

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research is to find out what are the challenging aspects in teaching writing descriptive text through online learning in senior high school and how to overcome those challenges. This chapter discusses some aspects dealing with the topic of the research. They are the background of the research, the problem of the research, the objective of the research, the definition of key terms, the significance of the research, the assumption of the research and the scope of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

At the high school level, English is now one of the subjects that is taught as a requirement. Students should be able to use language as a tool for communication in both spoken and written form as one of their learning objectives when studying English. Writing is one of the most crucial abilities that English language learners must master. According to Anh (2019), among the four English skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), writing is commonly known as the most difficult but the least liked skill although it plays a crucial role in language production. Writing difficulty is not just about how we find words and arrange them into a readable reading. There are several things that we can find and make writing be a difficult skill as lack of vocabulary, difficulty understanding

grammar structures, lack of ideas, and others. Therefore, teachers need hard effort to hone students' writing skills and make them can write well.

Nunan (2003) argues that writing is a process which involves physical and mental act to make ideas, express them, and organize them into sentences and paragraphs which will be clear for reader. Writing is important and often used by many people as individuals, such as writing letters, messages, and others. Scott (1990: 69), (in Virdyna, 2016) defines Writing as an interesting activity. It can give students some advantages although there are difficulties in writing, it is still a useful, essential, integral, and enjoyable part of the foreign language lesson.

For the tenth graders of high school, writing is divided into several types, namely descriptive, recounts and narratives. This research will be focus on writing descriptive text. In Indonesia, based on 2013 curriculum, descriptive text is one of writing genres that should be learned by students of tenth grade of senior high school. According to Kurniawati (2017, p. 3), descriptive text is one of the functional texts which is difficult to learn by the students. The word “descriptive” is derived from word describe, which means drawing, illustrating, or picturing particular object in order to visualize the object described (Dirgeyasa, 2016). Descriptive text is a text that describes a place, a person or a thing. The purpose of this text is to describe how a place in detail.

Descriptive text should be consisting of identification and description. The identification is the part of the paragraph which tells the topic and characters that is described, and the description is the part of the paragraph which tells the content of the description of the particular person, place or thing.

According to Jaya, et al. (2008, p. 14), descriptive text has language features consisting of specific nouns, simple present tense, detailed noun phrase to provide information about the subject, some adjectives (describe, number, classify), relating verbs to provide information about the subject, thinking verb or feeling verb to express the author's personal view about a subject and, Action verb. Language features are the characteristics regarding certain types of grammatical rules and certain types of vocabulary (Emilia & Christie, 2013). Similarly, Knapp and Watkins (2005) said that language features are the elements which make one text type different from the others. It means that language features are the attributes that should exist in a text so that readers can tell what type of text they are reading.

Due to responsibility in delivering the material in the classroom, it is an important thing for teachers to know how to write a text ideally so that they can help students comprehend the material. However, students also have some difficulties in writing descriptive text. Students often find it difficult to organize their ideas. In addition, students also make some writing mistakes, such as using grammar. It is difficult 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.

Recently, many countries, including Indonesia have experienced a pandemic phenomenon due to the spread of Covid-19 (BBC, 2020; Verdiana, n.d). According to KEMDIKBUD (2020), teachers and students have been asked to carry out the learning process from home since March 16, 2020. As a result, schools in Indonesia being obliged to study from home. Blended learning, flipped

learning, and online learning is inevitably used by teachers as a way of learning in schools so that the teaching and learning process takes place.

According to Purba (2002), online learning is a form of information technology applied in education in virtual schools. In online learning, all teaching and learning processes that are usually carried out face-to-face in the classroom are switch to do directly, but virtually which means at the same time the teacher teaches in front of a gadget in one place, while students take lessons from another gadget in a different place. The material used can be explained directly by the teacher using existing media such as presenting material using PowerPoint (ppt) during the learning process or the teacher can provide files to students that will be download for free as the materials.

There are several problems faced in online learning, such as teaching materials, learning interactions, and the learning environment (Fortune, Spielman, & Pangelinan, 2011; Roberts & McInnerney, 2007). One of the important aspects that needs to be monitored is the teaching materials. Teachers need to understand whether the teaching materials used are easy to apply online learning so that students can easily understand what the teacher is explaining. Interaction in learning also plays an important role in the teaching and learning process. Must establish a good relationship between students and teachers during class time. Based on this interpretation, it is known that learning interactions are very important to building into the learning process. According to Mufaridah (2021) for some competencies, teachers need more information, guidance, and sufficient training to overcome problems related to online learning. Schools, teachers, and students should force themselves to understand and use online methods. However,

the use of technology is not without problems. Many types of issues hinder the effectiveness of online learning, therefore guidance for using online learning is needed by teachers to make it easier for them to convey material as best as possible.

Findings from the previous research are important to support this research. Fauziah (2021) conducted research with the title teacher problems in conducting online teaching. This final project is a case study at SMPN 1 Batipuh, Tanah Datar District, explaining some of the challenges English teachers face when conducting online learning. 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. The gap with previous research, here 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. There is a novelty in this study, previous research used qualitative research and this research used a mixed method, quantitative qualitative research.

Based on the explanation and problem above, the researcher conducted a questionnaire and interview with the English teachers at Two private schools in Lumajang and Jember, about challenges faced by the teacher in teaching writing

descriptive text through online learning. The researcher interested to conduct the research entitled “Challenging Aspects of Teaching Writing through Online Learning at Senior High School in 2021/2022 Academic Year”.

1.2 Problem of the Research

Based on the background above, the problems that should be answered in this research are:

1. What are the challenges faced by the teachers in teaching writing descriptive text through online learning at senior high school?
2. How do the teachers encounter their challenges in teaching writing descriptive text through online learning?

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the statements of problem above, the objectives of the research are:

1. To know the challenges faced by the teachers in teaching writing descriptive text through online learning at senior high school.
2. To know how the teachers encounter their challenges in teaching writing descriptive text through online learning.

1.4 Definition of Key Terms

In the hope of avoiding misunderstanding, the researcher needs to clarify the key terms as follows:

a. Writing

Writing in this research is the ability of students to utilize the letters of the alphabet and express ideas in writing descriptive text, especially describing a place in detail. There are several elements in writing skills that students need to understand such as clarity in the complete description of the object observed, organization of the content of main ideas, organization of content writing paragraphs, grammar, spelling, and writing.

b. Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a text that describes a place, person, or thing. The purpose of this text is to describe how a place in detail. There are two generic structures in it, namely introduction and description. Usually, we use simple present tense and adjective clauses when writing descriptive text.

c. Online Learning

Online learning is a learning activity carried out by teachers and students without face to face in the classroom, precisely through gadgets (computers, laptops, and mobile phones) owned by the teacher and each student in their respective places. Virtually means that the teacher teaches in front of the gadget in one place, while the students take lessons from other gadgets in a different place. The teaching and learning process is carried out through E-learning and Google meet as the media in the online learning.

1.5 Significance of the Research

1. Theoretical Significance

The results of this research to investigate about the challenges faced by English teachers in teaching writing descriptive text through online learning and to know how the teachers encounter the challenges.

2. Practical Significance

- a. For the English teachers, it is hoped that the findings of this research would provide additional insights and help them manage challenges that arise in the classroom.
- b. For the researchers, it is hoped that the results of this research can be additional knowledge and can be a provision to teach English in the future.

1.6 Assumption of the Research

In this case, the researcher states this research assumes that there are many challenges faced by English teachers in teaching writing descriptive text through online learning and there are also various ways to overcome those difficulties.

1.7 Scope of the Research

This research conducted at two senior high schools in Lumajang and Jember in the academic year 2021/2022, which selected tenth grade English teachers as the object of the research in analyzing the teacher difficulties in teaching writing descriptive text through online learning.