Possible Features of Learning Management System to Improve Writing Skill

Yunika Triana*
Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Mas Said Surakarta
yunika@staff.uinsaid.ac.id

Dewi Zulaiha
Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta
dewizulaiha.2019@student.uny.ac.id

Abstract

In this modern era, many models are offered in teaching English. Apart from a variety of strategies, there are also many media platforms that offer new ways of teaching. LMS base teaching that offers different media and ways of teaching. Literature review was used to conduct the study. Researchers describe an online learning concept by increasing the variety of activity models to improve writing skills. This is a concept to improve the usability of LMS in English Learning teaching. In addition to the convenience of controlling student performance, this LMS is a form of advanced teaching application prototype. This concept also offers stakeholders to improve LMS features. Moodle, as an LMS that is commonly used almost all over the world, seems to also offer flexibility in modifying the application.

Keywords: *teaching English, LMS, moodle, writing skill*

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 outbreak has forced mankind to study and teach at home, but learning and teaching activities must continue to run optimally. Educational institutions provide certain applications to provide services to students, lecturers and administrators. LMS or learning management system is a flexible learning system that can accommodate these activities (Makruf et al., 2022). Besides being flexible, LMS also offers several built-in features that are easy to use. This application can also replace face-to-face learning virtually. Not just a tool for sharing material, LMS can also be used as an interactive teaching tool with a variety of features. In fact, this media can be used as a virtual face-to-face interaction medium.

LMS really allows students to learn anytime and anywhere. It provides learning material and activity in a neat managerial system. This tool can save every material and activity that has been carried out. So, students can review learning content easily. When students have difficulty accessing at a certain time, they can still review the material at later. Materials that have been stored on the web will be easily accessed on a desktop computer or smartphone at any time. This is also evidence that learning has been carried out by lecturers and students. There is content of learning materials, assignments and even activities during synchronous lectures presented on the media.

In terms of administration, LMS also offers good monitoring features. When compared to other online learning applications, LMS can present live teaching performance in the classroom. Even though teaching and learning activities are carried out at home, stakeholders can control it easily as evaluation (Costa et al., 2012). They can even assess whether the learning activities are in accordance with the provisions or not. If they do not comply, they can reprimand or provide administrative sanctions in an easy, transparent and accountable manner.

In the language learning process, especially writing learning, lecturers face their own challenges. Changes in learning methods from offline to online have the potential to reduce the quality of learning. On the other hand, online applications like this can improve student skills well

(Zulaiha & Triana, 2021). Lack of creativity of lecturers and low motivation of students to learn are problems that usually arise in online classes. In addition, technical problems also arise such as limited communication tools, internet networks, and so on. Therefore, this paper provides learning options in improving writing skills through a learning management system.

METHOD

This research used literature review. The research was conducted by looking for relevant theories related to the two research variables (Creswell, 2012). The theory regarding the first variable are be sought first because it is a key research variable. Researchers are looking for a grand theory of writing skills that underlie the search for tools or features to support LMS. After the relevant theory is found, the researcher analyzes it using in-depth analysis by summarizing and determining the corpus tools that are relevant to the need to improve writing skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Online learning does not change the view on the assessment of writing skills. All aspects of both micro and macro skills are worthy of attention. To become effective writers, they become the focus of research for researchers. (Brown, 2007) identifies the following micro and macro skills:
1.   Micro-skills
    a.   Produce graphemes and orthographic patterns of English.
    b.   Produce writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose.
    c.   Produce an acceptable core of words and use appropriate word order patterns.
    d.   Use acceptable grammatical systems (e.g., tense, agreement, pluralization), patterns, and rules.
    e.   Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms.
2.   Macro-skills
    a.   Use cohesive devices in written discourse.
    b.   Use the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse.
    c.   Appropriately accomplish the communicative functions of written texts according to form and purpose.
    d.   Convey links and connections between events and communicate such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification.
    e.   Distinguish between literal and implied meanings when writing.
    f.   Correctly convey culturally specific references in the context of the written text.
    g.   Develop and use a battery of writing strategies, such as accurately assessing the audience's interpretation, using prewriting devices, writing with fluency in the first drafts, using paraphrases and synonyms, soliciting peer and instructor feedback, and using feedback for revising and editing

Above are detailed skills that students must possess to improve their writing skills. The two skills above can be seen clearly the criteria for students to write well. These criteria are requirements that must be the focus of lecturers in teaching English online (Triana & Nugroho, 2021). So additional features are needed that help students to achieve basic writing skills. Below are some additional applications that can be an option for lecturers to motivate students to improve writing skills.

Corpus Tools
1.   Writing template drafting

Writing template drafting is a feature that helps students create letters based on certain templates. When the lecturer teaches how to write a formal letter, this feature will offer a variety of job application letter templates, agreement letters and so on. This template will help students to write structured letters (Supatranont, 2012). This feature can also be equipped with information on how to make opening, objective and closing correctly.

2.   Organization tools

Organization tools are writing features that will help students learn to write step by step. A special template will be provided to create a mind map. The topic bubble will help break down the main topic into several sub topics. After the mind map is formed, students are expected to be able to make outlining easily. The outline begins by making an introduction, first paragraph, second paragraph, third paragraph and conclusion. Each paragraph contains an explanation with five complete sentences. With a mind map, students are expected to be able to express their experiences and schemes well (Wette, 2017). This method is expected to help students improve their rhetorical and synthesizing abilities well.

3.   Plagiarism Checker

Plagiarism checker is used to detect the similarity of writing with online sources. Good writing is writing that is original and really comes from the thoughts of a writer (Goodwin & McCarthy, 2020). This tool can be used to help with where and how to paraphrase. After the student's writing is submitted to this tool, there will be a mark on the writing that shows similarities to online sources. It is in this marked part that must be omitted or paraphrased.

4.   Translation

This tool helps students to render one Language into another. This tool is very simple to use. Students do not need to open dictionaries or other applications, but in the worksheet students can display two different form layers. The first layer is used as the origin language, while the second layer is used as the target language. This app uses Human Aided Machine Translation (HAMT) by (Kastberg & Andersson, 2012) which results are not fully translated by machine translation, but students are expected to be able to make modifications and corrections according to the author's need.

5.   Grammar Checker

Grammar checker is used to detect errors in writing. It checks grammatical errors, spelling errors, incorrect punctuation, misused words and so on like in the Grammarly application (Dong & Shi, 2021). In addition, this feature is able to improve writing very well. In fact, sentence structure errors can be corrected by this comprehensive writing tool.

6.   Peer-to-peer Tools

Peer to peer tools is an application network in which each user will be connected to one network, both server users and client users. Each user will have a different position and form without the presence of central control from a dedicated server. The virtue of this tool is that it allows users with certain roles to provide feedback on the work of other users (Pound et al., 2022). This feedback will help students to build a proper writing. This tool can also be used to work on collaborative writing tasks which in the same file can be used as a workplace by more than one author.

CONCLUSION

The additional features above are tools to increase students' motivation and learning experience to improve writing skills. This feature deserves to be embedded in an LMS such as Moodle so that learning options are increasing. With the many features used, student motivation will increase and experience using information technology tools will increase. However, these additional features are as a supporting tool, learning methods have an important role. Lecturers must have time to explore more deeply to prepare learning materials and formats. Lecturer creativity is needed to improve micro and macro skills in writing.

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