Utilizing an Online News Portal to Enhance Student Writing Ability in Introductory Journalism Subjects

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Abstract. This study raises the theme of utilizing online news portals to improve students' writing abilities in Introductory Journalism courses. This research method was conducted qualitatively. The research implementation flow begins with planning coverage. Then proceed with editing and news evaluation. And news uploading is done as the final stage. The results showed that the application of the method of making an online news portal in an introductory journalism course greatly assisted students in understanding courses that began with the introduction of journalistic concepts. Then the introduction of the world of press work, and closed with the management of the student press through the news portal typed.net.

Keywords: Journalism, students press, news portal

1 Introduction

The development of information technology lately is growing very fast. The rapid development of communication information technology is sometimes not accompanied by the human ability to follow these developments. On the other hand, the swift rotation of the information flow makes the information misdirected. We often hear hoax news and hoax news. One of them is due to the inconvenience of the community in verifying the information obtained.

Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel in their book entitled Blur to call the current era with a storm of information, we will be difficult to determine whether the information contains hoaxes or not. To distinguish whether this information is true or not in an information storm, journalists must have the skills they call tradecraft. This skill focuses on how to weigh information from the press and other sources so that people can become participants, not victims in this new era of information [1].

The development of the Internet today provides jobs that are also very much. One of the skills required for the job is the ability to write. Good direct writing (straight news) or light writing (soft news).

The introduction to Journalism is one of the compulsory subjects in the Communication Studies Program, Social Sciences, Unand. This course weights 3 SKS (2-1). In this course, students will be given an understanding and understanding of journalism, the understanding of the press (general and special), the relationship between journalism and the press, the main problems in the press and journalism, the medium of communication as a medium for journalistic activities, types of journalistic writing, differences in the characteristics of media writing mass (print and electronic), and practicum introduction to journalistic employment.

This Introductory Journalism course is also a subject that must pass with a minimum grade of B for students who will take journalistic concentration. Communication Science students will first be introduced to the world of journalism in this subject, so this subject becomes very important and has links with other lecture words about writing in the Communication Studies Program.

Writing, said Hernowo, is a gateway to settling the current era of social media. Hernowo [2] said, even though this social media era, everything can be conveyed with pictures. However, writing still has a very large role in delivery. Therefore, the ability to write is an absolute must for everyone.

Some of the topics discussed in this course include types of news, journalistic elements, news writing techniques, types of media, and a variety of news writing. The course aims to:

a.   Provide an understanding of the basic concepts of journalism and journalistic links with the Press as a communication medium
b.   Get to know the field of journalism
c.   Enhance several dimensions of intrapersonal skills and interpersonal skills for students.

This subject contributes to the competence of Communication Studies graduates. Most communication graduates will work in the media industry, both print, electronic and creative industries. All fields of work require active writing skills that must be possessed by the workers. Therefore this course has an important role in bringing students closer to their field of work after graduating.

One of the Learning Achievements of Graduates (CPL) Communication Studies Program, Social Sciences, and Unand is to become an entrepreneur in the field of communication. To become an entrepreneur in the field of communication, students must be able to manage media independently. Because of this, creating an online news portal will greatly assist students in learning to manage the media industry professionals.

The existence of an online news portal that is managed by students will provide a means of lecture practice. With this program, students will learn to manage the media, produce writing by journalistic rules, and of course this is following the demands of industry 4.0 which must be adopted sooner or later.

The emergence of online media according to Iskandar and Sustainable trigger major changes in the media mass. These changes occur in two ways, first, the substance of the media, the journalistic process. Second, the form or format of media organizations [3].

This course practicum is only done manually. Beginning of lectures to Midterm Examinations (UTS) students are equipped with knowledge about journalism and the principles of writing news according to the Journalistic Ethics Code (KEJ) in force. After UTS, students have started to practice looking for, process, and write news simply. The results of their writing are only discussed in class and never published. With this online news portal, writing that has passed the editing stage will be published and widely consumed by the public.

During this time, Introductory Journalism courses are delivered using teaching materials in the form of handouts and power points . While the assessment is carried out by dissecting the writing of students who have shaped news. The pattern as mentioned above certainly does not bring students closer to their job description after graduation. With this online news portal, it is hoped that students will get to know the real process of managing online media. Starting from newsgathering, editorial management, until the news process is published.

The use of online news portals in lectures does not only help students understand Journalism Introductory courses. In the Communication Studies Program, the existence of online news portals is also related to other subjects, such as graphic design and mass media management. So that the existence of online news portals will be a practical tool for other subjects.

2   Research Method

The method used is research with a collaborative approach. The research design used is involvement in the process. Furthermore, each element involved in implementing the program that has been designed starting from the beginning to the end [4]. This study seeks to solve the problems faced by lecturers in the learning process, increasing the hard skills and soft skills of students by constantly innovating to use learning techniques to improve the quality and achievement of students. This study uses a qualitative method.

DRAFT AND TYPES OF RESEARCH

In this study, researchers are involved in the learning process, searching and finding certain actions in the classroom. Previously lectures were conducted using the Student Center Learning (SCL) method. Through this research, researchers will try to research a participatory approach in the world of work. Researchers will try to try to introduce how professional media manage their institutions, then students will practice on their news portals.

Data collection techniques through participatory observation, researchers are actively involved and become part of the research conducted. Other techniques in collecting research data are also through interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. Researchers as well as teaching teams plan, identify, observe, and carry out the actions that have been designed. The flow is as follows:
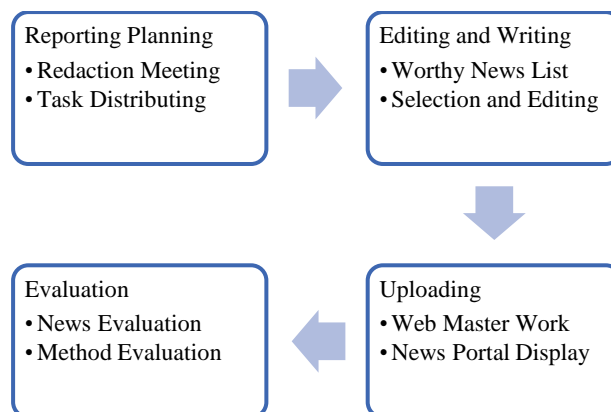

Figure 1. Flowchart of Online News Portal Management Method

Development of Learning Method

The method used is research with a collaborative approach. The point is that the SCL method that has been applied will collaborate with the introduction of professional news portal management. This is done so that in addition to understanding the material and basic knowledge of journalism, students are also brought closer to the world of their work when they graduate.

Previously this course only provided knowledge and a little practice in the world of journalism. However, their work was never published because of the limitations of the

publication media. A few years ago, the output of this course produced wallpapers that were distributed to several strategic locations. However, with the development of technology, the choice of publication in the form of online news portals is considered more suitable and by the generation of the millennial era. That is why this research is trying to look at making online news portals in improving students' writing skills.

Research Location

This research was held at Andalas University in Communication Studies, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, at the University of Andalas in the second semester of 2019.

Research Schedule

The activity of this research was completed in one semester of learning in the even semester of the 2019/2020 school year. The study was divided into two cycles, the first cycle starting with the college contract until the midterm (UTS) and the second cycle after UTS until the Final Semester Examination.

Research Subject

The class action research subjects are students of Communication Studies Program who take Introductory Journalism courses.

3 Research Result and Discussion

Development and Education Quality Assurance Research course Introduction to Journalism performed with two cycles should follow the student. The first cycle is giving material about understanding around the world of journalism. Then followed by briefing basic journalistic writing.

This first cycle process takes place at the initial lecture meetings. The same method also continued at the next meeting but was followed by journalistic practice. Starting from analyzing issues that are worthy of being covered and have news value. Then the coverage planning, continued with field coverage, writing news, and finally evaluation the coverage they did.

One sub discussion is about interviews. How to do a good interview and choose questions to ask. Santana said good questions in journalistic interviews are done by asking open questions. Because open-ended questions will provide an opportunity for interviewees to expand. Besides questions that tend to lead should also be avoided [5].

Implementation of Journalistic introductory lecture is students do not only acquire hard skills and but also soft skills, there is a combination of theory and practice, and serving practice greater than theory. The course takes place in the even semester each year and is in the second semester. This is not without reason. Introduction to the world of the press is a mandatory knowledge that must be obtained by communication science students, whatever concentration they take in the fifth semester.

The Communication Science Department has four concentrations, namely Journalical, Public Relations, Communication Management, and Television and Film concentrations. All of this concentration requires quite good writing skills. News search instincts must be good. Because this subject is very important because it will be interconnected with many other subjects in the next semester.

This introductory journalism course provides three broad subjects that will be distributed to the lectures in sub-subject areas at each meeting. Three basic things given in this lecture are: First, an introduction to the basic concepts of journalism. The basic concept of journalism is

given in sub-topic lectures, among others, through discussion of journalistic understanding, the main tasks of the press, journalistic ethics, journalistic code of ethics, and journalistic elements.

Kovach and Rosenstiel's in his book Nine Elements of Journalism stated that the main purpose of journalism is to provide the information needed by citizens so that they can live freely and organize themselves [6].

Second, after students are familiar with the basic concepts of journalism, they will be introduced to the world of press work. The introduction of the world of journalistic work is done by starting down for coverage. Students will be asked to plan a report, determine a case that is worthy of reporting, and has news value. Furthermore, students go to the field for coverage. They write the results of the coverage into a story, both direct news (straight news) or light news (soft news). In this stage, students are also introduced to the professional press work system by visiting the Padang Ekspres Daily office.

Online journalism has become a popular study since the rise of the internet. According to Zainuddin, there are several advantages of online journalism, including faster, easy access, and readers can interact directly with the media concerned [7].

Third, students are introduced to the student press management system, this also becomes one of the subtopics of the lecture. At this stage students are already managing an online news portal themselves. The planning, reporting, editing, screening, and evaluation processes are carried out by the students themselves by involving their seniors as mentors. Students are also introduced to the theory and practice of mass media management.

Junaedi [8] states, media management must provide knowledge about media management, management principles with all its processes which include planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling.
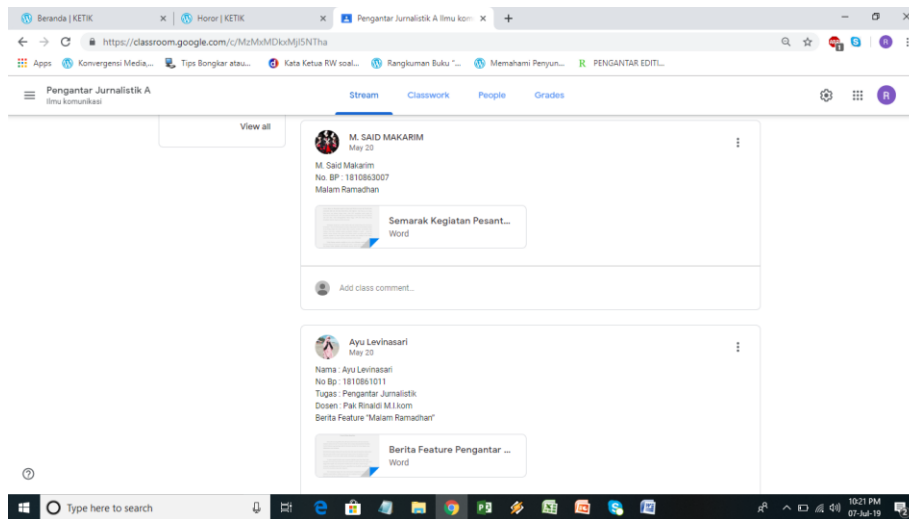
Based on the three stages and topics it is hoped that the objectives of this course can be achieved, namely.

a. Understanding the understanding, basic concepts of journalism and journalistic relations with the Press as a medium of communication
b. Get to know the field of journalism
c. Enhance several dimensions of intrapersonal skills and interpersonal skills for students.

As the author mentioned above, this research was carried out in several stages. First, an introduction to the basic concepts of journalism. In this stage students are asked to understand how journalism and what codes of ethics apply in journalism. Students are also asked to assess whether a case has news value or not and whether it is appropriate to be covered. Here also students must understand how to look for speakers and be professional in selecting speakers.

Shah, in his book Signs of Journalism, says, knowledge of ethical codes and journalistic standards is an absolute must when writing news. Minimum journalistic standards that must be known that coverage must be objective and must be fair (especially for the public) [9].

Second, after students are familiar with the basic concepts of journalism, they will be introduced to the world of press work. The introduction of the world of journalistic work is done by starting down for coverage. Before reporting, students must conduct editorial meetings to determine what issues will be raised. After being agreed upon, then the students did the distribution of the assignment of coverage. Every result of the coverage will be put into google classroom. This GoLlasslassroom can be accessed by all students. Later their writings will be collected in this application for editing.

Figure 2: Google classroom as a Media Collection of Coverage Results
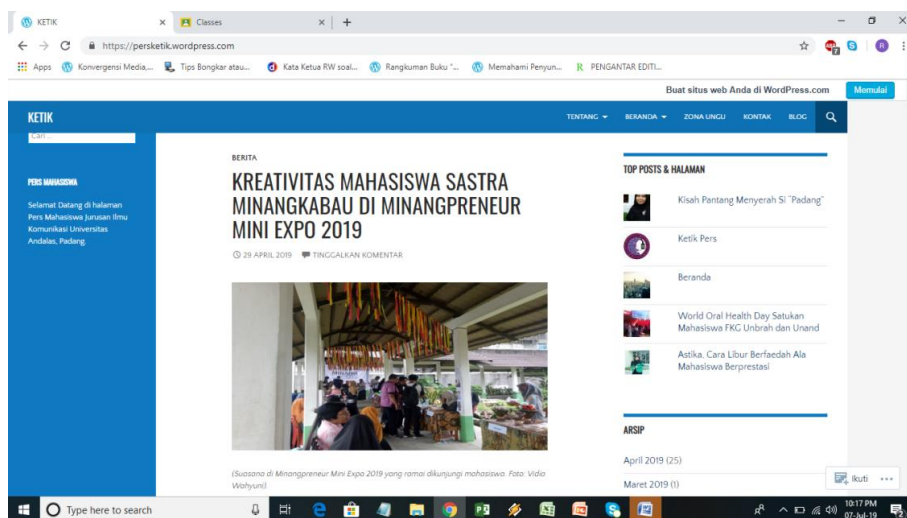
Before the news airs on the news portal, students will do the editing first. Are the results of their coverage appropriate or not. There are several major concerns at this stage. Among these is the writing that has been written by the prevailing journalistic language. Then the balance of the news is also seen whether it is balanced or even in favor of one party. In this process also see whether the news has been arranged with a good news writing structure or not.

All of these processes are consistent with what Burton said about news election flow that goes through three stages. Namely the stage of gathering and selecting news materials, followed by editing, and the last is the stage of news construction [10].

After all the processes have been carried out, students will enter the next stage, namely the introduction of student portal management. At this stage students are already managing an online news portal themselves. The planning, reporting, editing, screening, and evaluation processes are carried out by the students themselves by involving their seniors as mentors.

At this stage students have set up their own "media company". In this study they set the name KETIK.NET as the name of the student news portal. KETIK is an acronym for Journalistic Writing Creation. The TYPE of news agency is managed by way of the student press to manage their institutions. All the work of these students is published in the KETIK.NET news portal.

As a training tool, before this student manages KETIK, students create a blog as a means of experimentation. This student blog can be accessed via persketik.worldpress.com. This blog has aired several results of student coverage in their learning process towards the formation of the student press typed.net. A screenshot of the blog can be seen from the image below:
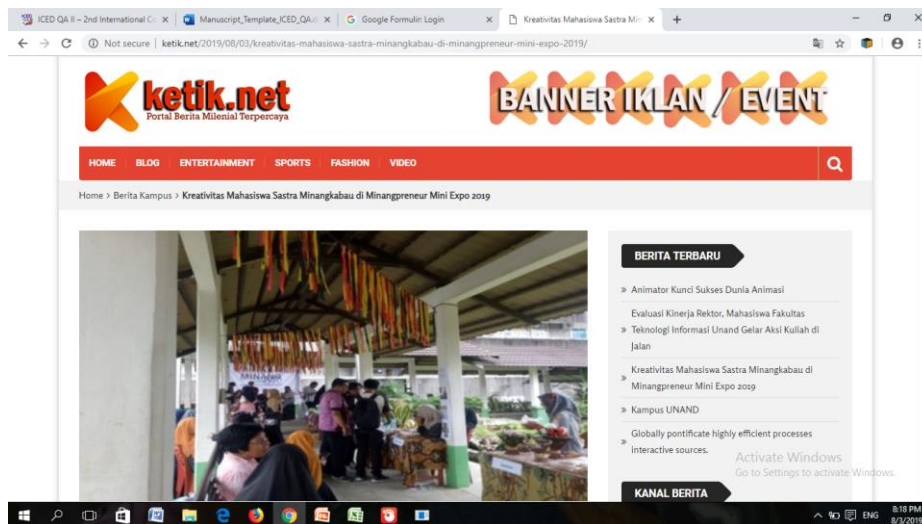
Figure 3: KETIK News Portal Trial

This blog is used as a training medium before they are the online news portal typed.net. In this blog, the rubric is also adjusted to the rubric that is published in their news portal. This news portal consists of four large sections. This news portal section can be seen in the table below:

Tabel 1. KETIK News Site Rubrication Table

Number	Rubric Name	Description	Sub rubric
1	TENTANG	This rubric is the main rubric that contains all live news and light news. Information about each incident in Unand is published here. Likewise with the figure of outstanding people in Unand also discussed here	▪ News ▪ Opinion ▪ Figure ▪ Review ▪ Literature
2	BERANDA	This rubric is lighter because it is filled with photo galleries and other light coverage	▪ Gallery ▪ Lifestyle ▪ Kuy ▪ Horror
3	ZONA UNGU	This rubric specifically tells about matters relating to the department of communication sciences	
4	KONTAK	This section contains information about the news portal manager	

Based on the table above the news portal typed.net created in this study consists of 4 main rubrics. About Rubric becomes the main rubric which consists of daily news that is covered by students. In this rubric there are five sub rubrics, namely opinions that contain the opinions of Andalas University students or lecturers, news about events that occur in and around Unand, figures in the form of lecturers and students profiles, reviews, and literature consisting of poems and short stories.

Then proceed with the homepage rubric. This column is lighter because it contains a gallery of photos, coverage of the style of life of students, culinary coverage, and roads, as well as one rubric about horror. Purple Zone Rubric is a rubric that specifically discusses communication majors from beginning to end. Screenshot of one of the news on the type.net news portal can be seen in the image below:

Figure 4: News Portal Screenshot ketik.net

All rubrication selections are determined by students and assisted by a number of their seniors to share their experiences. Likewise, the selection of issues that will be raised as writing is also determined by students through editorial meetings.

All of these processes, starting from the planning of the coverage, the editorial meeting, the writing, to the determination of the deadline for writing have been simulated in the classroom and have been practiced by students. The atmosphere of coverage is also adjusted to current journalistic developments. For example, researchers give students time to leave the classroom covering an incident. Then in half an hour students must complete a news article directly from the results of their coverage. The rhythm of work generally occurs in the world of the press work in general so that students also feel how the sensation of racing against the deadline to produce good coverage.

After students write their journalistic report. Some writings will be evaluated, whether they are by the journalistic writing method or not. From this evaluation students know the advantages and disadvantages of their writing for the provision of further coverage.

All the processes carried out in this study are seen in the grooves listed below:
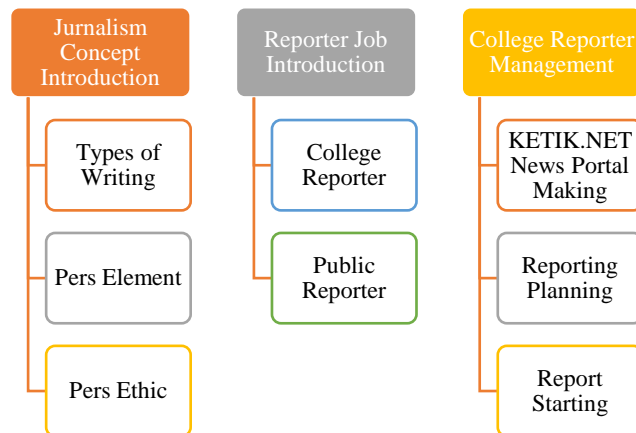
Figure 5. Workflow Research Results

4 Conclusion

Based on the results of the research described above, it can be concluded that the Research Development and Education Quality Assurance (PPMP) by creating an online news portal in the Introduction to Journalism course greatly helps students in understanding lectures. A true introductory journalism course should be done by increasing field practice rather than material in the classroom, by making this online news portal experience of the world of journalism can be felt by students.

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