



A CASE STUDY: REVEALING THE RESULT AND CHALLENGES OF ACCOMMODATING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AND SCHOOLGY FOR TEACHING WRITING IN EFL CONTEXT

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Abstract

This study is about accommodating Authentic Materials and Schoology in order to facilitate the students in EFL context in mastering writing skill. This study is aimed (1) to know the result of implementation of authentic material and schoology to teach writing in EFL context and (2) to know the challenges for the teacher to accommodate Authentic Materials and Schoology in teaching writing. The approach of the study was descriptive case study. This research was conducted at the English Department in one of FKIP in Suarakarta. The subjects of the research were the second-semester students of a writing class in the academic year 2019/2020. The data in this research are generated through interview, non-participant observation, and document analysis. The technique used for analyzing the data was qualitative data analysis having steps such as following: : (1) data reduction; (2) data display; (3) conclusion drawing and verification (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The result of this study shows that accommodating both authentic materials and schoology facilitates the students in EFL context to learn both literary aspects and writing aspects as well as boasting students' interest in writing. The challenges of accommodating Schoology in writing class cover (1) the availability of electronic devices and internet connection to access the authentic materials and schoology platform, and (2) the feeling of isolation since there is no face-to-face interaction in Schoology. Besides, maintaining appropriateness and comprehensibility of the authentic materials fitted with students' level becomes the basic challenge for the teacher whenever accommodating authentic material to support teaching writing.

INTRODUCTION

In this twenty-first century, having good writing skill is increasingly important to students. In general, people can express ideas and feelings through written text to inform, to persuade and to convince other people. However, in practice, the result of observation reveals mistakes and errors made by some students in using grammar rules, spelling, mechanics, and punctuation. In the very beginning step in writing, students often find problem in selecting topic for writing a text (Setyowati, Sukmawa, & Latief, 2018). As simple example, the students have little to write on the paper if the topic that is chosen for writing activity is boring for them. Besides, some students show little interest and joy to write since they find writing tasks as assignments. They tend to write for the teacher, not for themselves.

Writing is actually a complex process requires practices for its development. It needs both linguistic competence and practical knowledge on how to put the ideas into unified, coherent, and accurate text. In this case, the stages of effective writing are (1) pre-writing, (2) organizing, (3) drafting, (4) revising, (5) editing and (6) documenting the final draft. Noticing this lengthy process, the teacher can use the strength of Schoology. As online course management system, schoology offers teachers with method to create, manage and sharing lesson for their students.

For teaching writing, schoology is considered engaging since it allows both teacher and students or student and his/her peers to communicate and collaborate to enhance students' learning and success. It offers method not only for sharing lesson but also for managing lesson or in the form online portfolios documenting students' works. Using Schoology in writing class, teacher can accommodate scoring rubric for writing to help students to have self-assessment on their portfolio in terms of making a good writing. Seow, in Yugandhar (2015) states that significant technique in developing students' writing process is teacher's guidance while they are writing a text.

Meanwhile, Tomlinson (2012) underlined authentic input features of English Language Teaching (ELT) materials as the

ideal characteristics. These authentic materials help the students effectively acquiring the language. To help the students write better, in this research the teacher accommodates Authentic Materials and Schoology. In general, this paper reports the result of a descriptive case study on (1) the result of implementation of authentic material and schoology to teach writing in EFL context and (2) the challenges for the teacher to accommodate Schoology and Authentic Materials in teaching writing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching Writing in EFL Context

There is difference between teaching writing in EFL context and in context of English as native or first language. In fact, in EFL context, students face limited opportunities to speak or write and listen or read to English since they have less immediate English needs for both inside and outside the class. This situation makes some students are not happy yet to be exposed in written and spoken language for any length of time.

Writing it self requires linguistic competence and practical knowledge on how to put ideas elaborated in sentences in a piece of paper. Writing is thinking process in which a writer generates and organizes his/ her idea and exchanges it with the reader's own ideas. In more detail, outlining his/ her ideas, a writer then constructs main idea and supporting sentences, uses punctuation and also spelling. In this case, maintaining coherence and unity of paragraph and a group of paragraphs is also important principle to do. The ideas above implies that students need to know well writing steps such as (1) pre-writing, (2) organizing, (3) drafting, (4) revising, (5) editing and (6) documenting the final draft. Ariyanti (2016) shows that to accomplish a good composition in English, students need to go through complex steps such as brainstorming, prewriting, drafting, and editing. Talking about common difficulties faced by students in EFL context, in their research Kellogg and Whiteford (2009) revealed that university undergraduates' writing skills need to be improved. Their skills are still insufficient. Facing this situation, teachers need to use learning instruction

facilitating students develop their writing skills in (1) selecting the topic for their writing, (2) developing unified and coherent content, and (3) maintaining good text organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. Besides, teacher can adopt and adapt various material to support students' learning. In this study, authentic materials and schoology are accommodated to help students developing writing skill.

Accommodating Authentic Materials for Teaching Writing

Noticing students' difficulties in writing, teacher needs to help the students to overcome their problems and then write better. Choosing appropriate and supportive instructional material in language teaching can be a strategy taken by the teacher to reach the instructional goals. In this research, the instructional material is authentic material. Authentic materials, in the native speaker context, involve the natural use of the language for communication (Tamo, 2009). Similarly, Kilickaya (2004) states that based on particular context of the native speaker, authentic materials are naturally written or spoken for communication. Moreover, authentic materials bring topics that is up to date and popular in the real world and offer the language used in real context (Moglen, 2014). Based on the theories above, it can be concluded that authentic materials are language either in written or oral communication that is used by native speakers in the native speaker context. Related to the topic selection in writing, it can be inferred that challenging and motivating topic for students to write might come from daily texts/readings of the real world related to students' personal experience. Moreover, analyzing fiction or non-fiction texts (authentic materials) helps students to learn both literary aspects as well as writing aspects, such as selecting topic, writing topic sentence, making introductory paragraph, developing the body of the text by giving details, maintaining organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics to produce well written texts.

According to Maroko (2010), authentic materials' three broad categories in

terms of how the materials are transmitted are visual, printed materials and audio. Besides, Sundana (2018) mentions that authentic materials are also in the form of internet articles, newspaper, and magazines. As stated by Benavent & Penamaria (2011), with technology advancement nowadays, teachers prefer to take the authentic materials from the internet. Based on explanation above, it can be concluded that printed materials and the web-based materials are two broad categories of authentic materials for teaching writing.

Review of related studies in Indonesian context shows authentic materials is beneficial for students develop writing skill. Sundana (2018) in university level, studies about effectiveness of authentic materials for teaching writing. As the result, authentic materials are proven to be effective to improve the students' ability in writing descriptive text. Besides Setyowati & Sukmawan (2018), in their content analysis study investigating the use of authentic materials for essay writing, find that analyzing essay form helps students to understand the story better and then to write better. Moreover, in broader scope, research has shown that students and teacher get benefit since authentic materials can facilitate students' learning (Azri, Al-Rashdi, Hamed, Azri, & Al-Rashdi, 2014).

Accommodating Schoology for Teaching Writing

According to <https://www.brandywineschools.org/domain/1643>, Schoology is an online learning system. It is a platform for students-teachers' communication and among students. Low (2017) states that Schoology is a free e-learning program categorized to Social Learning Networks (SLNs) that is popular among teachers. Besides, schoology can be categorized as technology-supported instruction creating dynamic educational tool that could be used to generate new ideas from teachers and students (Biswas, 2013: 23).

In more detailed, through schoology, teachers and students can have a discussion in anytime and anywhere since it can be accessed at anytime, anywhere on any device not only when the two communicators are online. It facilitates teachers to give online assignment,

online assessment, and instant feedback through posting of comments or response or through private message. For students, schoology serves great benefits for interactive communication that enable them to access both teacher's and peer's feedback on their work. Schoology also enable students to ask question and to give comments on their peer's/ co-workers' work. From the ideas above. it can be said that schoology provide medium for students to learn at their own pace under teachers' guidance and instruction that enables them to be active and autonomous. For teaching writing, schoology provides a feature of online portfolios for documenting students' works. It also allows teachers to accommodate/ develop writing scoring rubrics. This scoring rubric facilitates students in doing self-assessment on their portfolio in order to write a good text.

There are some researches on this similar topic, accommodating schoology for teaching writing. In their research entitled 'The effectiveness of Schoology to teach writing viewed from students' creativity', Masyhudianti, Sutomo & Suparno (2018) revealed that Schoology is more effective than Picture Series to teach writing. Students can improve their writing and knowledge through this interesting media from the class instruction and from cooperative learning in which they can help each other. Besides, Zainnuri and Cahyaningrum (2017) also conducted a research entitled: "Using Online Peer Review through Discussion via Schoology to Enhance College Students' Proficiency in Argumentative Writing: A Case Study." They review the use of Schoology having its peer review and discussion features to enhance the proficiency of students in argumentative writing. Furthermore, Sicat (2015) was conducted a research entitled: "Enhancing College Students' Proficiency in Business Writing via Schoology." The results reveal that through the LMS Schoology, teachers can enhance the proficiency of the subjects in Business Writing. Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that this Case Study: Revealing the Result and Challenges of Accommodating *Authentic Materials and Schoology* for Teaching Writing in EFL Context has its basic difference since it

accommodated Authentic material together with schoology to teach writing.

METHOD

The second-semester students of a writing class in the academic year 2019/2020 were the subjects of this research that was conducted at an English Department in one of FKIP (Faculty of Teacher Training & Education), in Surakarta. This research is a case study.

According to Yin (1994), in case study, how' or 'why' question about certain focus is being asked. The focus here is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real life context in which the investigator has little or no control. The researcher collected multiple forms of data to gain in-depth understanding about the research focus. Interview, observation and. document analysis are conducted in this research to get the data that are needed. The technique used for analyzing the data was qualitative data analysis proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). They describe the steps in it as follow: (1) data reduction; (2) data display; (3) conclusion drawing and verification.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Accommodating *Authentic Materials and Schoology* in order to support the students in mastering writing skill

Using authentic material in the classroom means accommodating texts used in communication in daily life into it. This makes teaching and learning process becomes more interesting and motivating. According to Benavent and Penamaria (2011), authentic materials are motivating for the students. Authentic materials provide real language, real culture and a variety of genre used by the professional community. Moreover, authentic materials offer happening topics and the language used in real context (Moglen, 2014).

The result of observation shows that students are more engaged and willingly doing the writing tasks because of challenging topics of writing tasks coming from daily texts/readings of the real world. These data are proven with some students' statements mentioning the topics of writing tasks related to their personal experience may lead them to

write longer on the paper. From this explanation it can be inferred that since authentic is stimulating, some students show inner motivation and joy to write since they find the topic of writing task is related to their personal experience and personal preference.

Related to the strategies in choosing authentic materials, Crossley et al (2007) states syntactical complexity and low-frequency words used in the texts characterize authentic materials as natural. The result of interview shows that the teacher interpreted this theory as the need to consider difficulty level of the texts and tasks of the authentic materials matched with students' condition so that they provide both challenge and support for learning to write instruction.

Furthermore, authentic materials prepare students (especially for foreign language learners) to face the real world outside the classroom. In this case, authentic materials connect what students learn in the classroom and what they find outside the classroom. In other words, it is such kind of bringing real life in class or minimize the artificial world in class. The data driven from observation and document analysis on students' worksheets show the use of short stories carefully chosen give motivational benefit for students. The twist of the plot, cultural value, and moral value of these stories trigger the students' curiosity to read and then to write adapted short stories.

From the explanation above, it can be inferred that the better understanding of the story students read, the better writing product they write. During reading and analyzing text, students learn both the literary aspects of a fiction and writing skills. For example, they learn making introductory paragraph and giving details to develop the body of the text. In other words, students get a model in organizing ideas, writing topic sentence, developing supporting and concluding sentences into cohesive and coherent text, and using punctuation and spelling.

The result of analysis on students' tasks (written portfolios compiled in schoology) show that sufficient amount of exercises and tasks accommodating authentic material given to the students are proven supporting students learning compared to the

simplified/artificial materials. This finding is confirmed with theory from Tomlinson (2012), among others, ELT materials should contain authentic use of the language having authentic input features. He argues authentic materials helps students to acquire the language effectively and simplifying the authentic texts for learning purposes is not necessary.

As safe online learning management platform, *Schoology* collaborates resources, assessment, and content, stores students' works, and provides classroom interactivity and communication. In more detail, in daily meetings throughout the research, the students posted their writing task in *Schoology* group created by the teacher. Here, *Schoology* keeps students' works in every single process of writing a text in the form of online portfolios. By collecting their writing products in every single process of writing a text and got experience in interactive assessment in the form of having peer feedback and self-evaluation guided with teacher's scoring rubric, students show improvement on writing performance covering sub-skills of content, vocabulary, and sentence structure. Related to this finding, there are some support for accommodating portfolio assessment in teaching writing. Yurdabakan and Erdogan (2009) in their research found that portfolio assessment significantly give effect on students' writing skills. In line with the previous findings, Fahed Al-Serhani (2007) in his study, found portfolio assessment's significantly positive impact on students' writing performance. In detail, this impact refer to sub-skills of developing ideas, developing content that is unified, coherent and well organized. Moreover, portfolio assessment may also help students in maintaining diction of vocabulary and mechanics.

Besides, *Schoology* allows teachers to create or adapt writing scoring rubrics guiding students doing self-assessment on their writings and portfolio. From observation and interview, it can be seen that the teacher customized scoring rubrics in line with the process of tailoring authentic materials into tasks that are appropriate for the students' level. It is hoped that these tasks provide

challenge and support for students' learning process.

The improvement on students' writing skill mainly on sub-skills of content, vocabulary, and sentence structure is strengthened by the theory from Seow, in Yugandhar (2015). The guidance from teachers becomes a significant technique in developing students' writing process. In simple words, the explanation above shows that compared to traditional language, Schoology accommodates the benefits of classroom interactivity with personal and self-study.

In general, accommodating both authentic materials and schoology is considered to be an important strategy in enhancing students' interest in writing and understanding of the writing process. Authentic materials are motivating for the students because it presents topics which are happening in the real world and closely related to students' personal experience and personal preference. It offers the language used in real context. In this case, since authentic material is stimulating, some students show inner motivation and joy to write. Besides, portfolio assessment encourages students to be confident in doing self-assessment on their own works as a writer. In analyzing their text, basically students reflect on their work then make action in making substantive revision for their writing.

The challenges for the teacher in accommodating Schoology in writing class

As a social networking platform, Schoology simplifies administrative tasks or classroom management across the board. In Schoology, teachers can upload tasks, homework assignments and quizzes competed with scoring rubrics, polls and gives grades, feedback, and suggestions online for students' learning process. Students do both learning in the class and learning out of the class processing the activities designed by the teacher for their writing class. In other words, Schoology supports students' both individual and collaborative learning activities whenever and wherever they are. However, schoology has some challenges requesting teachers to manage.

Data gained from observation and interview with students show the following:

1. Students who do not have access to a computer/ hand phone/gadget and the internet, or a mobile device, are not able to use the tool.
2. Some students find feelings of isolation since there is no face-to-face interaction in Schoology.

To handle these challenges, before teacher gives instruction in Schoology, teacher can give guideline and announcement for his students to do the assignment in Schoology. This helps students to make preparation and find internet to support his/ her learning. After students do their assignment, teacher can give feedback, some comments, and evaluate the students' works. In this case, students found guidance even there is no face-to-face interaction in Schoology.

The challenges for the teacher to use Authentic Materials for teaching writing

Offering students with active engagement in the classroom, teachers need to be skillful enough to match learning challenge with students' needs and competences. Data gained from observation and interview with the teacher show the basic challenge is about maintaining appropriateness and comprehensibility of the authentic materials fitted with students' level, the second semester students. In this case, some students still found some texts written in difficult language both in vocabulary and language structures. Some other students showed demotivation as their language competence is not adequately acquired.

To manage this challenge, the teacher put the concept of *appropriateness* in choosing authentic materials covering the appropriateness in variety of the target language, tasks, activities, and exercises in order to provide both challenge and support for students' learning to write. Related to comprehensibility of the authentic materials, the teacher accommodated texts having high-frequency words and a lot of repetition which

facilitate comprehension. In other words, the text and task are manageable for students.

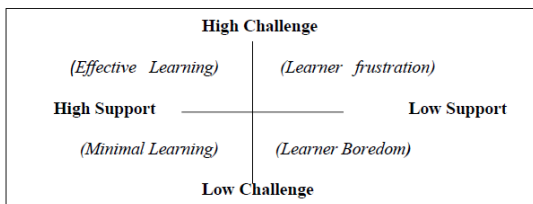


Figure 1. Language classroom learning consequences of variance support and challenge (Gilmore, 2007)

The consequences of variances between text and task difficulty to the learners can be seen in Figure 1. Learning would be effective if the text and the task design are not too difficult or too easy for students. In other words, the text and task are manageable for students. However, they might get frustrated which result in ineffective learning when the text and the task design are too difficult for the learners to accomplish.

In relation to authentic material and writing instruction, teachers need to consider suitability in which the authentic materials are appropriate for the students in terms of the difficulty level and appropriateness. It is then expected that the authentic materials provide both challenge and support for learning to write instruction.

In Khaniya (2010), Richard states that authentic materials often written in difficult language both in vocabulary and language structures. Besides, Day (2004) argues comprehensibility and appropriateness become the problems in using authentic materials for language teaching. Moreover, according to Day (2004), the appropriateness in the language, the target language variety, and appropriateness in terms of tasks, activities, and exercises are the most serious problem with authentic materials. He then strongly suggests that if teachers use authentic material in the classroom, they should consider the concept of *appropriateness* as the main focus of consideration.

Talking about linguistics different feature between authentic materials and simplified materials, Crossley et al. (2007) finds out the linguistic features as found in authentic materials are not suitable for beginning level of students. They then argue

that simplified/ materials found in textbooks in which using high-frequency words and many repetition facilitate students' comprehension. Similarly, Guariento & Morley (2001) and Khaniya (2010) state that authentic materials might not be suitable for lower level of students. Guariento & Morley (2001) underlie that lower level students' language competence is not adequately acquired yet. In this case, the use authentic materials for lower level of students might cause demotivation and frustration.

Meanwhile, according to (Guariento & Morley (2001) and Beresova (2015) authentic materials will mostly appropriate for intermediate level of students or for advanced students. The reason behind this is that the intermediate students have acquired competencies such as sufficient vocabulary and the syntactical structures of the target language. Concerning the ideas above, teachers need to consider the concept of appropriateness in using authentic materials for writing instruction in which appropriateness in the language variety, and appropriateness in terms of tasks, activities, and exercises to provide both challenge and support for learning to write instruction.

CONCLUSIONS

In general, the use of both authentic materials and schoology facilitates the students in EFL context to learn both literary aspects and writing aspects as well as boasting students' interest in writing. In more detail, accommodating authentic materials and schoology (1) enhance students' interest and joy in writing, (2) help students in understanding of the writing process such as selecting topic, writing topic sentence, making introductory paragraph, developing the body of the text by giving details, (3) encourage and give students more confidence in analyzing their own writing (doing self-assessment on their online portfolio) as writers thus being granted the time to grow as writers. Self-assessment helps students to produce well written texts in the scope of organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. Meanwhile, the challenges for the teacher in accommodating Schoology in writing class

cover (1) the availability of computer/ hand phone/gadget and the internet to access the authentic materials and schoology platform, (2) the feeling isolation since there is no face-to-face interaction in *Schoology*. Besides, maintaining appropriateness and comprehensibility of the authentic materials fitted with students' level becomes the basic challenge for the teacher whenever accommodating authentic material to support teaching writing.

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