

Integrating Turnitin in Teaching Essay Writing for Tertiary Education

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Abstract: Many intermediate students find that essay writing is challenging and many teachers struggle to find methods to teach the skill successfully. Turnitin is known as the platform of text matching software to detect plagiarism and as a tool allowing teachers to integrate a model for writing instruction into students' assignments, comments, and ongoing assessments. Turnitin allows teachers to focus on specific content lessons such as idea development, sentence fluency, words choice, and organization. This article reports the implementation of using Turnitin and services as instructional support tools for formative assessment in teaching essay writing for tertiary education, rather than just for plagiarism prevention. The idea of integrating this software is to explore how Turnitin helps teachers do the following: 1) discuss academic integrity with students, 2) teach essay writing techniques for tertiary education, 3) teach students to cite sources properly, and 4) build better essay writing skills in students. Some services included in Turnitin that will be implemented in this study are Originality Check plagiarism, GradeMark, and PeerMark. Fifteen second-grade university students taking essay writing class participated in this study. This paper reports the result of a case study research for intermediate students mainly talking about (1) the idea of integrating Turnitin to develop students' essay writing skill and improve awareness of academic integrity and (2) practical model of integrating Turnitin as instructional support tools in teaching essay writing completed with its challenges. In this study, steps and integration of Turnitin in teaching essay writing are explained and discussed. In addition, students' perceptions regarding the strength of Turnitin are analyzed.

1 INTRODUCTION

Due to its difficulties, many students find that writing is challenging. Writing, in general, is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously. At the sentence level these include control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and letter formation. It means, ideally, in writing the students should be able to organize the content with the title, organize a text to make it cohesive and coherent, use correct grammar, use correct vocabulary, and write a text with correct punctuation, spelling, and capitalization (Bell and Burnaby in Nunan, 1992: 6). This idea justifies that writing requires complex micro skill in establishing the sharing ideas.

In university level, problems on writing were still found by teachers. Research reveals that the university students have various writing problems namely language problems at the levels of

morphology and syntax; usage errors, and mechanical mistakes, that is, spelling, punctuation and capitalization; lack of several writing development skills, cognitive problems and graphomotor problems (Alfaki, 2015: 40). This study enhances the view that writing challenges the students as many skills need to be mastered in it. Due to the problems, many teachers struggle to find effective methods and strategy to teach the skill successfully.

An alternative for overcoming the students' problem in writing is turnitin. In general, turnitin is primarily launched as a "plagiarism" tool (Turnitin 2015). It is basically known as the platform of text matching software to detect plagiarism and as a tool allowing teachers to integrate a model for writing instruction into students' assignments, comments, and ongoing assessments. Research shows that Turnitin have a positive effect on helping students understand how to write with academic integrity (Kostka & Ebsworth, 2014; Rees & Emerson, 2009; Stapleton, 2012; Ledwith & Rísquez, 2008).

Technically, turnitin allows teachers to focus on specific content lessons such as idea development, sentence fluency, words choice, and organization. This article reports the implementation of using Turnitin and services as instructional support tools for formative assessment in teaching essay writing for tertiary education, rather than just for plagiarism prevention.

Considering the excellences of Turnitin, this platform is strongly recommended for teachers particularly for teaching essay writing in tertiary education level. Since the investigation in using Turnitin less carried out, bridging platform features and the implementation of it is needed. This article reports the implementation of using Turnitin and services as instructional support tools for formative assessment in teaching essay writing for tertiary education, rather than just for plagiarism prevention. The idea of integrating this software is to explore how Turnitin helps teachers do the following: 1) discuss academic integrity with students, 2) teach essay writing techniques for tertiary education, 3) teach students to cite sources properly, and 4) build better essay writing skills in students.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

This interpretive qualitative research used a case study method. Seventeen students of English department in a state university taking Essay Writing course participated in the research. A four-month Essay Writing course was offered to the participants using a blended learning approach: a combination of face-to-face tutorials and online learning interactions. Schoology and Turnitin were used as the platform for the online learning interaction.

In the face-to-face Essay Writing class, students discussed and practised Comparison and Contrast essay starting from composing outline, draft, revision, and final paper. Relevant reading and grammatical knowledge was also discussed when necessary. The students also received constructive feedback from peers as well as from researchers as the learning facilitators. In the online interactions of peer, all students socially interacted and discussed content-related issues. To enhance the English learning and acquisition, teacher participants to use English in the online interaction.

The data were obtained through observation notes, recorded interviews, participants' reflective journals, and the online interaction scripts. The qualitative data were analysed by using Braun and

Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis and content analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research indicated that participation in the blended learning of Essay Writing by integrating Turnitin increased the level of motivation and confidence of students to learn essay writing. The following section describes the implementation of using Turnitin, integrating Turnitin to develop students' essay writing skill with explained practice and steps, as well as students' perceptions regarding the strength of Turnitin.

3.1 The implementation of using Turnitin and services as instructional support tools

Turnitin is not merely a text matching software supporting anti-plagiarism but also a learning platform facilitating teachers to manage certain instructional process particularly in writing. Being integrated in writing class, this software assists teachers in performing such activities as follows: (1) discuss academic honesty to students, (2) lecture essay writing for tertiary education; (3) teach students to cite sources properly, and (4) establish better essay writing skill for students. Utilizing the provided services such as originality checking service, grade mark and peer mark in Turnitin then enables teachers to realize them.

3.1.1 Originality Check

In this study, the researcher integrated originality check which can measure the similarity index between the text of the submission and the targeted search assignment in any form of publication in the internet. The result, reported in originality report, specifically presents three features namely document viewer frame to show the similarity index, paper text consisting the original formatting of submitted text completed with the highlighted matching text, and matching source to denote the list of matching source(s). The similarity index in document viewer frame then indicated by the five possible indices like blue (no matching text), green (one to 24% matching text), yellow (25% to 49% matching text), orange (50% to 79% matching text) and red (75% to 100% matching text).

Students' assignments which have been submitted in Turnitin as shown in Figure 1 are then evaluated automatically. It then shows the similarity report. From the Figure 1, it can be shown that almost all of the students' assignment have lower than 10% of similarity index.

Revision of Comparison and Contrast Essay
 INBOX | NOW VIEWING NEW PAPERS ▾

| Submit File | AUTHOR | TITLE | SIMILARITY |
|-------------|------------------------|---|------------|
| ✖ | Fania Amanda Putri | This is my revised essay | 0% |
| ✖ | Adib Anisul Hakim | This is my revision | 0% |
| ✖ | Diyah Ayu Wisawan | revisi | 0% |
| ✖ | Dimas Putra K2216017 | Revision of Comparison and Contrast Essa... | 0% |
| ✖ | Dennis Kiri | Revision of Comparison and Contrast Essay | 0% |
| ✖ | dwi Lestari | FINAL REVISION | 0% |
| ✖ | Aulia Majid | Revision | 0% |
| ✖ | melka masni | Revision of draft essay | 0% |
| ✖ | Aya Nur Ghayath | Revisi | 0% |
| ✖ | Devy Fulyantri | Revision of Comparison and Contrast Essa... | 0% |
| ✖ | Evi Rochmanwati Wandi | REVISION OF DRAFT | 0% |
| ✖ | Bisma Teguh P. | Revision | 0% |
| ✖ | Ardiansyah J. Wibisono | Revision | 0% |
| ✖ | Arum Yuzar | Revision of Comparison and Contrast Essa... | 1% |
| ✖ | Alfianus Niemah | Revision of comparison and contrast pe... | 2% |
| ✖ | Auli Rohmah | DRAFT OF ESSAY | 3% |
| ✖ | AlViana Ferry Agel... | Final Essay | 8% |

Figure 1: Similarity index and similarity report.

3.1.2 GradeMark

This study adopted GradeMark feature in Turnitin which is the teachers' platform to edit and grade students online. The researcher contributes comment in the body of the submitted paper, signifies the mistake in grammar and punctuation, evaluate either in quantitative or qualitative rubric, assesses the students' performance and provides grade for the paper. Several tools and types of mark used by the researcher in this study include comments, inline comments, quickmark comments, rubric scorecard, and general comment. The implementation of GradeMark conducted by the researchers can be seen in Figure 2.

turnitin

Assignments Students Grade Book Libraries Calendar Discussion Turnitin Preferences

NOW VIEWING: HOME > ESSAY WRITING > DRAFT OF COMPARISON AND CONTRAST ESSAY > GRADEMARK REPORT

DRAFT OF COMPARISON AND CONTRAST ESSAY
 GradeMark Report

| Author | Title | GradeMark | Composition Marks | Composition | Usage | Punctuation | Format | Correcting Used |
|-----------------------|--|-----------|-------------------|-------------|-------|-------------|--------|-----------------|
| Fania Amanda Putri | Draft of Essay Comparison and Contrast | gm ✓ | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Adib Anisul Hakim | This is my draft | gm ✓ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Diyah Ayu Wisawan | Draft Essay - Work 2 - Diyah Ayu Wisawan | gm ✓ | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5 |
| AlViana Ferry Agel... | Draft of Comparison and Contrast Essay | gm ✓ | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Dimas Putra K2216017 | Draft of Comparison and Contrast Essay - Successful and Unsuccessful Systems | gm ✓ | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Dennis Kiri | Draft of an essay | gm ✓ | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| dwi Lestari | DRAFT | gm ✓ | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Aulia Majid | Outline of Essay | gm ✓ | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Alfianus Niemah | Draft comparison and contrast | gm ✓ | 0 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 10 | 2 |

Figure 2: GradeMark on draft of essay.

3.1.3 PeerMark

In teaching essay writing, this study integrated PeerMark which enables students to read, review and evaluate one or more of submission text in a single classroom in an assignment. The stages in utilizing PeerMark are as follows: (1) teachers set a Turnitin paper assignment; (2) teachers create a PeerMark assignment and set the number of papers to be reviewed as well as create free response and scale questions to respond to while reviewing papers; (3) students submit the paper; (4) students write peer reviews on the PeerMark by responding to the free response and scale questions. Since the PeerMark has due date, students lost their chance to write, complete and edit the review when the due date passed. The implementation of PeerMark conducted by the researchers can be seen in Figure 3.

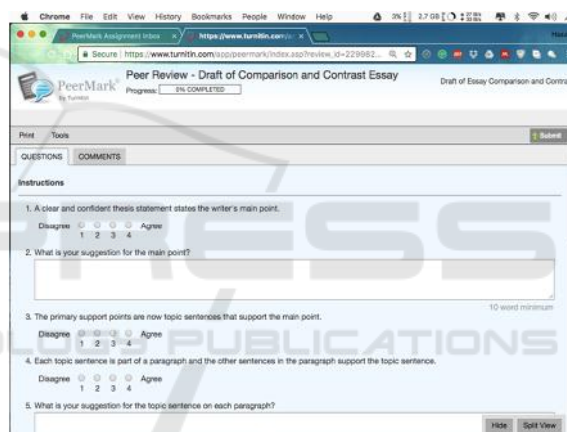


Figure 3: Peer review or PeerMark on draft of essay.

3.2 Integrating Turnitin to develop students' essay writing skill and improve awareness of academic integrity

Essay Writing is thinking process that generates, organizes, and exchanges one's ideas in the form of essay to the readers. It involves using several language components such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. It also takes long process covering prewriting, organizing, drafting, revising, editing and documenting the final draft. In fact, the students find difficulties in developing ideas into a good paragraph since they did not know where to start writing, still make some mistakes in applying grammar rules, mechanic, punctuation and spelling. Besides, students are often

blocked by perception that teacher is their only audience since they are accustomed to write a text to full fill the assignment or to write for the teacher, not for themselves. Besides, they tend to put their focus on speed leading to writing product instead of accuracy. In this case, they often skip necessary stages of the writing process. Understanding a responsibility to hold students accountable for the essay they write throughout each writing stage, teacher brings the strength of team work and feedback on their progress to help each student follow every stage of writing process. To achieve this goal, the teacher accommodates Turnitin.

Turnitin is known as the platform of text matching software to detect plagiarism and as a tool allowing teachers to integrate a model for writing instruction into students' assignments, comments, and ongoing assessments. It provides digital environment engaging students through the entire writing process. As reported by Bangerter, Turnitin consists of OriginalityCheck, PeerMark, and GradeMark tools offering students multiple rounds of feedback from their peers, their instructors, and even themselves throughout the writing process. This combination of feedback provides students with conducive and enjoyable classroom atmosphere.

Discussing about feedback for students' writing, Raimes (1993) states that feedback is an important part of every language teaching and learning process, careful work on the job will be a contribution to pedagogy. A research conducted by Seow (2002) in (Yugandhar, 2015) shows that the teacher's guidance to students' writing is a significant technique in developing writing process. In another situation, some teachers and writing theorists have fostered peer groups in high school and college classrooms as a way to encourage students to write and revise. As Moffett (1983) suggested, teachers teach students to teach each other. This peer-feedback is one of changes in writing pedagogy and research in which teacher comments often supplemented with peer comments (Hyland and Hyland, 2006). Both teacher's feedback and students' feedback in peer mark and grade mark can be designed following the students' need of exposures dealing with the language components while Turnitin OriginalityCheck may reduce incidences and/or unintended plagiarism. Moreover, related to this description, data from a number of studies show that active learning, collaboration, formative and scaffolded assessment, and ongoing discussion is needed for students to most effectively learn how to write with academic integrity

(McLafferty & Foust, 2004; Rees & Emerson, 2009; McGowan, 2005).

3.3 Practical model of integrating Turnitin in teaching essay writing and its challenges

This research adopted the integration of Turnitin reported by Bangerter. Practical model of integrating Turnitin as instructional support tools in teaching essay writing in this research is as follows. In the essay writing process, students are able to cycle or even move back and forth through prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing multiple times before they create the final product. With Turnitin, students use feedback from peers through PeerMark and instructor feedback through GradeMark. Moreover, students also can use Turnitin to check reflective pieces to identify what changes they need to make or to discuss what they have learned through multiple rounds of feedback prior to implementing those changes. Students also can move through OriginalityCheck and PeerMark several times before submitting a draft for evaluation with GradeMark. In this case, Turnitin holds students accountable for their efforts in the process rather than for just the final product. Moreover, feedback here can be very specific depending on students' needs. Feedback gained from OriginalityCheck may block students from the possibility of doing plagiarism.

Besides talking about the supportive features of Turnitin for students' writing development, there is also challenges that may arise that need to be anticipated. Specifically talking about PeerMark, the researchers found that constructing specific and constructive comments and feedback that can be useful to improve the text are not easy for students. It is revealed that only the high achievers noted as trained students who can construct constructive comments on their peers' writing and incorporate peers' comments to improve their writing. Harmer (2004) noted that with extensive training inside and outside of class, trained peer review feedback can positively impact EFL students.

3.4 Steps and integration of Turnitin in teaching essay writing

The researchers conducted an Essay writing course with the following steps. First, the researchers explain the materials about comparison and contrast essay. Then, students are asked to submit an outline of

comparison and contrast essay through assignment and to provide review on the other students' work by using PeerMark. After that, they compose draft of comparison and contrast essay by developing idea from the revised outline. Next, their drafts were reviewed by other students and lecturers by using PeerMark. Once the PeerMark of each draft has been read, finally the students can submit the final revision of essay through submitting it through assignment in Turnitin. The detailed information of each steps can be seen in Figure 4.

| Essay Writing | | | | |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| CLASS HOMEPAGE QUICKMARK BREAKDOWN | | | | |
| | START | DUE | POST | STATUS |
| Outline of Comparison and Contrast Essay | | | | |
| PAPER | 06-Sep-2017 11:00AM | 28-Sep-2017 11:00AM | 14-Sep-2017 10:00AM | 17/1/17 SUBMITTED |
| PEERMARK | 29-Sep-2017 11:00AM | 02-Oct-2017 11:00AM | 29-Sep-2017 10:00AM | 17/1/17 SUBMITTED |
| Draft of Comparison and Contrast Essay | | | | |
| PAPER | 10-Oct-2017 11:00AM | 11-Oct-2017 11:00AM | 11-Oct-2017 10:00AM | 17/1/17 SUBMITTED |
| REFLECTION | 11-Oct-2017 11:00AM | 14-Oct-2017 11:00AM | 16-Oct-2017 10:00AM | 17/1/17 SUBMITTED |
| PEERMARK | 11-Oct-2017 11:00AM | 11-Oct-2017 11:00AM | 11-Oct-2017 10:00AM | 17/1/17 SUBMITTED |
| Revision of Comparison and Contrast Essay | | | | |
| PAPER | 11-Oct-2017 10:00AM | 15-Oct-2017 11:00AM | 16-Oct-2017 10:00AM | 17/1/17 SUBMITTED |
| Argumentative Essay | | | | |
| PAPER | 20-Dec-2017 11:00AM | 27-Dec-2017 11:00AM | 28-Dec-2017 10:00AM | 17/1/17 SUBMITTED |

Figure 4: Steps and integration of Turnitin.

3.5 Students' perceptions regarding the strength of Turnitin

Having students' perception, the reflection assignment was assigned to all students. It is an opportunity for students to write about what they learned from the writing process as well as offer feedback on the assignment they worked on. This is most useful in classes that emphasize and teach the writing process. Students' responses in the reflection assignment were analyzed. In conclusion, most of students agreed that the use of OriginalityCheck, GradeMark, and PeerMark are useful to improve their writing skill of essay.

In addition, the researchers conducted an interview with highly motivated students. They said Turnitin for the teaching of argumentative essay is accessible very fast through its website in <http://www.turnitin.com>. Moreover, the subjects revealed that using Turnitin made them more responsible and self-confident since the teacher does not tell when the materials will be uploaded exactly. Students need to check regularly if an update including materials and assignments are posted by the

teacher. Moreover, the activities that students are assigned by using PeerMark in Turnitin such as peer review and give feedbacks on their friends' work by responding to the free response and scale questions have encouraged students to think more critically. This statement is in line with the research conducted by Zainnuri (2017), he stated that online peer review through discussion via Schoology can support facilitate to enhance students' proficiency in higher education about argumentative writing. This statement is in line with the result of Sicat's experimental research which concludes that the LMS Schoology in addition to the traditional method of teaching can help facilitate in enhancing the college students' proficiency in Business Writing.

4 CONCLUSIONS

From the findings and discussion above, it can be concluded that integrating Turnitin in the teaching of essay writing helps teachers do the following: 1) discuss academic integrity with students, 2) teach essay writing techniques for tertiary education, 3) teach students to cite sources properly, and 4) build better essay writing skills in students. In addition, the teachers can use Turnitin both to check students' papers for originality and instructional support tools for formative assessment and the students will be able to identify where they needed to edit their work to avoid plagiarism and should be more aware of academic integrity.

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