EXPLORING A DIGITAL TOOL "NEARPOD" TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SKILL IN WRITING

Puji Lestari[1*], Lambok Hermanto Sihombing[2]

[1]Indraprasta University, Department of English Education, Jakarta, Indonesia
[2]President University, Department of Communication, Bekasi, Indonesia
Corresponding Author: puji.indraprasta@gmail.com

Abstract

Teachers with new and innovative methods will make teaching more engaging. The students will not get bored easily as they get an enjoyable atmosphere. In this study, the researchers aim to elaborate on the use of Nearpod as a digital tool to improve students' skills. There are lots of skills that students can enhance through Nearpod. However, in this study, the researchers focus on how Nearpod can be utilized as a digital platform to improve their writing skills. To support this analysis, the researchers applied a qualitative methodology and used the Teaching by Principle theory by H. Douglas Brown and Heekyong Lee. The data was taken from the official websites of Nearpod, www.nearpod.com, and some supporting articles. The result showed that Nearpod could be used as one of the effective digital tools to enhance students' skill in writing.

Keywords: *Digital Tool, Effective, Nearpod, Skill, Writing*

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, the contemporary era of technology has spread into the realm of education (Lina, 2022). Technological advancements make the world more evolved, making it more straightforward for humans to do tasks, obtain information, communicate with others, and learn. Now that technology is becoming more advanced, it can produce new technologies, learning methodologies, and resources. Education is becoming more advanced as technology becomes more complex. Education is becoming more advanced as technology becomes more complex. Since the mid-20th century, the usage of education-based ICT has evolved to promote e-learning as an option to enable student learning. Including web-based games or mobile-assisted language

learning enhances the effectiveness of teaching and learning for both teachers and students (Pertiwi, 2020). She also stated that in our modern day, mobile applications, online platforms, and technology must be utilized in learning activities immediately. Several application tools can be used as learning media to enhance learning effectiveness. Teachers might apply numerous programs and technological platforms in the English language teaching-learning process (Pertiwi, 2020).

Recently, the use of technology in teaching and learning, both inside and outside the classroom, has become a must (Ahmadi, 2018). This is in line with (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015) study. The data demonstrate that teachers are well-prepared with tools and facilities. ICT is one of the essential components in technology-based teaching and learning effectiveness. Therefore, the use of technology in the teaching and learning process should be explored. Furthermore, Ahmadi (2018) asserts that technology facilitates teacher-student connection. In addition, it helps students enhance their critical thinking, self-assurance, and enthusiasm to learn foreign languages and lessons will be student-(Ahmadi, 2018).

The researchers view that by applying digital platforms in teaching and learning process, the students will get engaged and the teachers will get used to in using technology. In this case, they will not use any conventional methods. Traditional teaching entails memory and repetition of knowledge; the student works autonomously and is expected to follow the teacher's lecture, presentation, or explanation. Cooperative learning is a component of contemporary education in which students and teachers work together to solve issues provided by the instructor. The instructor fosters and adapts learning in this circumstance (Cucoş, 2006). Traditional or classical education stresses the teacher's responsibility to convey information through the supplied curriculum (Aunurrahman., 2009). In this sense, the researchers view that classical teaching method focus on teacher's role or teacher-centered. Meanwhile, in modern teaching classes, the teachers and students can cooperate together as the teachers are the facilitators and the students are the center of the attention. Thus, by applying modern teaching method, it is expected that the students will have more students-students interaction. The researchers view that this goal could happen if the teachers apply various teaching methods especially digitally. One of the interesting and engaging methods they can apply is using Nearpod.

Nearpod is a multiplatform e-learning technology that enables students to interact with one another and the instructor in real-time, regardless of the size or learning area (Ryan, 2017). Nearpod can be an excellent tool (Beranek, 2014) for student engagement and motivation during lectures. Through persistent and in-depth usage of broad interactions between students and academics (Simpson & Walsh, 2014). Nearpod interactive presentation software produces intentional outputs from various perspectives that enhance student comprehension. Both students and instructors have found the Nearpod program highly beneficial, particularly the attention-getting aspects (Beranek, 2014).

Furthermore, Nearpod is a tool that allows the presentation to be synchronized with other devices. The process consists of four steps. The instructor develops the presentation using various materials, such as slideshows, quizzes, resources, films, polls, and other activities. Second, the teacher distributes the presentation to the students via email, social networking applications, online links, and Google classroom using a unique code generated automatically. After obtaining the code, students log in and access the presentation. During this stage, depending on the teacher's option, the students will either participate in a live session, in which they all advance through the slideshow as the teacher changes them, or a homework session, in which they interact with the content at their leisure. Upon completion of the assignment, the instructor can examine the students' responses and offer them evaluation (Shahrokni, 2017).

To support this analysis, the researchers applied the Teaching by Principle theory by H. Douglas Brown and Heekyong Lee to see how Nearpod can be used as a digital platform to improve students' writing. As we know that one of the ways to see the students' understanding is through assessment.

One form of writing assessment entails the creation of an essay in multiple drafts, with checklists to help with evaluation (Brown, H. D., & Lee, 2015).They stated that there are types for Assessing Writing. "First, Imitative writing, such as exercises in handwriting letters, words, and punctuation, keyboarding (typing) exercises, copying, listening cloze selection tasks (listen and write), picture-cued writing exercises, completing forms and questionnaires, converting numbers and abbreviations to words and phrases, spelling tasks, and one-word dictation tasks. Second, Intensive (controlled) writing, such as dictation of phrases and simple sentences, dictocomp

(rewrite a story just heard), grammatical transformation exercises, picture description tasks, use vocabulary in a sentence, ordering tasks (reorder a list of words in random order), short answer tasks, and sentence completion tasks. Third, Responsive writing, such as paraphrasing, guided writing (e.g., question and answer), paragraph construction tasks (topic sentence, main idea, etc.), and responding to a reading or lecture. The last, Extensive writing such as essay writing tasks, tasks in types of writing (narrative, description, argument, etc.), and tasks in genres of writing (lab report, opinion essay, research paper)" (Brown, H. D., & Lee, 2015).

METHOD

This research analyzed how Nearpod can be used as a learning platform in improving students' writing skill. To support this analysis, the researchers utilized a qualitative method and applied the Teaching by Principle theory by H. Douglas Brown and Heekyong Lee. The data was taken from official website of Nearpod, www.nearpod.com and some supporting articles. There were several stages that we did. First, the researchers introduced the features of Kahoot to get to know what the students can explore and learn through its application. Second, the researchers selected one topic, Halloween's Day to be discussed. Third, the researchers connected the topic with Teaching by Principle theory by H. Douglas Brown and Heekyong Lee. The last, the researchers made a conclusion.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To analyze how Nearpod can be utilized as a digital platform in assessing students' writing skill, the researchers introduced the features of Nearpod which can be seen in Figure 1.
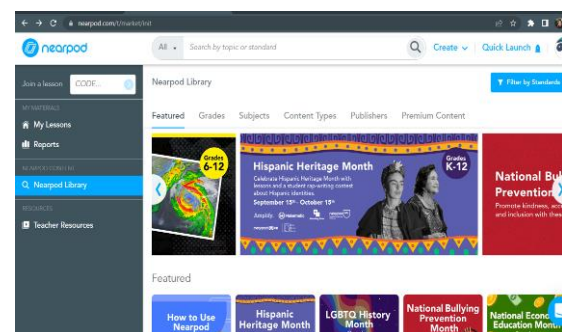

Figure 1. Nearpod features

In Figure 1, we can see that Nearpod consists of several features. There are My Lessons, Reports, Nearpod Library, and Teacher Resources. The most interesting part of Nearpod is they provide Nearpod Library where every teacher can explore and select what topics they need, what grades and subjects they teach.

In a closer analysis, (Shahrokni, 2017) stated that the features of Nearpod are "Controlled (synchronous) or free (asynchronous) delivery of information, a repository of ready-to-teach course

materials, free, basic plan for teachers, allowing the creation or use of slides, activities, and quizzes, a variety of assessment tools, including open-ended questions, polls, quizzes, drawings, fill in the blank items, and memory tests, support for different resource types, including video, slideshow, audio, PDF, Field Trip Live (Virtual Reality), and Twitter stream, intuitive, user-friendly, and secure environment, compatibility with all types of platforms, opportunities for practice in both real-time and offline modes, and detailed reports on students' performance" (Shahrokni, 2017).

The following analysis is exploring the content on Nearpod. Nearpod allows us to search any teaching materials or topics easily. One of the topics that was discussed in this analysis is Halloween's Day which can be seen in Figure 2.
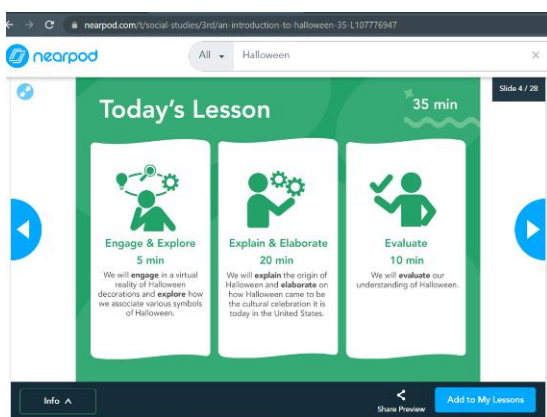

Figure 2. Learning Objective

In Figure 2, we can see that Nearpod provides clear learning objective which means either teachers or students know the

outcome of the study. For instance, in 5 minute, the students will engage in a virtual reality of Halloween decoration and explore how they associate various symbols of Halloween. We see that it is vivid what outcomes the students need to do and reach out. Aside from it, when we see this benefit from teachers' point of view, the teachers are also helped by Nearpod as it allows the teachers to review the lesson to ensure the activities are well-suited to the teachers' format. In our overview, it is essentially important as it could help the teachers to select which one is suitable and which one is not. Thus, Nearpod does not only give various topics to be discussed, but also allows the teachers to modify and adjust the materials just like what they want.

The next analysis can be seen from Figure 3.

Figure 3. Various activities in Nearpod

In Figure 3, we can see reading slide related to Halloween. From these slides, the teachers are helped as they do not need

to find other resources as it has been completed by Nearpod. However, if the teachers want to add, they can also add and adjust it. From those reading slides, the students are expected to comprehend the texts carefully. They need to know the facts about Halloween, the history, etc. It is challenging as the students have to read and understand the text with the limited time set by the teachers. However, it is a good aspect as they will get used to do it. Basically, the activities in Nearpod does not only contain reading part but also other activities such as watching a short movie, in this case, Halloween's history or party, puzzle, matching the pictures and many more. However, since the focus of the researchers' study is in writing, we have to know how it works.

In a closer observation, when the students have done with their activities, the teachers can assess them by doing several types for assessing writing. As cited in Brown and Lee (2015), the students can do imitative writing, such as exercises in handwriting letters, completing forms and questionnaires. They can also have intensive (controlled) writing, such as using vocabulary in a sentence or doing sentence completion tasks. Besides that, they can do responsive writing, such as paraphrasing the reading texts about Halloween. In addition, the teachers can also assign their students to have an extensive writing such as writing an essay or research paper about Halloween. Those are the ways that teachers can do to assess the students' writing.
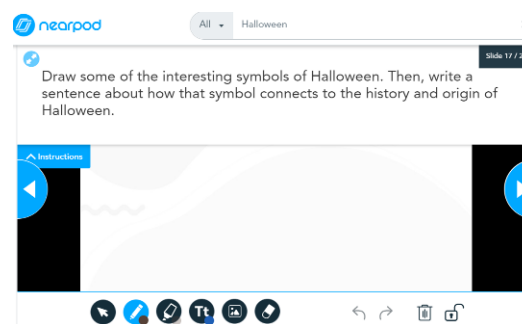
The last analysis can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Fun assessment provided by Nearpod

In Figure 4, we can see that teachers can assess their students' understanding from various activities. One of the most interesting activities is Open-Ended Question. The students will face various instructions or questions showing their comprehension. In this sense, Nearpod asks the students to dram some of the interesting symbols of Halloween. Then, they need to write a sentence about how that symbol connects to the history and origins of Halloween. In our overview, this part is interesting as the students will show their understanding through a picture and sentences. The other students also have to do it. Various learning outcomes and perspectives can be seen from this activity. Thus, we see that writing activity will be more fun when the teachers can apply it.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, Nearpod is one of the key solutions to overcome students' perspective about writing. Most of the students think that writing is challenging. However, through various activities provided by Nearpod, the benefit is not only for the teachers, but also students. Teachers are assisted by the materials in Nearpod. They will not need lots of time to talk. They only facilitate and guide the students. Then, the students will have a new perspective that learning foreign language especially in writing part will not be a burden anymore. They will have engaging atmosphere in the class or outside the class when they use Nearpod.

REFERENCES

Ahmadi, M. R. (2018). Mohammad Reza Ahmadi 1*. *International Journal of Research in English Education (IJREE)*, *3*(2).

Aunurrahman. (2009). *Belajar dan Pembelajaran.* Alfabeta.

Beranek, et. al. (2014). Platform for Supporting Student Learning at Unicorn College. *Higher Education*, *67*, *n*.

Brown, H. D., & Lee, H. (2015). *Teaching by principles : An interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Pearson Education.

Cucoş, C. (2006). *Pedagogie*. Polirom.

Ghavifekr, S., & Rosdy, W. A. W. (2015). Teaching and learning with technology: Effectiveness of ICT integration in schools. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science*, *1*(2). https://doi.org/10.21890/ijres.23596

Lina, M. F. (2022). WRITING JOB APPLICATION LETTER AND RESUME WITH GOOGLE DOCUMENT: AN EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH. *Journal of English Teaching, Applied Linguitics and Literatures (JETALL).*

Pertiwi, A. P. (2020). USING THE QUIZIZZ AS AN ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' ENGLISH LEARNING. *Journal of English Teaching, Applied Linguitics and Literatures (JETALL).*

Ryan, B. (2017). "Near Peers: Harnessing the power of the populous to enhance the learning environment," Irish Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning. *Irish Journal of Technology Enhanced Learning*, *2*, *no*.

Shahrokni, S. A. (2017). Nearpod. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language.*

Simpson, A., & Walsh, M. (2014). Please note : Pedagogic conceptualisations for touch pad technologies. *Australian Journal of Language and Literacy*, *37*(02).