wiki website as an educational technology and collaborative learning in the form of CBLM can be an answer for teachers who need to provide their students a new way in improving writing performance. Wiki and its merits can encourage students to be independent learners because they are able to effectively participate and contribute in writing their essays by sharing ideas, editing, and supporting to each other. The teachers, especially in Indonesia, can implement wiki by using CBLM in all level of students. However, teachers must adjust and consider some important aspects before utilize it in the classroom depend on students' need and classroom environment.

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