

**USING MOODLE AS A MEDIUM FOR DISCUSSION
TO ENHANCE READING COMPREHENSION AND
DESCRIPTIVE WRITING ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE
TENTH GRADERS OF SMA AZZAHRAH
PALEMBANG**

A THESIS

By

Nurul Hafidzah

06012681418031

Magister Program of Language Education



**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
SRIWIJAYA UNIVERSITY**

2016

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background, the problems, the objectives, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background

In relation to language as a tool for communication, Harlig (2007) says, “Language is primarily used for communication and does not exist without language users” (p.57). It means that a language like English has an essential function as a tool for communication among its users. However, not every English user especially student who learns English wants to learn English as a tool to communicate. They just want to pass English test without knowing how important English is. It is in line with the finding of a study conducted by Noonan (2005). The study found that there are so many students who just want to pass the English test, so they can get their bachelor’s degree.

Indonesian students’ English Proficiency is not satisfactory yet. The data shows that English Proficiency Index (IPI) of Indonesia is not good enough (Education First, 2015). Indonesia is in 32 position out of 70 countries with score 52, 91. The score is higher compared to previous year, but the rank has decreased from 28 to 32. This score drives Indonesia in moderate position. If we look at from the region score, South Sumatera stands on moderate position. South Sumatera gets lower score than some cities in Java.

Unfortunately, English is a compulsory major for high school students and they have to pass it. English is one of the requirements to continue to the next education level (Department of National Education, 2006). To master it, the teacher of English has to follow the curriculum used at the school that consists of four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Reading is one of literacy skills that must be mastered by students because reading is a means to open the world by understanding knowledge in form of

symbol. It has been defined by referring to specific skills such as reading books, understanding directions, or answering questions about text (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008, p. 364). However, students' reading comprehension achievement in Indonesia is not really in a good level. It is in line with the study conducted by Riswanto, Risnawati, and Lismayanti (2014) at one of Junior High Schools in Palembang. Based on the observation and interview conducted by those researchers to the teachers of English, it is showed that the students' ability in comprehending reading texts is at the average level. It happens because various strategies are seldom used in teaching and learning process of English in the classroom.

Another literacy skill related to reading is writing (Martin & Jones, 2000). It is a kind of productive skills. Therefore, writing can be a way to show someone's feeling. Fageeh (2011, p. 31) informs that writing is an outlet for emotions and thoughts. However, writing becomes a problem in teaching and learning activity at school in Indonesia. It can be seen from a study conducted by Riza (2013). She found that students' ability in writing English was still low and they have not motivated in writing because they did not enjoy learning writing. Thus, they failed to reach the target of teaching. It is reflected from students' English score. The average score was 56.61. It was lower than Minimum Mastery Criteria (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal, KKM) of English at that school. The KKM is 70. It is similar to the finding of a study done by Pamuji (2015) at one of Junior High Schools in Palembang. He reported that there were 44% students who were in very weak level in writing and there were 2 % students who were in fail level in writing.

A preliminary study through interview and test done by the writer at SMA Azzahrah Palembang showed several facts related to the students' reading comprehension and writing skills. The teacher explained that the students' reading comprehension achievements were not bad, but they still needed improvement to make sure that they could pass the KKM, 75. Not all of the students could reach Minimum Mastery Criteria, so the teacher had to work hard in enhancing students' achievements. The teacher also argued that most of the tenth graders did

not like to write in English. Thus, their writing achievements were not good enough. The teacher also said that the students' reading achievement was better than writing. In the end of the interview, the teacher suggested the writer to enhance their reading comprehension and writing achievements. The Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) test was also given to the students to find out the students' reading level. The results of the test showed that the students' reading level is in level 5.

Technology can be used to help teachers of English overcome problems in teaching English. It is line with a research conducted by Inderawati (2011). She says, "Teaching English literacy by the implementation of ICT will be more interesting due to their creativity in using sophisticated media and can encourage the learners to develop their ability in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is not a new topic in using technology for teaching and learning. It has been implemented for years. However, it is still discussed for many times to find useful tools dealing with language teaching. Technology helps both teacher and student in the process of teaching and learning English. It is line with Sari and Inderawati (2014). They said that the use of technology in creating learning internet-based environment is closely related to the development of students' literacy ability. Not only for preparing the materials, technology also gives opportunity for the teacher to assess the student through internet. Technology can enhance the classroom by conducting different teaching strategies that make their classes interesting and challenging. Alias, Rahman, Ujang, Gelamdin, and Said (2013, p. 763) found that the process of learning and improving students' performance by using appropriate technological processes and resources have been the need of the day. It also gives high motivation to the learners to learn English.

Technological applications such as Webquest, Wiki, Facebook, Hot Potatoes, and Moodle can be applied to enhance reading comprehension and writing achievement. It is not only applicable in the class but also outside the class. Some studies (Alshumaimeri & Almasri, 2012; Fageeh, 2011; Suthiwartnarueput & Wasanasomsithi, 2012) found that using technology is very useful to enhance students' achievements in learning English. In line with the

previous studies, this current study focuses on using Moodle to enhance reading comprehension and writing achievement.

Moodle is acronym of Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. This platform helps the teacher to prepare good materials by using some tools prepared there. According to Hon (2013), “ Moodle helps teachers to enhance the effectiveness, breadth, and depth of classroom teaching by giving students more exercises on preparation, revision, intensive drilling, and assessment” (p. 6). In other words, Moodle can be a good alternative tool to enhance and assess students’ achievement.

Moodle is used as a medium for teaching and learning English material. Students of English can learn the material in the class and at home by connecting their gadget or computer to the internet. Moodle lets the students explore them in learning English. They also can interact and discuss each others by using platform Chat and Forum. Moodle’s features reflect this social constructionist approach in various design aspects, such as making it possible for students to comment on entries in a database or to work collaboratively in a Wiki (Wu, 2008, p. 48). Indeed, the discussion technique is a good way in teaching and learning English that uses Moodle as a medium.

Based on some findings of the previous studies, Moodle is very useful to enhance students’ reading comprehension achievement (Dwiningsih, 2012; Hsieh & Ji, 2013). Moodle can also be used to enhance students’ writing achievement (Wu, 2008; Lien, 2015). Students’ motivation in learning English increased after Moodle is used in their class (Al-Ani, 2013). The students’ perception about Moodle also supports the advantages of using Moodle in the class. However, the obstacles still appear such as the students never known about the platform in Moodle, there is no internet connection, and so on.

Moodle can be applied to enhance both reading comprehension and writing because reading and writing are closely connected each others. Therefore, it should be taught together. Reading is taught first, and then writing is given later. Reading gives effects in improving writing and reading skill and writing can influences the development of reading and writing skill. Reading can do far more

in the teaching of writing than ask the students for discussion and composition topics (Raimes, 1983, p. 50). Krashen (1993) also argues, “A substantial amount of research strongly suggests that we learn to write by reading” (p.27). Al-Saadat (2004) also states, “Reading and writing should not be sequenced in linear fashion so that reading necessarily precedes writing” (p.227). Reading habit can improve someone’s writing style. The learners knew how to write by analyzing the reading text. They analyze the language of writing, the grammar, vocabulary, and other things.

This study used descriptive text because it was appropriate with 2006 curriculum used in the school. Mukarto, Sujadmiko, Jesophine, and Kiswara (2007) argue, “Descriptive text is a kind of text to describe something, someone or place” (p. 140). The students could easily describe based on what they see and feel. Descriptive text consists of two text organization: (1) Identification (mention the participant such as name, occupation, and so on), (2) Description (mention about the physical features, personality, characteristic, and so on) (Sudarwati & Grace, 2007).

In relation to the explanation above, the writer decided to conduct a research entitle “Using Moodle as a medium for discussion to enhance reading comprehension and descriptive writing achievements of the tenth graders of SMA Azzahrah Palembang.”

1.2 The Problems of the Study

The research problems in this study are formulated in the following questions:

1. Was there any significant difference in reading comprehension achievement of the tenth graders between before and after they were taught by using Moodle?
2. Was there any significant difference in reading comprehension achievement between the tenth graders who were taught by using Moodle and those who were not taught by using Moodle?

3. Was there any significant difference in writing achievement of the tenth graders between before and after they were taught by using Moodle?
4. Was there any significant difference in writing achievement between the tenth graders who were taught by using Moodle and those who were not taught by using Moodle?
5. What was the students' feedback towards the use of Moodle in learning of reading and writing?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems above, the objectives of this study were:

1. to find out whether or not there was significant difference in reading comprehension achievement of the tenth graders between before and after they were taught by using Moodle.
2. to find out whether or not there was significant difference in reading comprehension achievement between the tenth graders who were taught by using Moodle and those who were not taught by using Moodle.
3. to find out whether or not there was significant difference in writing achievement of the tenth graders between before and after they were taught by using Moodle.
4. to find out whether or not there was significant difference in writing achievement between the tenth graders who were taught by using Moodle and those who were not taught by using Moodle.
5. to know the students' feedback towards the use of Moodle in learning reading and writing.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study was significant because it could give contribution in teaching and learning English especially to enhance students' reading comprehension and writing achievements. This study gave more information to the teachers of English especially where the research was conducted. The teacher knew a new medium that could be used in the class to enhance students' reading

comprehension and writing achievements. For the students, this study was beneficial to motivate them in learning English well. They got new experience in learning English, so they wanted to improve their English especially reading comprehension and writing achievements continuously. For the writer, this study enlarged the writer's experience in doing research. Therefore, the writer could anticipate the weaknesses for the future research. It also became a source of information or reference to the other researchers who had similar theme with this study. It could help them in conducting their study.

REFERENCES

- Afflerbach, P., Pearson, D., & Paris, S. G. (2008). Clarifying differences between reading skills and reading strategies. *The Reading Teacher*, 61(5), 364–373. doi:10.1598/RT.61.5.1
- Alagozlu, N. (2007). Critical thinking and voice in EFL writing. *The Asian EFL Journal*. 9(3), 118-136.
- Al-Ani, W. T. (2013). Blended learning approach using Moodle and student's achievement at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 2(3), 96-111. doi:10.5539/jel.v2n3p96
- Alias, N., Siraj, S., Rahman, M. N. A., Ujang, A., Gelamdin, R. B., & Said, A. M. (2013). Research and trends in the studies of WebQuest from 2005 to 2012: A content analysis of publications in selected journals. *Procedia*, 103, 763-772. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.397
- Al-Saadat, A. I. (2004). Investigating the relationship of reading and writing abilities in the English language program at King Faisal University. *Scientific Journal of King Faisal University*, 5(1), 215-229.
- Alshumaimeri, Y. A., & Almasri, M. M. (2012). The effects of using webquests on reading comprehension performance of Saudi EFL students. *The Turkish Online Journal and Educational Technology*, 11(4), 295-305.
- Alyousef, H. S. (2005). Teaching reading comprehension to esl/efl learners. *The Reading Matrix*. 5(1), 143-154.
- Burns, P. C., & Roe, B. D. (1985). *Informal reading inventory: Preprimer to twelfth grade* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Day, R. R., & Park, J. (2005). Developing reading comprehension questions. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 17(1), 60-73.
- Department of National Education. (2006). *Kurikulum tingkat kesatuan pendidikan*. Jakarta: Department of Nasional Education.
- Dick, W., & Carey, L. (1978). *The systematic design of instruction*. Dallas, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company.
- Donoghue, M. R. (2009). *Language arts: Integrating skills for classroom teaching*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publication.
- Dwiningsih, R. (2012). *The effectiveness of Moodle to teach reading viewed from the students' intelligence quotient (an experimental study at the first grade*

- students of SMA Negeri 2 Purwokerto in the academic year of 2011/2012.* (Unpublished Magister Thesis). Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia.
- Education First. (2015). *EF English proficiency index*. Retrieved from <http://www.ef.co.id/epi/spotlights/asia/indonesia/>
- Fageeh, A. I. (2011). EFL learners' use of blogging for developing writing skills and enhancing attitudes towards English learning: An exploratory study. *Journal of Language and Literature*, 2(1), 31-48.
- Faisal, & Wulandari, Y. (2013). Improving students' competence in writing descriptive texts through fresh technique. *Journal of English Education*, 2(1), 59-68.
- Fraenkel, J. R., Wallen, N. E., & Hyun, H. H. (2012). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (8th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.
- Franco, C. P. (2010). Moodle as an alternative to flexible education. *Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Program in Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 1-15.
- Green, B. S., & Salkind, J. N. (2003). *Using SPSS for windows and macintosh* (3rd ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Harlig, K. B. (2007). One functional approach to second language acquisition: The concept-oriented approach. In B. Vanpatten & J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition* (pp. 57-75). London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hon, T. (2013). The application and advantages of an e-learning platform (MOODLE) on an intermediate Chinese speaking and listening course. In *Proceedings of International Conference The Future of Education*, (pp. 1-6). Retrieved from http://conference.pixel-online.net/foe2013/common/download/Paper_pdf/155-ELE07-FP-Hon-FOE2013.pdf
- Hsieh, P. C., & Ji, C. H. (2013). The effects of computer-mediated communication by a course management system (Moodle) on English reading achievement and perceptions. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Advanced Information and Communication Technology for Education*, (pp. 201-205). Retrieved from www.atlantis-press.com/php/download_paper.php?id=8820
- Hu, X., Lei, L., Li, J., Isheli-Chan, N., Siu, F., & Chu, S. (2015). Mobile access to moodle activities: Student usage and perceptions. In *Proceedings of the International Mobile Learning Festival 2015* (pp. 1-7). Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/10722/213704>
- Hughes, A. (1989). *Testing for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). Feedback on second language students' writing. *Language Teaching*, 39(2), 83-101.

- Inderawati, R. (2011). From classroom to peer comment in Facebook: Bridging to establish learners' literacy. *International Conference ICT for Language Learning*, 4th edition, Italy.
- Jennings, J. H., Caldwell, J., & Lerner, J. (2006). Jennings Informal Reading Assessment. In *Reading problems: Assessment and teaching strategies* (5th ed.), Appendix D. Retrieved from http://wps.ablongman.com/ab_jennings_readprobs_5/
- Jingwei, T. (2013). The research on blended learning of ESL based on moodle platform. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 6(2), 30-34. doi:10.3968/j.sll.1923156320130602.3612
- Krashen, S. (1993). We learn to write by reading, but writing can make you smarter. *Ilha do Desterro*, 29, 27-38.
- Lien, C. T. X. (2015). Enhancing writing skills for second-year English majors through a moodle-based blended writing course: An action research at Hue University of Foreign Languages. *TESOL*, 6(4), 1-12.
- Littlejohn, A. (2005). *Writing 4*. Yogyakarta: Kanisius Printing and Publishing House.
- Martin-Blas, T., & Fernandez, A. S. (2009). The role of new technologies in the learning process: Moodle as a teaching tool in Physics. *Computers & Education*, 52, 35-44.
- Martin, M., & Jones, K. (2000). *Multilingual literacies: Reading and writing different worlds*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Meneghetti, C., Carretti, B., & Beni, R. D. (2006). Components of reading comprehension and scholastic achievement. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 16(4), 291–301. doi:10.1016/j.lindif.2006.11.001
- Moser, G. P., & Morrison, T. G. (1998). Increasing students' achievement and interest in reading. *Reading Horizons*, 38(4), 233-245.
- Mukarto, Sujadmiko, Jesophine, S. M., & Kiswara, W. (2007). *English on the sky Junior High School*. Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Nath, L., & Anderson, L. (2007). The effects of a classroom discussion technique on student satisfaction: a quasi-experiment. *Mountain Rise*, 4(1), 1-12.
- Noonan, F. J. (2005). Helping EFL Students Improve Their Spoken English. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 11(7). Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Noonan-Spoken/>
- Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (1999). *Writing academic English*. New York, NY: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Pamuji, A. (2015). The correlation between reading achievement and writing achievement to the eight graders of bilingual class at SMP Negeri 1 Palembang. *Premise Journal*, 4(1), 1-10.

- Pang, E. S., Muaka, A., Bernhardt, E. B., & Kamil, M. L. (2003). *Teaching Reading*. Bellegarde: Sadag.
- Priyana, J., Irjayanti, A. R., & Renitasari, V. (2008). *Interlanguage: English for Senior High School students X*. Jakarta: Grasindo.
- Rahman, F., Khalil, J. K., Jumani, N. B., Ajmal, M., Malik, S., & Sharif, M. (2011). Impact of Discussion Method on Students Performance. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(7), 84-95.
- Raimes, A. (1983). *Techniques in teaching writing*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Rice, W. (2011). *Moodle 2.0 e-learning course development*. Birmingham: Packt Publishing.
- Riswanto, Risnawati, & Lismayanti, D. (2014). The Effect of Using KWL (Know, Want, Learned) Strategy on EFL Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 4(7), 225-233.
- Riza, S. M. (2013). Improving students' achievement in writing descriptive text through mind mapping model of eight grade SMP Negeri 13 Medan. *Jurnal Tematik*, 3(12), 1-15.
- Roehling, P. V., Kooi, T. L. V., Dykema, S., Quisenberry, B., & Vandlen, C. (2011). Engaging the millennial generation in class discussions. *College Teaching*, 59, 1-6. doi: 10.1080/87567555.2010.484035
- Sari, F. S. P., & Inderawati, R. (2014). The Application of Cultural Literacy Model to Enhance Speaking Ability through Legends for Advance Students in ELT Classroom. *International Proceedings of Economics Development and Research*, 77(17), 80-85. doi: 10.7763/IPEDR. 2014. V77. 17
- Shwartz, Y., Weizman, A., Fortus, D., Sutherland, L., Merrit, J., & Krajcik, J. (2009). Talking science: Classroom discussions and their role in inquiry-based learning environments. *The Science Teacher*, 76(5), 44-47.
- Stanford, J. (2008). In the mood of Moodle. *English Teaching Professional*, 54, 58-60.
- Sudarwati, M., & Grace, E. (2007). *Look ahead for senior high school students year X*. Jakarta: Erlangga.
- Supiani. (2011). *Improving the students' ability in writing descriptive texts through collaborative writing technique*. (Unpublished Magister's Thesis). Sebelas Maret University, Indonesia.
- Suthiwartnarueput, T., & Wasanasomsithi, P. (2012). Effects of using facebook as a medium for discussion of English grammar and writing of low-intermediate EFL students. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 9(2), 194-214.

- Waugh, C. K., & Gronlund, N. E. (2013). *Assessment of student achievement*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Wood, S. L. (2010). Technology for teaching and learning: Moodle as a tool for higher education. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 22(3), 299-307.
- Wu, W. H. (2008). The application of Moodle on an EFL collegiate writing environment. *Journal of Education and Foreign Languages and Literature*, 7, 45-56.
- Zakaria, E., & Daud, M. D. (2013). The role of technology: moodle as a teaching tool in a graduate mathematics education course. *Asian Journal of Management Sciences & Education*, 2(4), 46-52.