THE INFLUENCE OF SKYPE TOWARDS STUDENTS' WRITING SKILL

[1]Yuski Iskandar

[1]Universitas Hasyim Asy'ari Tebuireng Jombang, Indonesia.

[1]*Yuskiiskan@gmail.com*

[2]Sayid Ma'rifatulloh

[2]Universitas Hasyim Asy'ari Tebuireng Jombang, Indonesia.

[2]*sayid.unhasy@gmail.com*

Abstract: one of the main skill in learning English as second language is writing. Learning writing is necessarily important nowadays, not only for education purposes but also for occupation purposes as well. However, most of the students feel bored in writing; one of the reasons is because the teaching learning process still uses conventional method. Thereby, it seems that writing is difficult and boring because the students score in writing is low. Therefore, the researcher uses *Skype* as the media in teaching writing as an alternative solution for this problem. The study aim is to find if there is any significant influence of using *Skype* towards students' writing skill especially in writing descriptive text. The result of this study showed that there is a significant influence of using *Skype* towards students' writing skill.

Keywords *: Skype, Writing Skill, Descriptive Text.*

INTRODUCTION

Writing is the main activity in the class learning process. By writing students can communicate and present ideas from both inside and outside. Writing is one skill that is important because of the presence of a post so we can find out various things in history that we never know. Writing is considered into passive English skills (Herwiana, 2021) and one of the most important skills in studying English because it is not only an academic skill, but it is also an important skill that translates into any career field.

Among all the four language skills, writing skills are the most difficult to master. In line with this, Zuhriyah and Agustina state that almost all Indonesian EFL learners have some difficulties when writing. Writing is an intricate and complex task, it is the most difficult of all the language abilities to acquire. In fact many high school students are able to understand the language, especially English, but many of them would be troubled if the teacher asks them to pour their ideas into the writing. They find it difficult to arrange the understandable sentences. In other words, it can be said that they have problems with grammatical structure. In order to be able to create understandable texts, the writers' ideas should be expressed using

the correct grammar (Zuhriyah & Fajarina, 2021). The other problems are lack of vocabularies, not enough ideas, and less knowledge related to the writing topics. Therefore, teaching writing to EFL students is a challenge for Indonesian teachers (Herwiana, 2021).

The explanation above gives the point of light that basically writing skills are skills that are needed by students, especially high school students. They face problems on their way in learning these skills. Given the importance of writing skills and the problems faced by students in improving writing skills, it needed a suitable learning medium for the students. A foreign language class by using the traditional way will make students bored and hard to learn. Things are looking right now as a method and learning media that is liked by students and modern. In his journal, Nadhim (as cited in Hussein & Elttayef, 2016) writes "The fact that foreign language learners suffer from traditional ways and methods of teaching and learning. They are looking for new ways of teaching and learning, especially methods which are integrated with technology.

Nowadays, the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) cannot be separated from human life including education (Ma'rifatulloh: 2020). For example, the use of Computer mediated communication (CMC) that makes it possible for language learners to have meaningful interaction with native speakers anywhere there is an internet connection. However, one major drawback has been connecting English language student with competent English speaking conversation partner (Terhune, 2015).

Some researchers have proven the benefits of *Skype* as the learning media of writing. First, Betaineh states that online discussions via Facebook, *Skype*, and other social media sites should be utilized when teaching writing and other language skills. Second is from Orjuela (2009) the title of his research is The use of *Skype* Chat for Improving Writing Skills in an A2 Adult Learners Group. He found that the research process gives a positive experience to prompt students' motivation through the use of technology and an opportunity to improve the teacher's performance. Students are encouraged to use "*Skype* Text Chat " as an academic tool and the teacher gets in touch with new learning technological strategies to foster learners' improvement. The statement reinforced O'Beidat & Al-Jamal (2008) they recommended that the chatting technique should be introduced as a major tool for teaching writing skills.

There are some reasons the researcher chooses *Skype* as a media in teaching writing. First reason is that this media is modern media in this era. All of the things use the internet so the teacher can teach the student about the positive things of using internet. Second, all students can find new friend not only in Indonesia but all people around the world. Third,

Skype is *Microsoft* application that helps student to practice four skills all at once then they can develop their writing skill. The aim of this study is to know is there any influences of *Skype* towards students' writing skill.

Writing in foreign language may be not as easy as writing in native language. It occurred to the students of MAN 5 Jombang (as the subject of this research) while the teacher taught descriptive text. Some problems were the students' lack of vocabularies and grammar rules as well as their motivation in writing descriptive text. Therefore, an interesting media is needed in teaching and learning of descriptive text. *Skype* is one of social networking site that have *Skype*'s text, voice and video make it simple to share experiences with the people that matter to you, wherever they are. Therefore the researcher chooses it to be used as a media of teaching and learning of writing descriptive text.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Discussing about writing, there some of the theory related. We know that writing is one of the ways to realize the idea of the writer. Writing can also be used as media to expose the things that exist today and even in the past. Writing skills are very important to master learners. (Newton & Nation, 2020). Harmer (2007) states that writing skills will be a lot of benefits in advanced-paced life now. (Ur, 1996) said, "Writing is Widely used within the foreign language courses as a convenient means for engaging with the aspect of the language other than writing itself. Brown & Abeywickrama (2010) mentions a list of micro and macro skills for written communication as follows: Micro skills: (1) Produce graphemes and orthographic patterns of English. (2). Produce writing at an efficient rate of speed to suit the purpose. (3) Produce an acceptable core of words and use appropriate word order patterns. (4) Use acceptable grammatical systems (e.g., tense, agreement, pluralization), patterns, and rules. (5) Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms. (6) Use cohesive devices in written discourse. Macro skills: (1) Use the rhetorical forms and conventions of written discourse. (2) Appropriately accomplish the communicative functions of written texts according to form and purpose, (3) Convey links and connections between events, and communicate such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification, (4) Distinguish between literal and implied meanings when writing, (5) Correctly convey culturally specific references in the context of the written text, (6) Develop and use a battery of writing strategies, such as accurately assessing the audience's interpretation, using prewriting devices, writing with fluency in the

first drafts, using paraphrases and synonyms, soliciting peer and instructor feedback, and using feedbaczk for revising and editing.

To make a paragraph, there are several steps: prewriting is the way where the writer tries to collect the ideas, drafting is the step where the writer drags down the idea into a paragraph, revising is an activity where the writer refines his/her idea into a better one and the last is editing where the writer hunts the errors, he or she has to refine the grammatical errors. According to Weigle (2002), he mentions the 5 components of writing they are content, organization, mechanic, language use and vocabulary.

In this research, the object of the research is writing descriptive text. Descriptive text is a discourse that narrates about a person, place event and so on. This has 2 generic structure namely identification and description of features. This also has generic features: purposes or social function, and language characteristic. The media used during the students' learning process is *Skype*. *Skype* is invented in late August 2003, it is a software application for making voice calls over the Internet, was launched. It was evolutionary in that it "just worked" for users who had a PC and Internet connection, yet it did not require a significant investment in capital equipment by *Skype*'s founders. Over the past 11 years "*Skype*" has evolved into a widely recognized brand, and a verb, describing how two or more parties communicate over the Internet. From its beginnings, it offers voice calling and instant messaging. 11 years later, *Skype* delivers over 36% of the world's international calling minutes, has brought video calling to the consumer and business masses, and has over 300 million monthly active users in over 180 countries. Its Group Chat facilitates ad hoc communications across business teams, special interest groups, and families. According to *Skype*, at least 40% of its users employ *Skype* for their business communications activities. And *Skype* is everywhere. Its availability has spread from the PC to smartphones (such as the iPhone, Android phones, BlackBerry 10, and Windows Phone 8), tablets (such as iPad, Samsung Galaxy, and Surface Pro), TVs, and a range of other devices that offer real time voice, video, and/ or text communications as a feature (Courtney, 2015). This application has some usages such as for Voice calling, Hosting, Presence or status, Text messaging, Group chat, Conversation archiving, Contact directory and Multiple calling features.

As an online social media, *Skype* has several benefits such as: (1) Knowledge and skills development (2) improving the Motivation (3) Connectivity (4) Familiarity (5) Cost effectiveness (6) Convenience (7) Increased appropriate use (8) Increased efficiency (9) Increased self-expression (10) Increased teamwork and cooperation. For the unique of *Skype*,

some researchers have conducted similar studies such as Bataineh (2014) who investigates the students' writing skill and accuracy which that used chat assist, he states that students who worked with *Skype* showed a significant improvement in their writing skills when compared to the control group. In light of these findings, it is recommended that online discussions via *Skype* should be utilized when teaching writing and the other language skills. Another researcher is Orjuela (2009), she found that Students are encouraged to use "*Skype* Text Chat" as an academic tool and the teacher gets in touch to new learning technological strategies to foster learners' improvement. The similarity between their research and the researcher's is both of them used *Skype* as Media and writing skill.

METHOD

In this research, the researcher uses quantitative research. As for the research design, the experimental study is used in this research. This study use *quasi-experimental design.* Quasi experiment design is a non-random research design**.** The participants might be selected by random selection or random sampling. With random selection or random sampling, each individual has an equal probability of being selected from the population, ensuring that the sample will be representative of the population.

The population of this research is first grade students at MAN 5 Jombang. There are two classes that consist of X IPS I as control class and X IPS II as experimental class. Each of the class consists of 35 students. The researcher chooses this school because of this is one of the activated schools for studying and learning process during the pandemic in Jombang regency.

Because this study is quasi-experimental, the researcher does not randomly assign participants to groups. The researcher takes X IPS 1 and X IPS 2 classes as the sample of this study. In determining to choose experiment and control class the researcher takes based on the suggestion of the teacher because all of the classes had similar average score. The research takes all students from X IPS I class (N= 35) as a controlled class and X IPS 2 class (N= 35) as an experiment class.

To collect the data, the researcher uses instruments in the form of test, so the data of this study was obtained from a test. A test is considered a good instrument to obtain data (Arikunto, 2010). The data of this study is the students' achievement after learning writing descriptive text using *Skype*. The data was derived from the test (pre-test and post-test), students' scores, and students' answer sheet. There are two classes involved for the research,

namely experiment class and control class. Before starting the treatment, the researcher gives pre-test to know the students' competence toward their written skill. To collect the data, the researcher uses the test. The test will do to find out the influence of using *Skype* as media in teaching writing of descriptive text. The researcher applied two tests namely pre-test and post-test for the experiment and control class, both of them will be taken as the data to analyze.

Before the researcher make an observation at the school, the researcher prepares all of instruments, material, media and equipment. In experiment class, the researcher do treatment or learning process uses *Skype* as media to influence student writing skill and at control class do learning process use Facebook as media to influence student writing skill. The last process is post-test in control class and experiment class.

The obtained from the test is used to know how effective learning the descriptive text using the Skype media. It will gain from the students' scores. The two result from both of group will compared by applying SPSS for windows 16.0 to find out the differences score of students' achievement in teaching writing of descriptive text uses *Skype* as media and teaching writing of descriptive text uses without *Skype* as media. As Donald (2010) tells that analysis of covariance (Independent Sample T Test) is a statistical technique used to control for the effect of an extraneous variable known to be correlated with the dependent variable. For example, consider an experiment to study the effects of two methods of teaching reading on reading achievement, the dependent variable. Subjects' reading ability before the experiment would be a variable that would certainly be related to the dependent variable of the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

As previously stated, the researcher conducted the field research at the first class students of MAN 5 Jombang. To find a valid data, the researcher gave test to provide data. This test was given to know the writing skill of the students when the students make communication with foreigner on the *Skype* described in the teaching learning process. And to get the validity of the result, the researcher uses some books as writing test references. The researcher used one of the ways in grading writing scale adapted from (Weigle, 2002). It is the most applicable in our rating system since we would have 1-4 scores. Jacobs has categorized five components in analysis of writing process that are content, organization, Mechanic, language use and vocabulary.

Based on that criteria, the researcher gave the pre-test and post-test then compared the scores both from 35 students of the first class students MAN 5 Jombang and to know the result of the test, the researcher makes the table of the students' score of pre-test (score X), post-test (score Y) and the comparison scores of X and Y. From that data (see appendix) it can be shown that between experimental class and control class there are 35 students have a differences to their writing skills, the result shows that the students' writing skill at control class improves after the treatment .The mean of controlled class pre-test got 59.09 while in post-test got 77.89. The lowest score in pre-test is 45 and the highest score in pre-test is 77. While in post-test, the lowest score is 51 and the highest score are 100. The result of the data showed the improvement of the students' score from the pretest to the posttest. The mean of both tests also showed better result.

Another finding is related to the experimental class before and after the treatment. The mean score of experimental class in pre-test is 58.56 while in post-test is 86.15. The lowest score in pre-test is 40 and the highest score in pre-test is 78. While in post-test, the lowest score is 63 and the highest score are 100. The majority of the students obtained higher score in post-test than pre-test. The data shows that there are differences between the pretest and the posttest scores. The higher scores on posttest imply that there is a significant improvement of the students writing skill after the treatment.

Discussions

In this research, the researcher proposes alternative hypothesis (Ha) There is a statistically significant ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) difference of student writing skill by using *Skype* as Media (experimental group) and without *Skype* as Media (control group). In analyzing the data, the researcher analyzed the hypothesis post-tests of both classes. This step is the main to figure out The Influence of Students' Writing Descriptive Text Using *Skype* at MAN 5 Jombang. The researcher analyzes the data by conducting Independent Sample T Test. To test this hypothesis, each group is given a pretest and posttest related. If this figure is compared with the significance of categorical figure is 0.05, then these numbers look bigger, so it can be ascertained that the variant of the dependent variable is a homogeneous, thus meeting the requirements of Independent Sample T Test. Testing is done by eliminating the effect of pretest of the media. The number of significance for the strategy in teaching writing descriptive text is 0.000 because the value is far below 0.05 then Ha is accepted. Based on data description, the researcher can conclude that *Skype* as instructional media has a

significant influence for students' writing skill in descriptive text. This finding is in line with O'Beidat & Al-Jamal findings (2008), they recommend that the chatting technique should be introduced as a major tool for teaching writing skills. This shows that social media may help students to gain more information and knowledge.

The statement above corresponds with Betaineh (2014), he found that students who worked with *Skype* showed a significant improvement in their writing skills compared to the control group. In another side, *Skype* as sophisticated media has a lot of users where most of them are foreigners. This will make students familiar with English and it is hope that this one can move a side unbeneficial activities such as gaming, playing *instagram* and so on. (Terhune, 2015). Another similar finding is the study by Orjuela (2009) which finds that the help of social chat is significant for students since they will be accustomed to use this feature in a real live. So this will be more challenge for the students.

In line with these findings, it is recommended that the use of via *Skype* as media is beneficial for the development of student skills, not only in writing aspect, but also in other skills as well. Therefore, teachers may try to utilize this media when teaching writing and the other language skills.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the result of the study, it showed that the use of *Skype* towards students writing skill has several influences that can be seen from the result of comparison of pretest and posttest of both experimental and control class. The students' writing skill at control class before and after the treatment showed significant improvement. This implies that the use of *Skype* as media is effective to improve students' writing skill.

After conducting this research, the researchers suggest that teachers may use *Skype* in teaching English. *Skype* is not only for video call but it may facilitate students to find partners in practicing their English. Therefore, it is assumed that by using *Skype* as media may increase the students' motivation in learning English and make them more accustomed in using technology to help them learning better.

For other researchers, it is suggested to conduct more studies regarding the use of *Skype* as instructional media on other learning focus such as speaking, reading, or may be other subjects beside English language.

REFERENCE

Arikunto, S. (2010). Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan dan Praktek. *Jakarta: PT Rineka Cipta*.

Bataineh, A. M. (2014). The effect of text chat assisted with word processors on Saudi English major students' writing accuracy and productivity of authentic texts. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, *9*(9), 32–40. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v9i9.4119

Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2010). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices* (Vol. 10). Pearson Education White Plains, NY.

Courtney, J. (2015). Experience *Skype* to the Max. *The Essential Guide to the World's Leading Internet Communications Platform*.

Donald, A., Jacobs, L. C., Razavieh, A., & Sorensen, C. (2010). Introduction to research in education. *New York: Nelson Education, Ltd*.

Harmer, J. (2007). How to teach English: new edition. *Harlow: Pearson Education Limited*.

Herwiana, S. (2021). Strengths and weaknesses of collaborative writing and peer feedback in an EFL intensive reading and writing coursework. *PIONEER*, *13*(1), 105–121. https://doi.org/DOI:https://doi.org/10.36841/pioneer.v13i1.944

Hussein, N. O., & Elttayef, A. I. (2016). The Impact of Utilizing *Skype* as a Social Tool Network Community on Developing English Major Students' Discourse Competence in the English Language Syllables. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *7*(11), 29–33. http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy-ub.rug.nl/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1099585&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Ma'rifatulloh, S. (2020). Measuring the Impact of Blended Learning in EFL Classroom. *ICIC 2020: Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Islamic Civilization, ICIC 2020, 27th August 2020, Semarang, Indonesia*, 301–308.

Newton, J. M., & Nation, I. S. P. (2020). Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking. In *Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking*. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429203114

O'Beidat, Z. M., & Al-Jamal, D. A. (2008). The Effect of Computer Chatting on Developing Tenth Graders' Reading and Writing Skills. *Journal of Educational & Psychological Sciences*, *09*(04), 11–34. https://doi.org/10.12785/jeps/090412

Orjuela, C. I. B. (2009). *The use of Skype Chat for Improving Writing Skills in an A2 Adult Learners Group*. Universidad de la Sabana.

Terhune, N. M. (2015). *Language learning going global : linking teachers and learners via commercial. September*. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2015.1061020

Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching: Practice and theory*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.

Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing writing*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.

Zuhriyah, M., & Agustina, R. K. (2020). Brain-based learning and high order thinking skills effect on students' writing ability. *Journal of English Educators Society (JEES)*, *5*(2), 193–198. https://doi.org/10.21070/jees.v5i2.778

Zuhriyah, M., & Fajarina, M. (2021). Course review horay and critical thinking skills: the effective teaching model for students' grammar competence in remote EFL classrooms. *Journal on English as a Foreign Language*, *11*(2), 297–317. https://doi.org/10.23971/jefl.v11i2.2974