Students' Voices on the Use of Powtoon as a Tool to Optimize Their Skills in Designing Presentation

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Abstract: This study focuses on students' voices on the use of Powtoon as a tool to optimize their skills in designing presentation. It investigates the implementation of Powtoon to design presentation and students' responses on its implementation, especially the challenges that they face on the process. It is a case study that takes the data from three sources: observation, students' interview, and questionnaire. The subjects of the study are lecturers and students taking part in two ESP classes. The implementation of Powtoon in learning process took 21 days consisting of one-week introduction to Powtoon features and two weeks of students' designing presentation. The findings reveal that students give various responses toward Powtoon's application. Some positive responses toward the application were given by the students who admitted that Powtoon offers advanced features of design such as various animation, music, and stop-motion. However, limited duration of displaying presentation which only provides five minutes and some technical issues such as internet connection makes it difficult for the students to obtain the optimal result of their presentation design. Furthermore, this study suggests that the role of lecturer is vital in minimizing the possible troubles by guiding, monitoring, correcting, and evaluating the whole process.

1 INTRODUCTION

Students have various choices to present their ideas in classroom, although the popular PowerPoint is still their favorite choice. Apperson et al. (2008) stated that the use of PowerPoint confers an enormous benefit towards education in that students like the courses better, have a more positive impression of the instructor, and therefore, have a more favorable attitude toward their education. The familiar features of slides, animation, and color backgrounds make PowerPoint a friendly media for students to help them doing the presentation. However, the development of technology offers more choices of media that let students to explore further in designing presentation. In relation to personal devices, mobile phones are ideal for individualized informal learning since student determines which apps to acquire and how to use them (Jones, 2011). When it comes in online form, students will be able to produce their woks online. It also means that there will be no limitation in terms of time and space. One of the tools is Powtoon.

Powtoon is a tool which has similar features as PowerPoint or Prezi that using slides and texts, but it enables the user to add animation and sound effects as well as music. The final result will be a more attractive presentation media as it can be plays automatically like a movie. Pais et al (2017) states that this kind of online visual presentation has several benefits. First, it allows the user to publicly share the result and attracts viewers by its well-designed presentation. Second, it forces the user to be able to paraphrase the information to be put effectively into each slide thus it will be easy for the user and the viewers to understand the presentation. Third, it integrates different types of formats and media and it is also compatible with various operating systems. The last and the most important benefit is that it is available in free version, although some pro features are only accessible when the user buys the pro version.

Found in 2012, Powtoon uses Adobe Flex technology that generates an XML file that let the file be executed in Powtoon online form or being exported to YouTube. The user should register to start working and exploring the features, but it need

Premium version to enjoy the whole features. This media provides various templates for those who want simple and fast design and also blanks template for starting from a scratch. To save the project, the users are able to save it as a common presentation which moves slide by slide, or they can export it as a movie then export to YouTube directly.

Digital media learning has shown that technologies, in the form of certain tools, can assist digital natives in the learning process and lead to better academic performance (Rahmah, 2016). In addition, Song and Fox (2008) describe a project which features an open-ended, student-oriented approach to vocabulary learning in which EFL students were provided access to and guidance on using a variety of vocabulary building tools. By integrating the tools into the classroom, students become active, self-paced, and empowered learners as these tools have the potential for supporting student learning in creative and innovative ways, while keeping them engaged and interested (Sarkar, et.al, 2017). In this case, PowToon is able to bring concepts alive for students, hold their attention and help them retain information. In terms of students' ability development, instructor has many ways to explore their abilities by using the features offered by the tools. For example, animated slides and voice recording features of Powtoon develop students' speaking ability since students put more interest to the objective of the lesson that is wrapped in an interactive way. In this case, Pais et al (2017) state that a high percentage of mostly female students consider PowToon to be a motivating tool used to create interactive materials through animation and videos.

The implementation on the use of Powtoon as a tool to optimize students' skills in designing presentation consists of two stages: introduction to Powtoon features and design the presentation. However, integrating technology into classroom is not an easy job. Educational technology involves applying ideas from various sources to create the best learning environments possible for student and it also raises questions such as how a classroom might change or adapt when a computer is integrated into the curriculum. This integration means that the curriculum and setting may also need to change to meet the opportunities that the technology may offer (Hooper and Rieber, 1995). Thus, a simple model as a tool to help explain the patterns of adoption by teachers after they are first introduced to educational technology consists of five stages: familiarization, utilization, integration, reorientation, and evolution. Through those all five phases, the chance of

technology will likely be misused or discarded will be eliminated (Rieber and Welliver, 1989)

Regarding on how technology has been implemented into teaching and learning process and how it is beneficial for both instructor and students to reach the learning's objectives, previous studies were dominated on the discussion of the positive impacts gained by integrating such educational tool in the classroom, but they did not mention the obstacles found during the process. To fill the gap, there should be a further study on how the integration of technology as a learning media also creates challenge for students. Therefore, this study would like to investigate the implementation of Powtoon to design presentation and students' responses on its implementation, especially the challenges that they face on the process.

2 METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach which data was collected from three sources: observation, students' interview, and questionnaire. The subjects of the study are lecturer and students taking part in two ESP classes. The implementation of Powtoon in learning process took approximately 21 days consisting of one-week introduction to Powtoon features and two weeks of students' designing presentation in Powtoon. The first week was used to slightly introduce the features of Powtoon to students with the help from Youtube's explanation and a demo to show the example of making Powtoon from a scratch. The next two weeks were the time for students to explore Powtoon by themselves the discussed what will be the content of their presentations. Guidance were given during the two weeks meeting to ensure that students understood the objective of the task and successfully produced the presentation which met the criteria. The next stage after the task was done was questionnaire given to the whole students. Several students were purposively selected to be interviewed to explore their responses the implementation of Powtoon in learning process and on the benefits and obstacles they found during the process of finishing the task.

3 FINDINGS AND DICUSSIONS

3.1 The Implementation of Powtoon in Learning Process

Based on result of observation, there were two stages implemented on the use of Powtoon as a tool to optimize students' skills in designing presentation: introduction to Powtoon features and design the presentation.

3.1.1 Introduction to Powtoon Features

This study began with one-week introduction given by the lecturer that helps the students to acknowledge what Powtoon looks like and how does it work. The introduction consisted of a brief explanation of Powtoon and its features to support students in designing presentation. Students found it useful to know features of Powtoon from the one-week introduction given by the lecturer in the beginning of the study. The introduction is also beneficial for students and lecturer to keep them on track with the learning objectives. Students were actively asking questions as the lecturer explained the features that will be mostly used by them during the making of presentation.
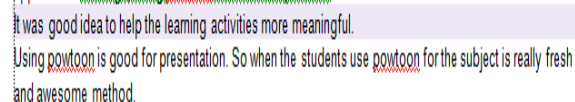
3.1.2 Design the Presentation

The next two weeks were the time for student to explore Powtoon and design their presentation. Time limitation for each presentation was five minutes which consists of maximum 10 (ten) slides. The theme for the presentation was in the scope of teaching English for young learners, so they have to create interactive and attractive media to teach kids about English by using Powtoon. During this process, the role of lecturer is vital in minimizing the possible troubles by guiding, monitoring, correcting, and evaluating the whole process.

3.2 Students' Responses towards the Learning Process

The result from observation, students' interview, and questionnaire shows that students gave various responses towards the implementation. Questionnaire reveals that students had good impression towards the media since the beginning of the study. They were attracted to the features offered by Powtoon which could not be founded in the usual PowerPoint such as music addition and cartoon

animation. Those two elements are the key points that make Powtoon as an interactive learning media that will be beneficial for the students.
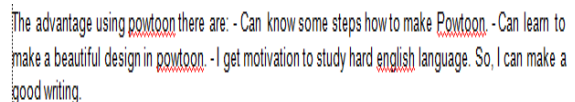

Figure 1: First impression of using Powtoon.

Figure (1) shows that as the students are in the sixth semester, they have been equipped with certain writing skills that they have learned in their previous semesters. Integrating Powtoon into classroom then helps them in terms of enhancing their writing skill. Some students said that Powtoon 'forced' them to arrange simple and communicative words to be written in their presentation design as each slide was meant to be as interactive as it could be, so the power of animation combined by effective writing skills will make the presentation be more effective. Besides, students were trained to make summary of the material they presented and choices of words were very important to keep the presentation interactive and straight to the point.

The interactive features of Powtoon also lead to positive responses expressed by the students. For example, Powtoon adds new experience in using technology while also gives them more knowledge in creating a good presentation. Since the user interface is colorful, students are able to create their works for certain objectives: media for teaching English for young learner, media for product campaign, and so on. Powtoon also allows students to improve their abilities in collaborating design into their works since Powtoon lets them explore the media with various choices of animation, sound effects, slide movement, and collection of cartoon. Those features, in fact, create fresh and dynamic learning environment among them as they can also share with others regarding the design of their presentations. It means that the objective of the task which is to create better learning experience can be realized.

Figure 2: Powtoon motivates to learn English better.

In figure (2), the motivation to learn English better was also expressed by the students. They have experienced another fun and interesting way to develop their abilities in designing presentation,

composing good writing skill, as well as improving their English skill.

However, since the questionnaire show more than 70% of the students are not familiar with Powtoon., some challenges arose as they tried to use it for designing presentation. Some technical issues are related to computer or laptop as their media to work and also the internet connection. The first challenge was Powtoon requires certain computer or laptop specification to run smoothly. In fact, some students' computer did not meet the specification and force them to work extra with time as the program did not run normally. Another challenge is that Powtoon requires lots of data connection as the features selections are various. The availability of Wi-Fi helped some students to work fast as the connection was more stable yet others still depended on portable modem or their mobile phone that worked as data connection source. To overcome the challenge, students were suggested to work in a coworking space, campus, or public spaces that provided free and fast internet connection.

Besides technical issue, time limitation of free version of Powtoon somehow limited the students to explore the media maximally. The five minutes allowance in free version forced them to cut some of the content that had been prepared in the beginning. Furthermore, some pro features were only available in pro version, so they still had limitation to design the content maximally. In addition, for some students who had little interest in design, Powtoon was such a burden since they have to start designing from a blank space. They felt that it took more time to think about the design rather than composing the content, as it can be seen in figure (3).

It need to always connected to internet , least of tutorial when the first opening, sometimes the slides is lost by itself, too slow when i choose content by content that provide in it.

Figure 3: One challenge in using Powtoon.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of Powtoon in this study is to optimize students' skill in designing presentation. Through one-week introduction and two weeks observation, some positive responses toward the application has been given by the students who admit that Powtoon offers advanced features of design such as various animation, music, and stop-motion. However, limited duration of displaying presentation which only provides five minutes and

some technical issues such as internet connection makes it difficult for the students to obtain the optimal result of their presentation design. This study also suggests that the role of lecturer is vital in minimizing the possible troubles by guiding, monitoring, correcting, and evaluating the whole process.

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