The Implementation of Tumblr.Com in Teaching Writing

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Abstract
COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 digitizes human activities. The educational field is one of the aspects that affected. The classroom activities that usually do with the teacher and students together in one room moves to the virtual class in which the teacher and the students are apart. The teachers are charged to be more creative to make an interactive class. There are various applications, educational purpose and non-educational purpose, that can be used in teaching and learning activities. Thus, this study aimed to know the students' perception of the use of learning online applications and the perception of Tumblr.com as social media to teach writing, specifically in teaching hortatory exposition text. This study uses a qualitative research design and an online survey that engaged 15 students of the English Education Department in the 4th Semester at Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa. The result of this study displayed students' improvement in writing and a positive attitude towards the use of Tumblr in the teaching and learning process. It leads to the conclusion that Tumblr can be used as an alternative solution to having interesting activities in online the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: Tumblr, Hortatory Exposition Text, writing, online media, teaching

INTRODUCTION

In the era of revolution industries or what we usually called as 4.0 era, English plays important role in international interactions (Reddy, Mahavidyalaya, & Hyderabad, 2016). This statement is proved as The British Council estimates that about 375 million English first speakers and 750 million English second speakers. By showing those numbers, it can be concluded that English is being a communication language around the world. Related to the 4.0 era, there are many kinds of innovations that operated in English as the main language. Thus, some companies require employees who can read, write, and speak English. The ability of English skills would help the companies grow as the 4.0 era system that produces free trade which is the person should interact with people from anywhere and English makes it easy to communicate with.

Besides work purposes, English also important for general purposes such as educational things, politics, social. Therefore, a lot of people try to learn English by joining the course, take English subjects, studying in an international school for building an English area to maximalize the learning process. These reasons make the education field try to make a program to improve the teaching and learning English as interest as possible. Schools try to make additional classes, extracurricular, courses outside the class from kindergarten to university level to make a good English generation.

In Indonesia, English is introduced to children since they enter kindergarten by building their vocabulary of animals, tools, things, family, plants, and others by singing a song, playing games, and practicing to write. In the next level, the children are introduced to word order, phrases, basic grammar, and so on. Generally, the students are expected to master four skills; reading, writing, speaking and listening. Many students are successfully mastered English well, but it is undeniable that some students are found in difficulties to learn English. From the difficulties of English itself, personal motivations are the reason for the distress in learning English. This situation is not only found in the elementary school to senior high school but also in the English Education Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, the University of Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa, especially in the 4th semester.

In response to the 4.0 era, in which there are a lot of innovations, it also becomes a challenge for the teacher to make an interactive class or an interesting learning process. The appearance of technologies becomes a challenge for the teacher not only because the technologies are fast-growing and they should keep updated but also technologies become a problem in the process of teaching and learning. Laptop and smartphone are examples of gadgets that can be found in daily activities. Those things become daily tools because of the simplicity of the operation and ease to be brought anywhere. Those things also become a problem in the teaching and learning process because of the features that able to entertain the user. Social media and games are features that have both good and bad impact to the user, especially students, moreover, it is connected to the internet and make the student out of focus. According

to APJII data on Wednesday (22/05/2019), the internet users in Indonesia mostly are 15 to 19 years old (Untari, 2019), which means they are in the student age.

The educational field keeps trying to adjust to the era. There are social media and games are built for educational purposes. There are also available youtube education channels, educational applications, websites, and others. According to Lewis & Cyntia Nichols (2016), social media allows the user for communicating, interacting, producing, and sharing messages. Inline, from the beneficial side, social media can be used in the educational field by having some adjustments.

In 2020, there is a virus that comes up to the surface called Covid-19 that limits human mobility because of the easiness spreads. According to WHO (2020), this virus is the newfound coronavirus. In response to this situation, the government regulates the society to stay at home and try to digitalize almost their activities including education. The number of users of social media gets increased by 27% at the beginning of the pandemic to 41% in the middle of this phase (WANTIKNAS, 2020). The government also makes a regulation that all activities are suggested to do *work from home* programs and do the social distancing to prevent the spread of this virus.

In response to those regulations, the educational field tries to adapt to the online process. This research discussed Tumblr.com as social media that believed can be used in the learning process. Tumblr.com is a combination of Instagram, Facebook, and Blog with similar to its features, There are previous studies that have been conducted to know the effectiveness of Tumblr.com. According to Olexa and Librenjak (2019), Tumblr can be a medium to build students' habit in writing as long the class period of Japanese University Students. The lack of this media is the students not continually practice after the class. It means that it depends on the personal motivation' students. The second study found that Tumblr can improve the students' writing by showing the significant result of the first post-test (72.8) and second post-test (78.7). This study also found that this media can stimulate students' motivation in SMA N 3 Pontianak (Vitiara, 2017). Another study said the same result as Vitiara's research that Tumblr practically can improve the students writing but can

not boost their motivation to write. The students also argued that Tumblr can not improve their writing performance to organize their writing or reduce their writing mistakes (Rahmanita, 2018).

The result of this research looks forward to the students' perception after using Tumblr in the writing learning process, which can be a consideration for the teacher to adapt this media for writing class.

Referring to the background, this study research a students' attitude toward Tumblr as the writing learning media. These questions research are formulated as follow:

1. What applications are recognized by the students for the teaching-learning process during the Covid-19 pandemic?
2. How is the students' attitude toward Tumblr.com in writing hortatory text during virtual class?

Various definitions have been given to learning. According to Bransford, Brown, and Cocking, learning is a process of active engagement (Wilson & Peterson, 2006). In the learning process, people can give interact with the environment, talking with others, or reacting to something as their response in learning. Another example, when people learn in school or course, they will give a response after receiving the knowledge. The response can be an action or an idea. This is what it means by engagement. Wilson & Peterson (2006) also defines that learning is a metacognitive awareness, which means the learner has a greater capacity to transfer their knowledge to new problem and contexts. This definition explains that the learning process builds their ability to have group work not only on individual understanding. Duckworth and Lampert in Wilson & Peterson's book (2006) believe that in learning activities, the learner can grow new understanding related to their experiences. In a line with those definitions, it can be concluded that learning is a flexible activity of how people get the information and process the information by engaging, sharing, and building the knowledge they get.

To have a learning process, we usually learn with someone who is experienced. Someone who is experienced will teach the learner. According to Bruner's insight (Smith, 2018), teaching is not an activity to produce the subject become a little living library but to get the learner to think scientifically for himself, to muse matters as a historian does, to participate in the process of knowledge-getting. It means that teaching is a sharing activity that involved the teacher as a facilitator and learner as a subject that has been facilitated. Brown (2004) suggests teaching set up the practice games of language learning: the opportunities for learners to listen, think, take risks, set goals, and process feedback from "coach" and afterward reuse through the abilities that they are attempting to ace. Thus, teaching is an activity transferring knowledge and expect the learner can apply the knowledge.

In the teaching process, 2 basic components must be in the process; media and teacher. Mutohhar (2009) said Media is a tool that can be used practically, reusable, and help the teacher to create effective instruction in the classroom. Media in era 4.0 mostly in digital form such as PPT, e-book, and educational platform. Teachers also can be media in teaching. A teacher has an important role in the process of teaching and learning. A teacher can provide the knowledge and play a role as controller, prompter, resource, assessor, organizer, participant, or tutor for the learner.

In this study, the skill that was researched is writing. Writing is a form of communication to deliver thought or to express feeling through the written form. It means that writing is used to express people thought, feeling, ideas (Harmer, 2001, p. 79). Writing skill is the process of thinking to find ideas, thinking about how to express into good writing, and arrange the ideas into statements and paragraphs clearly (Nunan, 2003, p. 88). According to Harmer (2004:31-33), there is some importance in writing. Those are:

Writing encourages students to focus on accurate language use.

a. Writing is often used as a means of reinforcing language that has been thought of.

b. Writing is frequently useful as preparation for some other activity.

c. Writing can be used as an integral part of a larger activity; language practice, acting out, or speaking.

d. Writing is also used in questionnaire-type of activities.

The text that used in this research is hortatory exposition text. Hortatory exposition text is a text that has a social function to persuade the reader that something should or should not be the case (Vernalita, 2017). The generic structures of hortatory exposition text are:

- Thesis: It presents an announcement of an issue of concern.

- Arguments: It presents the reasons for concern, leading to the recommendation.

- Recommendation: It presents the statement of what ought or ought not to happen.

The language features of hortatory exposition text are:

- Simple present tense

- Using modals

- Action verbs or thinking verbs

- Using adverb

- Using connectives/transition

In teaching writing, Richards & Renandya (2002:303) state that the process of writing consists of planning, drafting, revising, and editing. In teaching writing also needs an assessment, There are five indicators for scoring in writing tests; grammar, vocabulary, content, organization, and mechanic. Some media can be used in teaching writing, according to Smaldino, Lowther, and Rusell (2008: 6), media that can be used in teaching writing as follows:

(1) Text, is alphanumeric characters that may be displayed in any format, for example, book, poster, and so on.

(2) Audio, includes anything that can be heard and maybe live or recorded, for example, teacher's voices, music, and mechanical sounds.

(3) Visuals are regularly used to promote learning, for example, cartoons, and photographs.

(4) Audiovisual/Video, shows motion, for example, movies, DVDs 23 and computer animation.

(5) Manipulatives, are three-dimensional and can be touched and handled by students.

(6) People, for example, teachers, and students. All kinds of media can be utilized if the media are relevant to the materials and effective to support the teaching of writing skills.

Tumblr is an American microblogging and social networking website found by David Karp in 2007. Thus, this media has features to practice writing, there are:

1.   Dashboard.

The dashboard is the primary tool for the user. It shows recent posts from people they follow. Through the dashboard, users can comment, reblog, and like posts from people they follow that appear on their dashboard. The tools that can be used for the users to access Tumblr are the users can post text, image, video, quotes, or links. While posting a post, Tumblr allows users to have a variation of fonts.

2.   Queue

The users can schedule their posts. It will be posted as they set the time.

3.   Tags

The tags help the users to find particular topics by adding tags in their posts.

4.   Inbox and messaging

Tumblr allows users to submit questions to other people anonymously. In 2015, Tumblr gives users more tools. The users can have fan mail or even chat with another person on Tumblr.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is conducted by using a descriptive qualitative method. According to Ritchie & Jane (2003), qualitative research has tended to place concern and value on the human, interpretative aspects of learning about the social world and the significance of the investigator's understanding and interpretations of the phenomenon being studied. It is set in online research. The participants in this

research are 15 students of the English Education Department in the fourth semester of the University of Sarjanawiyata Tamansiswa in the academic year 2020. The students in this research are identified have learned about hortatory exposition text in their writing class. The Snowball sampling method is used in collecting the students. According to Vogt (Miller & Brewer, 2003), snowball sampling is used to find research subjects by contacting a few potential respondents and then ask them whether they know of anybody with the equal characteristics that the researcher is looking for in this study. The data were collected from the questionnaires in the interview and survey form. Google form and Whatsapp were used to share and collect the questionnaires. In this stage, the questionnaires are shared via Whatsapp. The students are asked about their experience in virtual class using the media that they usually use in the writing class. Before collecting the data, the students were asked to make a Tumblr account. Tumblr account is used to practice writing for the students and the researcher observed their activities on Tumblr. The students are asked to do some activities and submit them directly use Tumblr. After doing the writing activities on Tumblr, students are asked to fill the survey form that is shared via Whatsapp. Students' works were analyzed using table assessment.

Table

The Explanation of Criteria (Setiawan, 2018)

No.	Item Analysis	Score (1-4)
1	Content	4 = Demonstrate a clear understanding of the purpose of the text and includes a presented central idea with relevant facts, details, and/or explanation
		3 = Demonstrate little understanding of the purpose of the text but the message carried in the sentence is presented

		2 = demonstrate little understanding of the purpose of the text but the message carried in the sentence is not presented 1 = demonstrate no understanding of the purpose of the text but the message carried in the sentence is not clearly
2	Coherency	4 = maintain a consistent point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including the effective use of transitions 3 = maintain a mostly consistent point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including the effective use of some transitions 2 = maintain an inconsistent point of view, focus, and organizational structure, which may include ineffective use of transitions 1 = maintain an inconsistent point of view, focus, and organizational structure, which may include ineffective use or awkward transitions that do not unify important ideas
3	Structure	4 = accurate in the convention of the English Language such as grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling

		3 = contain few errors in the convention of the English language such as grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling
		2 = contain some errors in the convention of the English language such as grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling
		1 = contain serious errors in the convention of the English language such as grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling
4	Diction	4 = vocabulary is precise and varied
		3 = vocabulary, in general, is appropriate and varied
		2 = very limited vocabulary but still appropriate and do not interfere with the reader understanding of the writing
		1 = very limited and numerous errors in vocabulary and interfere with the reader understanding of the writing
	Total	

In analyzing the students' questionnaires, the technique from Miles and Huberman (1994:170) were adapted. The techniques are:

a.   Reduction

Data reduction is the first step to analyze the data. It refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes of transcriptions.

b.   Display

The data display is the second step to analyze the data. It shows the display of data that has already been analyzed to be easy to understand. It included interviews, observation, and survey results in the form of text. It described the students' experiences before and after using Tumblr.com as the teaching and learning media.

c.   Conclusion

The conclusion is the last step to conclude the data found after analyzing the data. The researcher concluded the data that got from the questionnaires and observation.

RESULT

Interview Result

The first step that the researcher did was interviewing the students. The questionnaire is supposed to know what currently they used for daily social media and virtual classes. It is also to find a problem in the virtual class process. Here is the result of the interview as follow:

Table 1:

The Result of the Interview

Social Media for Writing	Results
Media	WA and GC
Features	Add image
	Add video
	Add Audio
	Add link
	Add Comment
	Chat room

Advantages	Proper apps for virtual class
	General application
Challenges	Communicative section
	The limit of features
	The lack of understanding
	Less interest

From the interview table, it can be seen that the students use WhatsApp and Google Classroom in the virtual writing class. According to Google Official Website, Google Classroom is a free web for helping the teachers save time, keep classes organized, and improve communication with students. It can be said that Google Classroom is a different kind of social media. Website user controls the audience while social media cannot be able to control the audience. It means that Google Classroom is used by the teachers for specific educational purposes. It is used as a room to submit the students' work, material discussions, or set test schedules.

WhatsApp and Google Classroom have most similar features such as add images, add video, add audio, add the link, add a comment, and chat a room. With the complete mentioned features, the students still find difficulties in the learning process. The result of the survey showed that the students feel hard to have a communicative discussion; the features do not provide the students to understand the subject, and they cannot use the application.

In the learning process, the students also mentioned that writing is one of the difficult skills to be learned. Aside from the skill that they should master, the lack of students' interest and the ability to understand the explanation in online terms also is their obstacles in writing class.

The students' activities during the practice stage showed improvement in writing hortatory text as seen in the following diagram.
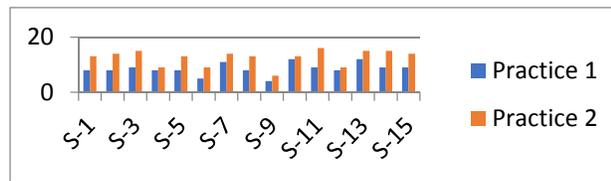
From the diagram above, it can be seen that almost all of the students were improved in writing hortatory exposition text. The students mostly improved in elaborating on their ideas. The students got a little obstacle to write, some of the students were found that the writing was not authentically from their ideas then the researcher recommended them to explore other users' writing by using related hashtags.

Survey

In the last step for getting the data, the researcher gave the second questionnaire. This questionnaire aims to know the respond of the students about the use of Tumblr.com in their writing. Here is the result of the survey as follow:

Table 2:

The Result of the Survey

Tumblr for Writing	Results
Media	Tumblr Web and Application
Features	Add image
	Add video
	Add Audio
	Add link
	Add Comment
	Chat room
	Group Chat
	Dashboard
	Text Setting
	Like
	Comment

	Reblog Follow World Wide Explore
Advantages	Easy to access Build ideas Easy to connect everyone Anonymous Appropriate tools for writing
Challenges	The internet connection Group chat

From the survey table, it can be seen that the students are interested in using Tumblr for practicing writing. According to students' responses, the most useful feature from Tumblr is the dashboard. The dashboard on Tumblr shows posts from other accounts that they follow and recommends some accounts related to their interest. It makes the students think that the dashboard is very useful because of the content that stimulates the students to come up with ideas. The students also argued that the features on Tumblr are easy to use and have a variation to help them in writing. The students mentioned the features of the font set to make their writing look different and interesting. The unlimited words on Tumblr also become a good point for Tumblr. This feature makes the students free to write their ideas.

Talking about access to Tumblr, the students said that it is not difficult to access Tumblr as long as there is a connection internet through a Wi-Fi connection or internet data. But, the connection also becomes lack of Tumblr.com because when the connection off, it becomes an obstacle for the students to access Tumblr.com.

Tumblr can be accessed via the website and app. There are two opinions about this. First, the students said that accessed via the website or application is easy. It can be an option for those who cannot install the application on their device. The students still can access Tumblr via the website while other students said that the performance of Tumblr is better via application rather than the website. The reason is, Tumblr has the limitation of features if it is accessed via the website. For example, the group cannot be accessed via the website; the user should install the application on their device to join the group. The users who access Tumblr via the website will only get the notification of the group invitation link but it will redirect them to install the application.

The students who use Tumblr via application feel helped by using the group chat feature. There are two types of groups on Tumblr; the general group in which the members around the world are free to join the group chat and the group which contained invited members only. The general group chat can be accessed by the students by following the group and it eases them to discuss with other users from the other side of the world.

In building the students' ideas, the features of *hashtags* and *explore* also be an alternative way for the students to get inspired by reading writings from other users. At this point, the students agreed that those features help them to improve their writing. Also, the students feel enjoy using Tumblr as writing practice media. The simple user interface and the various features help them. Based on the analysis of the whole questionnaires, it can be concluded the result of the Tumblr use in writing.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of this research, the features of Tumblr can motivate and provide the students to improve their writing skills. However, some factors make Tumblr cannot be accessed effectively. The internet connection still becomes a limitation in accessing Tumblr. Also, the use of Tumblr via the website and application needs to be considered because not all features that can be accessed via the application also can be accessed via the website.

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