

# The Use of “Schoolology” in Pragmatics Classes

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**Abstract**— This study was a descriptive qualitative design which focuses on describing the efficacy of Schoolology for teaching Pragmatics. Lecturer who taught at the fourth semester and the students of the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Department were involved as the participant in this study. The data were collected through observation and interview. The collected data were analyzed by following the stages of data reduction, data display and data description through summary of the findings. From the result of the analysis, the findings were obtained that the lecturer used the features available in the system such as the features to make and administer quizzes, to organize online discussions and to provide learning resources.

**Keywords**—schoolology; pragmatics classes.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The 21<sup>st</sup> century information technology innovation was planned to become an alternative strategy in the world of education in overcoming the problems the constraints of time, place, and cost. Various applications have been offered as aids to instructions using some e-learning applications. Some of them offer various features of e-learning application by using the internet technology and programming that enable the students to interact with learning materials through chat room, notice board, video conferencing, etc. [1]. The applications are Edmodo, Schoolology, Quipper, Kahoot, and Moodle.

To enhance the quality of teaching and to solve various problems caused by the constraints of space and time, lecturers are given the authority to teach by using e-learning. The use of e-learning also becomes the requirement of colleges in catching up with the 21<sup>st</sup> century technology development.

According to [2] various facilities are offered in e-learning to enhance the quality of language teaching which include (1) e-learning for enhancing and developing the professional ability of the teachers, (2) e-learning as a learning resource in language teaching, (3) e-learning as an aid to interactions in language teaching, and (4) e-learning as a teaching forum, also including the change in Indonesian language teaching paradigm due to the use of information

technology in teaching.

As a reaction to this requirement colleges, especially in institutions of teachers' education that produce teachers and educational workers, an attempt has been made to enhance their ability to prepare prospective teachers with the ability to react appropriately in meeting the challenge of the era. One of the real activities that can be done by lecturers is to apply an appropriate strategy in teaching. Lecturers must apply strategies that are based on the characteristics of the students, the use of today's technology, and the prediction of the students' current and future needs.

One of the strategies that can be developed in this case is blended learning strategy. Blended learning is a strategy of teaching that combines face-to-face teaching and online learning. The combination between both teaching strategies can make the teaching more efficient [3, 4, 5, 6]. The routine of the lecturer in teaching can be facilitated which is not limited by the problems of distance and time when blended learning is used. The development of blended learning strategy gives an opportunity to compete in the world of education.

One of the language courses which is suitable with blended learning strategy is Pragmatics. Pragmatics is a frame in understanding language use. Pragmatics is the branch of linguistics that studies utterance intention rather than the meaning of sentences that are uttered. Utterance intention cannot be separated from the situation that accompanies it and it involves the interaction between the speaker and the interlocutor. Thus, Pragmatics is closely related to context. Context in interpreting the meaning of an utterance is not only concerned with the context that accompanies the linguistic text, but it is also related to the contexts outside, such as physical and social contexts [7, 8, 9, 10, 11].

To understand the whole meaning of a speech, we should comprehend the meaning of the elements forming the speech and complete it with an understanding of the other elements. Other elements that influence the meaning of the speech are related to the use of language in context. The context in the meaning of a speech does not only relate to the context that

accompanies the linguistic text, but also clings to the context such as the physical context, social context, and knowledge assumptions shared by the speaker and the speech partner. In this case, the speech partner not only understand what the speaker has said but also must understand the context used in the utterance. This should be evaluated for its truth because in the use of language in everyday life, misunderstanding often occurs which causes by the intentions and information of an utterance are not conveyed properly.

Aware of this, Pragmatics as a functional language course have a strategic role in equipping students with conceptual understanding of speech intentions, enhancing students' critical thinking skills in understanding speech intentions, enhancing student skills in communicating effectively, and being able to solve issues related to the scope of the intended purpose of the speech. Understanding concepts is a mental process of the adaptation and transformation of science. Students are said to have a deep understanding of the concept if the student can reconstruct the meaning of a concept on its own, interpret it and know its relationship with other concepts in solving a problem at hand. Understanding the concept states the level of mastery that can be achieved by students during the learning in accordance with the objectives set. If students can link the concepts learned, learning will become more meaningful.

In understanding concepts, students are also required to be able to communicate communicatively. Being communicative is the key to the success of a communication. Communicating communicatively means full of warm communication, both parties can mutually merge into the problem being communicated so that both parties can understand and understand each other. Students as teacher candidates are expected to be sensitive to the situation and conditions when speaking. The way a student communicates will greatly determine the quality of the student's personality.

Students as individuals who reach maturity are not only required to be able to understand the concept of the material and communicate it, but students must also be able to communicate reasonably. Reasonably, students must be demanded to have the ability to think further, namely at the level of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The ability to think is the level of high-level thinking skills called critical thinking. Critical thinking is to think reasonably and reflectively by emphasizing decision making about what to believe or do.

Students must be trained to identify the meaning of speech that cannot be acquired naturally. Critical thinking teaches students to not only master basic skills such as understanding, predicting, and summarizing, but to train students to become critical individuals in all the contexts of speech they receive. The ability to think critically is necessary for students and scholars because at every opportunity they will decide on various issues, both related to their scientific fields and social problems.

Considering the important role of Pragmatics learning in the Indonesian Literature Education study program, it is necessary to have an effective Pragmatic learning process at the institution, namely learning that is relevant to student needs and able to

provide meaningful results for students. One of the attempts to realize this is to learn, choose, determine, and develop appropriate learning tools to provide learning services to students. The tools are in the form of syllabus, teaching materials, and assessment instruments. All three are important tools that are inseparable (not independent of each other, but interrelated) that support the learning process.

Syllabus is a set of plans and arrangements regarding the content and material of lessons and the ways used for teaching. The syllabus functions as a guide in organizing teaching and learning activities. It contains answers to questions (1) What will be taught; (2) What are the objectives to be achieved; (3) How to carry out learning activities; (4) What is the allocation of time in learning activities; and (5) How to know that the learning objectives have been achieved. Teaching material is a set of material arranged systematically, which is needed by lecturers to teach and students need to learn.

Teaching materials can be in the form of printed or non-printed. Printed teaching materials, for examples student worksheets (LKM), handouts, textbooks, modules, and others. While non-printed teaching materials, for examples VCDs, interactive CDs, cassettes, and others. And the demands now are online teaching materials. And the last is the assessment instrument.

The assessment instrument is an assessment tool used as a basis to check the level of achievement of learning objectives. It contains methods that can be used as a reference by lecturers and students in measuring learning success. The three devices need to be developed in such a way that learning can be created that is relevant to the needs of students and is able to provide meaningful results for students. That way learning will really provide satisfying results for student progress. In connection with the above, the development of syllabus, teaching materials, and assessment instruments should be based on the development of developing science and technology.

For that purpose, lecturer must be able to develop Pragmatics learning tools that are suitable to the needs of lecturers and students. By having the appropriate learning tools, the direction of learning will be clear, and the learning objectives can be achieved properly. As the consequence, utterances in real context, such as in the form of audio or video recordings rather than printed illustrations are required so that it will be appropriate if the teaching is aided with e-learning application.

In relation to that, accuracy is also needed in the choice of e-learning portals. The question is to what extent this e-learning portal can be used in Pragmatics course. Accordingly, the focus of the present study was to describe an e-learning portal that can be used in Pragmatics course and to analyze the use of the features provided in this e-learning portal in Pragmatics course.

It is expected that this study can at least have two benefits: theoretical and practical benefits. It has a theoretical benefit as it will enrich knowledge in the aspect of the choice of the blended learning strategy. In addition, the result of this study is expected to help strengthen the use of technology in meeting the education

need in Indonesia. The practical benefit offered in this study is found in its contribution to all people involved in education such as (1) the researchers who got direct experience in doing a study oriented toward the combination of teaching strategies, which at the same time helped them in personal development; (2) the lecturer of Pragmatics course for whom the result of the study can be used as reference alternative in the course which can facilitate the lecture in giving his lecture; and (3) for readers for whom the study can be used as input or reference that can broaden their insight into teaching strategies that are based on the use of technology.

## II. METHODS

The study used a descriptive qualitative design. The data were collected in a descriptive qualitative way in the form of the use of the e-learning portal with its features in teaching Pragmatics. The subjects consisted of the lecturer who taught Pragmatics course and the students of Class IVA who enrolled in Pragmatics course. The subjects had a central position in this study because the variable of the study that the researchers observed was present in them. The determination of the students who were selected as the subjects was done by using a random sampling technique.

The data for the study were collected through observation, documentation, and interview methods. Observation method was used to obtain answers to the problem of the study, i.e., about the use of blended learning strategy in Pragmatics course. The observation technique was used to observe the situation of the use of e-learning in teaching by systematical observation and recording the situation. Documentation was used to collect the data on the portal selected in the Pragmatics course and the features used in teaching. Interview was done to complete the data on the use of portal and its features in teaching.

Observation guide and interview guide were used as the instruments for collecting the data in this study. Observation guide was used for observing all events that occurred during the use of e-learning in the teaching. However, interview guide was used to get deeper information toward the use of e-learning in the teaching.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. Results

The blended learning strategy selected in Pragmatics course used Schoology application. Schoology application has many features that can facilitate the lecturer and students in learning. The features contained in Schoology are courses, groups, recourses, recent activity, calendar, messages, profiles, notifications and requests. Of all these features, not all features were used by the lecturers in this course. The following is a list of features in Schoology as seen in Table 1:

TABLE I. FEATURES IN SCHOOLGY

Features in Schoology	Sub-features	Functions
<i>Courses</i>	<i>Materials</i>	to add course material or links, quizzes or tests, and have discussions.
	<i>Updates</i>	to provide information or announcements related to the courses
	<i>Gradebook</i>	to display the scores of students.
	<i>Grade Setup</i>	to set up the types of assessments used in Schoology.
	<i>Badges</i>	to reward the students
	<i>Attendance</i>	To check student's attendance
	<i>Members</i>	To find out the members or students who take Schoology classes
<i>Groups</i>		To create group discussion
<i>Recourses</i>		To access material that has been saved or uploaded to Schoology.
<i>Recent Activity</i>		To show recent activity in Schoology account
<i>Calendar</i>		To display calendar pages that have been previously uploaded in Recent Activity.
<i>Messages</i>		To send or view messages between Schoology users.
<i>Profil</i>		To edit user profiles
<i>Notifications and Request</i>		To find out the notification that goes to a Schoology account

The features provided in Schoology are *courses*, *groups*, *recourses*, *recent activity*, *calendar*, *messages*, *profile*, *notifications* and *request*. From all the features, only some of them were used in developing this course. The features used are listed in the following table.

TABLE II. FEATURES USED IN SCHOOLGY

Schoology Features	Sub-Features	Use
<i>Courses</i>	<i>Materials</i>	To add material or a certain link, quiz or test, and to do a discussion
	<i>Updates</i>	To share information or write a announcement related to the teaching
	<i>Gradebook</i>	To display the students' grades
<i>Resources</i>		To access material or learning material that has been saved or uploaded in the Schoology

The data on table II show that only some of the features available in Schoology application were used in the course. In the *Courses* menu the most frequently used feature was materials. This feature was used to distribute the materials, to conduct a discussion and to collect assignments. The uploading of the materials made it easy for the students to learn, they could find and read the materials again after the course ended. The display of the materials is described as follows.

In the feature *materials* there is *add discussions* that is used for conducting a discussion between the lecturer and the students and students with other students. The discussion was done when the lecturer was not present. It was also used for discussing problems in the final project. The responses and answers given by the students were used as the basis for giving scores for the students' participation during the learning process.

The collection of assignments was done in the sub-feature *materials*, known as *add discussion*. In this sub-feature, a folder was made to collect students' assignments. This was done to enable the students and the other students to see and read them. The sub-feature *gradebook* was also used to display the students' grades. Through *gradebook* grade categories and group grades as well as the time for grading students could be managed. The feature *resources* was used to access learning materials in the form of document, audio or pictures through recourses apps to save the existing materials in the Schoology.

The results of this study describe that Schoology functioned as a supplement, which is an addition to face-to-face learning, enriching student learning experiences. Face-to-face learning has limited time, so that all material can only be conveyed briefly so that lecturers utilized e-learning to meet the lack of learning material. Strategies in this network were very useful for enriching material being learned. Learning materials were added through virtual classes. Students learned by utilizing virtual classes found on the Schoology portal. Lecturers directed students to look for reference material via the internet and provided learning material through virtual classes.

Aside from being a supplement, this strategy was also useful as a complement, which is to complement face-to-face learning. In delivering material using lecturing method conducted by the lecturer, sometimes it was less understood by students. Therefore, lecturers utilized e-learning to complement learning, such as the use of controversial digital speech videos. Digital video was used to simplify and clarify the material presented. Another benefit was when the lecturer had a business that cannot be left behind. Lecturers took advantage of virtual classes to replace face-to-face learning. In this condition, full learning was carried out. Students learned the material that has been provided in cyberspace, so students continue to carry out the learning process. The lecturer uploaded the material in Schoology provided with order of tasks that must be done by students. Thus, interaction can be carried out learning in the Schoology network.

The use of a blended learning strategy was at least able to minimize the cost of purchasing books, paper, and others. In learning activities without using this strategy, in order to meet the required lecture material, students must have books,

duplicate material in the form of hardcopy, and so forth. However, by utilizing the Schoology, they do not need to do that anymore. Unfortunately, these cost savings were not fully felt by students as their gadgets should be connected to the internet and it required data quota. The university already provided their students with free Wi-Fi facility but sometimes, the network has not reached all lines of classrooms. However, it has helped to lower the costs incurred in the use of e-learning, it is also environmentally friendly.

The use of Schoology portals in Pragmatics lectures provided effective learning. Students as Z generation where they are already attached to gadgets, Pragmatics lectures bring learning in class by utilizing gadgets. Students could empower the gadget's function to find important information about lecture material. Learning through this strategy gives freedom to students to solve problems in Pragmatics learning. Students compete in a healthy manner in search of required subject matter information. Although there were also some students who misuse their gadgets to look for other things that are not related to the subject matter. Overcoming this condition, the lecturer reprimanded the student directly so that the student was not accustomed to misusing gadgets in the lecture situation. However, in general the use of this strategy has greatly helped the learning process.

## B. Discussion

In this part, the e-learning portal selected and the use of its features in the teaching of Pragmatics course is discussed. In the Pragmatics course, the lecturer only selected one portal i.e., Schoology. The reason for selecting this was because it was suitable with the need in teaching Pragmatics.

Schoology application also has complete features that cover all components of teaching. The components are learning objective that can be communicated through Schoology and the materials that can be accessed through Schoology. The interaction that occurs in the Schoology application is predicted to meet the need in teaching. Prasoj and Riyanto stated that the components consisted of objective, materials, equipment, the condition of the place where the lecturer and the students meet, and the interaction in the learning process [12].

Employing one portal is enough as the portal has covered the most important thing. The appropriate strategy for teaching is the use of portal/web e-learning according to the characteristics of the teaching [13, 14, 15, 16, 17]. The choice of a good portal is not determined by the amount of portals are selected but by the relevance of the portal in meeting the need in the teaching of the course.

The result of this study also showed that only some of the features available in Schoology portal were used in teaching. This was not caused by the lecturer's inadequate understanding of the use of the features, but it was caused more by the need in the teaching of Pragmatics course.

In its application, not all the courses occurred online which makes use of portal/web e-learning. Based on the result of the study, there were 16 sessions in the Pragmatics course. Out of

the 16 learning activities, 8 occurred fully in the classroom and 5 fully online while 3 meetings were done with one-hour face to face and the rest was done by using online activities. The course activities were done mostly in the classroom face-to-face.

The learning activities also showed that the application of teaching done by the lecturer combined face-to-face teaching and the teaching online through Schoology portal. Masrur stated that blended learning is a learning activity that combines face-to-face and distance learning, in which the role of the technology involved in the teaching process makes it possible for the students to learn by using the internet (online) and offline.

The use of Schoology portal in the teaching of Pragmatics course has only been limited to giving supplementary and complementary materials. Theoretically, there are three functions of e-learning in teaching, i.e., supplementary, complementary and replacement functions. As a supplement, the students can search supplementary materials through the existing features. E-learning is also useful as a complement, i.e., e-learning as a complement to the teaching through digital videos. The application of e-learning in the Pragmatics course has not yet been oriented toward the use of online as replacement to replace the face-to-face teaching. The lecturer still guided the discussion until it reached the expected objective.

The use of Schoology portals in Pragmatics lectures has a positive impact. The effectiveness of teaching learning process can be maximized. This strategy is useful as a supplement, complement and costs saving. Reference [18] stated that the concept of learning by utilizing networks is beneficial as a supplement. Lecturers used this portal to support the learning such as the use of digital video. Digital video was used to simplify and clarify the material presented. The use of digital video attracted more attention of students and the material presented will be analogized through the digital video.

Other benefits are eco-friendly and save on education costs. This is in line with Silahuddin's research that e-learning as an alternative in learning that offers many benefits and uses, one of which saves the use of paper which has an impact on saving the empowerment of natural resources. Through this strategy lecturers can also evaluate student learning outcomes systematically through applications in the Schoology portal. Soekarwati emphasized that one of the benefits of e-learning is to examine students' answers and notify the results directly to students [19]. In this case lecturers are also being free in correcting student's answers and giving feedback. The students feel comfortable since only them who can read the result of the correction or feedback.

But on the analysis task, the lecturer must really give the correct feedback to the students. Students will know the progress of their learning through feedback and assessments given by the lecturer. Observing everything shown in this study, the use of portal Schoology in Pragmatic lectures cannot replace the role and methods of conventional learning. This strategy with all its advantages can only serve as a complement to conventional learning because students do not yet have complete independence in learning.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the analysis, it can be concluded that Schoology was the only e-learning portal selected in the Pragmatics course. The features in Schoology were adequate to meet the need of the course although in its application only some features were used by the lecturer. The features used were the ones for writing and managing quizzes to organize online discussions and to provide learning resources. Based on the conclusion and implication that have been mentioned above there are two suggestions can be made in this part, i.e., recommendations for further use of Schoology portal.

A suggestion on the use for the lecturer of Pragmatics course in the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Department of Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha is that Schoology portal is effective for use as one of the portals in blended learning strategy since the features designed are suitable for the need of the course. In its use, the lecturer is expected to be consistent in giving feedbacks in teaching. For the students, this Schoology portal can be used as one of the resources that are relevant in Pragmatics course. This implies that the students are expected to have a will, autonomy, and reading habit so that they are ready and have prior knowledge related to the materials of the course.

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