
Challenging Aspects of Teaching Writing through Online Learning at Senior High School

Syahvira Zakiyyah Azmi Anugrah¹, Yeni Mardiyana Devanti², and Indri Astutik³

¹Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember, syahviraanugrah@gmail.com

²Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember, yenimardiyana@unmuhsumber.ac.id

³Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember; indri@unmuhsumber.ac.id

*Correspondensi: Indri Astutik
Email: indri@unmuhsumber.ac.id

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Abstract: Writing is one of the most important skills that English students need to master. Writing is a difficult skill to master due to the lack of vocabulary, grammar, and ideas. The research design is a mixed method (Qualitative quantitative research). Data collected in two ways: Conduct a questionnaire in the form of Google forms application and interview with the teachers through Goggle Meetings. This research is dealing with four respondents from two different schools. This research proposes the question, "What are the challenging aspects faced by English teachers in teaching writing descriptive text and how do they encounter them?". Based on the data, in the face of poor communication and lack of motivation, they provide platforms and applications for teachers to monitor and ensure good communication with students using Google Classroom and WhatsApp. Teachers also encourage students to follow up by providing the teachers' number so that they can chat privately with the teacher if they do not understand the material or the assignment. Due to a lack of financial resources and lack of access mainly to internet data, the teachers gave the students some time to complete their assignments and suggested they use the school's Wi-Fi.

Key Word: Challenging Aspects, Teaching Writing, Descriptive Text, Online Learning

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the most crucial abilities that English students must master. According to Anh (2019), among the four English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), writing is generally known as the most difficult but least preferred skill even though it plays an important role in language production. For class X high school students, writing is divided into several types, namely descriptive, recount, and narrative. Here the descriptive text becomes the focus of discussion. The word "descriptive" comes from the word "describe" which means to draw, illustrate, or describe a particular object to visualize the object being described (Dirgeyasa, 2016).

Teachers must know how to compose excellent texts because they are responsible for providing material in class. However, there are various challenges that students face in writing descriptive text. Students often find it difficult to organize their ideas. In addition, students also made some writing errors, such as poor grammatical usage. It is challenging to build and develop their imagination. Therefore, teachers are required to use interesting strategies or media so that students can fully understand the material presented. Specifically, when teachers were obliged to conduct lessons online because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Online learning itself is a new thing in Indonesian education. According to Purba (2002), online learning is a form of information technology that is applied in education in virtual schools. All of the learning and teaching processes that are typically conducted face-to-face in the classroom are becoming direct but virtual in online learning, which means that the teacher is imparting knowledge in front of a device in one location while the students are learning from other devices in a different place.

Of course, there will be many challenges for teachers and students in managing online learning. According to Fortune, Spielman, & Pangelinan (2011) in Roberts & McInnerney (2007), Numerous issues encountered in online learning, such as teaching materials, learning interactions, and the learning environ-

ment. Mufaridah (2021) for several competencies, teachers need more information, guidance, and sufficient training to overcome problems related to online learning. Schools, teachers, and students must force themselves to understand and use online methods. Many types of problems hinder the effectiveness of online learning; thus, teachers need guidelines for using online learning to make it easier for them to interact and convey material in the best way possible.

According to Dull (2017), online learning in implementation has challenges, including:

A. Poor Communication

In online learning, there is no chance for face-to-face interaction with the teacher, which is crucial for building a relationship between the student and the teacher.

B. Lack of Motivation

Students lack motivation while online learning due to their natural tendency to get distracted. For students who struggle with time management and have a tendency to procrastinate, working at their own pace becomes a disadvantage.

C. Lack of Funds

Technology downsides include cost, hardware issues, internet problems, production of course materials, and worry about the availability of funds.

D. Lack of Quality

Online Learning sometimes results in a lack of quality in the teaching learning process. According to Galusha (1991), there are issues with non-online faculty's perception of the legitimacy of online courses.

E. Poor Accessibility

Hardware, software, and connectivity facilities are prerequisites that enable online teaching and learning.

Research about teacher challenges has been conducted by many researchers. Fauziah (2021) conducted research with the title teacher problems in conducting online teaching. According to research findings, English teachers face many challenges when teaching online. The challenges grouped into six groups, namely: problems with the internet network, teachers' perceptions of students who skip classes during lessons, teachers' limitations in preparing learning materials, lack of interest in student learning, lack of teacher confidence in student learning outcomes, and lack of interaction between teachers and students. This research also describes several problems in learning through online learning but only focuses on one skill, namely writing skills. What makes all of the previous research different from this research is; The researcher found that teachers faced four aspects of challenges in teaching writing through online learning. The researcher also investigated deeper information to find out how teachers encounter the challenges of teaching writing online. The previous research used qualitative research and this research used a mixed method, quantitative qualitative research. Hopefully, the results of this research should give them more knowledge and assist them in handling difficulties that may emerge in the classroom.

METHOD

This method involves the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. The mixed methods model used in this study is a sequential model that uses explanation, analysis, and quantitative data approaches in the first stage, while qualitative data is collected and analysed to support findings from quantitative data, in the second stage.

The results of this research revealed the challenges faced by the teachers while implementing online learning to teach writing, and how they overcame those challenges. Arikunto (2014, p. 172) asserts that the source of data in research is the subject from where the data comes from. The teachers who teach English in the tenth grade at SMK Kesehatan Kalisat and MAN Lumajang are the data sources, and the researcher used questionnaires and interviews to gather them.

The researcher used the questionnaire in this research because it provided a consistent picture of what happened based on the responses of the respondents and provided an advantage in its use and each statement. The researcher employed a close questionnaire in this study. The questions were distributed to respondents via Google Forms produced by the researcher.

According to Lodico (2010, p. 165), in all qualitative research, data analysis and interpretation are continuous throughout the research, so that insights gained in initial data analysis can guide future data collection. The researcher acquired clear information about the outcomes after doing the questionnaire and

interview, and the researcher then came to conclusions/verified the results. By minimizing the bias that develops during data collection and analysis, an effort is made to verify the accuracy of data or information that the researcher has collected from many perspectives.

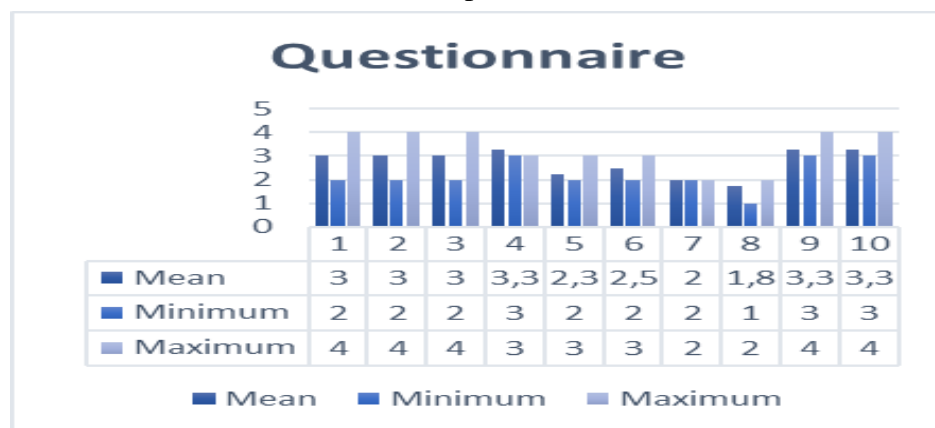
To obtain valid interpretations and findings, the researcher needs to check the validity of the data. The researcher used data triangulation to see whether the information collected by one instrument was consistent with another instrument. Data triangulation as stated in Cresswell (2014), that data collected through various sources including interviews, questionnaires, and document analysis. Therefore, the researcher used triangulation with data sources to verify the data collected from the interviews.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data was collected from a total of 4 participants consisting of 2 participants from each school. Each participant was given a questionnaire with a total of 10 questions that dealt with five challenging aspects of teaching online writing. The interview was conducted after the participants answered the questionnaire. Each school had one participant chosen at random to be interviewed via Google Meet.

From the questionnaire that has been distributed it had 5 aspects of challenge, those are poor communication, lack of motivation, lack of funds, lack of quality and poor accessibility. It has scale 1 to 4 (1. Strong agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strong disagree.) to know teacher challenges for all those aspects.

Table 1. Graphic of Questionnaire



1. Poor Communication

Statement number 1 and 2 on the questionnaire about the poor communication aspect of teaching writing through online learning. The first statement is whether the teacher is easily giving feedback during online learning. The second statement is about more interaction between teacher and students. We can see in the table that the mean is 3 for the first and second statements. It indicated that most teachers disagree about those statements. This aspect of poor communication was faced by all those teachers. It explained that poor communication was a challenge for teachers in teaching writing through online learning.

2. Lack of Motivation

For statements number 3 and 4 about the lack of student motivation when writing through online learning. The third statement is about students being more active in using online media for writing. The table shows that the mean is 3, indicating that teachers disagree with this statement. The fourth statement about students easily participating in writing assignments also has an average of 3.25, indicating that the teacher disagrees. It explained that during writing through online learning, students were less active or easy to participate, and it made students less motivated to learn. It concluded that the lack of motivation is one of the challenges in teaching writing through online learning.

3. Lack of Funds

For statements number 5 and 6 to know that students did not have any problem with gadgets or the internet for online learning. Statement number 5 is about students having support devices. The mean is 2.25, with a minimum answer of 2 and a maximum of 3. It indicates that most teachers agree that students have gadgets to support them in online learning. Statement number 6 about students does not have problems buying internet data. The mean is 2.5, with a minimum answer of 2 and a maximum of 3. It indicates that of

four teachers, two teachers agree while the other two disagree. It explains that lack of funds is a challenge for some teachers, especially when students cannot buy internet data for online learning.

4. Lack of Quality

Lack of quality was asked on the questionnaire for the seventh and eighth statements. Statement number 7 was about teachers preparing material in teaching writing through online learning. Number 8 was about teachers providing media that supports online writing. The table shows the average is 2 and 1.75, indicating that teachers agree that the preparation of materials and media is not a challenge for them. It explains that quality is not a challenge for teachers in teaching writing through online learning.

5. Poor Accessibility

Poor accessibility, was asked on statements number 9 and 10. Statement number 9 states that no internet issue during teaching writing online. Statement number 10 is about students who have a good internet connection in their area. Both statements were disagreed with by all the teachers. The table shows that both statements have a mean of 3.25, with a minimum answer of 3 and a maximum of 4. It explains that poor accessibility was also a challenge for teachers in teaching writing through online learning.

The findings show that of the five aspects of challenges, teachers in both schools have four aspects that become their challenges in teaching writing through online learning. They are poor in communication, lack motivation, lack funds, and have poor accessibility. As stated by Dull (2017), the implementation of online learning has several challenges, such as poor communication, lack of motivation, lack of funds, poor quality, and poor accessibility. The result of questionnaire shows that poor communication, lack of motivation, lack of funds, and poor accessibility are challenges teachers face when teaching writing through online learning. After getting these results the researcher continued the second stage, namely the interview.

There are several ways for the respondents to overcome the challenges they face. The respondents used several platforms that provide tools to help them monitor the students' writing activity. One of the respondents used Google Classroom, she created virtual classes, invited students to join the class, provided information related to the teaching and learning process, provided learning materials that students studied in the form of presentation files and learning videos, assigned assignments to students, schedule assignment meetings and so on. Another respondent used Google Meetings, Google Forms, and WhatsApp for learning activities. It can help them to communicate easily with all students, make all students participate and communicate with them and face bad communication. Carter et al (2020) also stated that in online classes, such performance is likely to occur. An important research technique in online teaching and learning is monitoring student participation and engagement with the course materials.

To overcome the problem of students' lack of motivation, respondents gave several interesting short videos to watch to increase their motivation before learning began. Due to limited funds and accessibility, most of the problems that arise are from internet connection and internet data. Respondents stated in interviews that some students used internet problems as an excuse for not being active in online learning. To overcome this problem, respondents usually provide more time to submit assignments and provide Wi-fi at school if they do not have internet data. Mahdavia (2021) also has a statement about that, he said students who have difficulty getting internet data or whose areas are not covered by the internet. Schools must be able to facilitate internet, such as Wi-fi connections for students. Thus, students with these difficulties can still connect to the internet. They only need to come to school to use the facility. He also suggested teacher to provide offline access options can mitigate the impact of poor internet connectivity.

CONCLUSION

The respondents from both schools encountered the same four challenges when attempting to teach writing through online learning, according to the results and conclusions from the five aspects of problems. To face these challenges, they had several strategies. To poor communication, they provided platforms and applications that help teachers monitor and communicate well with students, such as using google classroom and WhatsApp. The teacher also encouraged them to ask questions when they didn't understand the material or assignment by giving them the teacher's number so they could chat privately with the teacher. To overcome the problem of students' lack of motivation, the teacher gave several interesting short videos to watch to increase their motivation before learning began. To lack of funds and accessibility of most internet data, such as cannot buying internet data and poor connection. The teacher gave students more time to complete assignments and suggested they use the school's Wi-fi.

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