Pre-Service Teacher's Experience in Teaching Descriptive Writing through Asyncrhonous Class During Covid-19

Handhini Dewi Mustikah
Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang

ABSTRACT
A study of pre-service English teacher's experience in teaching writing through online is still under explored. With the lack of knowledge and experience in teaching learning, a pre-service English teacher tried to improve the pedagogical skill through the teaching and training program. Unfortunately, a pre-service English teacher could only conduct teaching learning through asynchronous. Thus, this study aims at exploring the experience of a pre-service English teacher in teaching descriptive writing asynchronously during Covid-19 pandemic. The study was a descriptive case study where the phenomena or problem occurred to a pre-service teacher during teaching descriptive writing in teaching and training program. The participant in this study is one student college majoring English Education from Karawang. The data were collected by conducting interview. The result consisted of three themes: (1) Problems in teaching writing via asynchronous learning environment; (2) Tools in online teaching writing; (3) Pre-service English teacher's goals in teaching writing. The implications for this study are the teachers shouldn't teach only through asynchronous, but combine it with synchronous in order teaching learning process be more effective, for the students shouldn't ignore the teacher when they got writing feedback. For the future research it will be more interesting if the participant is more than one participant. For collecting the data can use another method, not only interview.
Keywords: Asynchronous class, Pre-service teacher, Descriptive writing.

INTRODUCTION

Corona Virus disease 2019 also known as Covid-19 pandemic has been tremendously impacted to all over sector of life, including education field. Thus, teaching and learning activity have to be transformed into online learning. Furthermore, the Minister of Education and Culture requires online learning considered to be implemented in Indonesia education system. Feldman and Zucker (2002) stated that teaching-learning process with online method has been brought new insight toward the online education, i.e. education online was unable to be conducted dynamically. Online learning allows a closure school to be proceeding learning process anytime and anywhere. Therefore, online learning maintains teachers and students to communicate and interact each other without deprive the essence of learning environment.

Online learning is divided into two types of learning activity, namely synchronous and asynchronous. Ge (2012) mentioned that both asynchronous and synchronous give advantageous in online learning if teachers can integrate it properly into learning design. The obvious advantage of asynchronous is teacher and students are able to conduct teaching learning without any constraint of time and place. Also the teacher can use the variety of tools in creating material in order to make interesting and enjoyable content. While the synchronous advantage are students feel like they are able to communicate, interact with their teacher and peers. Moreover, in synchronous, the students are able to discuss about the complex issues and immediately get a feedback from the teachers. However, in practice of distance education, many teachers are not able to conduct both types of online learning because of several problems occurred coming from students. Students' economic background, internet accessibility and easily be bored in synchronous learning are still being main problem in conducting online learning. Hence, the teachers only can teach students asynchronously for a moment.

Online learning is involving both face-to-face method and distance education method, thereby online learning can be conducted as synchronous and asynchronous in teaching learning process through email, newsgroups and conferencing tools, such as chat groups. Determination of online learning tools need to create two ways communication between the teacher and the students effectively. It is also supported the teachers in students' assesment through internet. The problems faced by students, teachers and institutions in asynchronous learning environment. Students are not able to join asynchronous learning is due to their economic backgrounds, not all of them facilitate by their parents to have mobile phone and buy data package to access the material (Wargadinata, et al. 2020, p.) Even though they have mobile phone, it doesn't mean relieve their obstacles in asynchronous learning. The accessibility and availability of internet is frequently occurred. Lack of skill in using technology still main problem for both teachers and students in using technology. To keep asynchronous learning environment, it is required much cost to several equipment such as the computer, internet network, software, audio/visual for institutions.

Asynchronous learning is a general term used to describe learning, instruction, and forms of education that can be conducted in anywhere and anytime. In asynchronous, teacher and students do not have limitation such time and place when delivering the course, and need several aid tool in supporting learning process (Mayadas, 1997). Asynchronous approach can be used to ease learning in continuing education, distance education, and traditional classroom, also it can blend self-study with asynchronous interaction in order to foster learning. This approach can also integrate the technology and students to facilitate them in communication and interaction and referred as asynchronous learning network. Online media/tools that facilitate teachers to teach via asynchronous learning environment, it can be from various online source, but a pre-service English teacher frequently chose friendly media, such as Google Classroom, Youtube, and animated-video maker. Google Classroom is aimed at simplify creating, distributing, and grading assignment (Yates, 2017). Moghavvemi, Sulaiman, Jaafar, Kasem (2018) proved that Youtube was effective as one of learning tools for teaching learning that helped students to discover new information and learn, moreover Youtube also elucidated the students in answering the problems or questions related to course. Animated-video could enhanced students' learning interest, feeling and attention because it assisted by images, graphics, sound and animation content (Hamidiyah, Warsono, Anggraini, Jatmika, 2020).

In this study a pre-service English teacher taught descriptive writing for junior high school students. The a pre-service English teacher wanted the students were able to describe something coherently. In order the students created the text coherently; a pre-service English teacher followed the approaches that apply in Indonesia curriculum. Indonesia 2013 curriculum in teaching writing is following genre-based approach, which this approach consisted of four stages: (1) Building knowledge of the field, (2) Modeling/ Scaffolding, (3) Join construction, (4) Independent construction. A pre-service English teacher's experience in teaching writing during distance education said that she followed all of the stages except join construction

stage. It was impossible to be implemented for a pre-service English teacher and asked the students to construct the text in group discussion, because she only taught writing through asynchronous.

Essentially, Genre-based approach given the advantages for a pre-service English teacher if could conduct it appropriately. Hutabarat & Gunawan , 2020; Montero-Arévalo 2017 showed the proofs as following. Firstly, (Hutabarat & Gunawan, 2020 p. 106). Another positive proof of genre-based approach stated by Montero-Arévalo (2017) that the students were able to understand the text properly, expand their idea in writing which they created more detail of the story, implement the writing structure according to the teacher's instruction.

There are previous researches about teaching writing through online have been discovered to examine this study. Firsly, Aliyev & Ismayilova (2017) studied the undergraduate students by integrating online technology i.e. English Movies into teaching English writing in order to facilitate teacher to teach writing successfully and the result showed that undergraduate students' English skills have been improved not only their writing, but also vocabulary, listening, and speaking. In line with Aliyev & Ismayilova (2017), Ardiasih, Emzir & Rasyid (2019) analyzed the effectiveness of online collaborative writing technique (OCWT) used Wiki integrated into Moodle for undergraduate students. Which this previous study disclosed that the students were enthusiastic, improved their argumentative essay skill and its implication. The opposite result derived from Sarikaya (2021) which uncovered the experience by primary school teachers' during teaching writing by using instructional technologies during Covid-19 pandemic, such as students were lack of motivation and focus on writing task, easily be bored towards learning process, and inadequate students' parent support. The contradiction result between Aliyev & Ismayilova (2017); Aliyev & Ismayilova (2017) and Sarikaya because of the circumstance. Teaching English, especially writing skill through online, is regarded as a challenging task for teachers, especially in Covid-19 pandemic. Which the teachers need a lot of preparation such as design online lesson plan, choose the appropriate online media, create a pleasant content, and deliver the material properly through online class (Asilestari, 2018). Even though teachers have a lot of knowledge and experience in teaching. The previous research above have mentioned about the experience of teacher in teaching writing through online, but there is still little study toward pre-service teachers, it because pre-service teacher has lack of knowledge and experience. To fill this gap, the author tried to analyze a pre-service teacher' experience in teaching descriptive writing asynchronously during Covid-19 pandemic. The present study is looked for the pre-service English teacher's experience in teaching descriptive writing through asynchronous learning environment during COVID-19 pandemic.

METHOD

In this study, the author used descriptive case study as the research method. Descriptive case study is applied in this research by the aim to gain in-depth description and analysis of individual, institution, or educational context comprehensively (Yin, 2002). This study aimed to deeply analyze the experience of a pre-service English teacher in teaching descriptive writing through asynchronous environment learning during covid-19 pandemic.

The participant was one student college in Karawang who had experience in pre-service professional training program in one of junior high school in Karawang. The reason why the author chosen a pre-service English teacher because the phenomena or problem occur when the participant taught English for junior high school during pre-service professional training program from campus in Covid-19 pandemic. At that time, the participant only had an opportunity to teach English writing via asynchronous learning environment. It was the school's order and the participant should obey it. The order was held due to students' economic background and internet accessibility. In addition, the researcher was one school with the participant, which only the author and the participant who taught in that school during professional training program.

Before collecting the data, the researcher asked the permission to the participant to conduct the interview by offline or online method, and the participant was able to conduct only by online method. Initially, the author has planned to interview via Zoom, sadly the interview could be done through WhatsApp chatting due to poor signal and Covid-19 pandemic. The participant answered every single questions of interview by recording the participant's voice in WhatsApp. To make the interview running well, the author used Bahasa Indonesia to the participant in order that the participant flexibly delivered the opinion during the interview session. For the duration of interview, it conducted about 15 minutes. After recording, the author transcribed the spoken text into the written text.

The researcher collected the data through interview. Interview is helpful for author in collecting data in a qualitative research, because it is obtained people's experience, beliefs, perceptions, and motivation in a depth data (Richards & Morse, 2007). Therefore, if the author conduct interview appropriately, it is possible to elicit the broadly and accurate data rather than with the questionnaire. The type of interview for this research is semi-structured interview. Reasoning used semi-structured interview is because the author need to give an adequate flexibility to the respondent and let the respondent answer based on an settled question of interview (Richards & Morse, 2007).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the author presented about finding and discussion toward pre-service English teacher's experience during teaching descriptive writing asynchronously. The theme gained after analyzed the data by using Braun & Clark (2006) method. As a result several finalized themes were identified: (1) Problems in teaching writing through asynchronous learning environment; (2) Media in online teaching writing; (3) Pre-service English teacher's goals in teaching writing.

Theme 1: Problems in teaching writing via asynchronous learning environment

A pre-service English teacher expressed her experience in teaching writing asynchronously for the first time. Several problems faced by a pre-service English teacher during teaching learning process through online, such as limitation of tools and signal, problem in writing process, students were lack of motivation, which it affected online writing process. First problem indicated that if all the students were from wealthy family, it probably a pre-service English teacher wouldn't limited the use tools in teaching online writing. These three interpretations from a pre-service English teacher were pointed below:

A pre-service English teacher's vignette 1

"Not all my students are from wealthy family, so I considered not to utilize face-to-face media such as Zoom, or Google Meet"

A pre-service English teacher's vignette 2

"It's just in my imagination, I wasn't implemented the method or instructional method in teaching descriptive writing, because of the limitation of media, so I just allowed to used what is it… used the offline media eh… I mean online media but undirectly like Zoom or Google Meet".

A pre-service English teacher's vignette 3

"Then, about signal issue, yeah, if I taught directly it would be good, I might used a lot of learning strategy"

The limitation of tools and signal for teaching online writing affected the effectiveness of distance education. As we know that not all students came from a wealthy family, which they had to struggle during online learning. This struggle not only befallen to students, but also the teachers. Therefore, the teachers was trying their best to remain the teaching learning process even though they had to limit the use of online instructional tools. It was one of the reason why a pre-service English teacher only conducted the teaching learning process through asynchronous.

The second problem was difficult in choosing learning activity due to only conducted the teaching learning process through asynchronous. The first problem linked to the second p

roblem, which the limitation of online instructional tools and signal caused a pre-service English teacher faced a problem in writing process. An honest comment of a pre-service English teacher toward the problem:

A pre-service English teacher's vignette 4

"Because I taught through online and asynchronous, it was hard enough to choose the activity in descriptive learning, if I teach in classroom, I might divide them into some groups, so they can discuss, make one-short paragraph about descriptive text, they discuss it and after that they can share with the other groups"

A pre-service English teacher's vignette 5

"No, I never received draft eh… about how they writing are, their steps in writing, I just received the final result, because the limitation of time and media, where I just provided one Google Form for them to send the result of their writing and I realized my weakness, that was I didn't provide what is it… column or option for them to send their writing step by step, it was supposed not to just the final result so I didn't know how they write descriptive text. whether they do it from zero, I mean the idea was come from themselves, selecting the vocabulary, or whether they made it from Indonesia then translated it into English or they might just searched it from Google and they just changed the name in the text with their family members' name, something like that"

A strong point of view from a pre-service English teacher above showed how complicated it during teaching writing through asynchronous with the limitation of online writing tools was. The statement above was reasonable because as a pre-service English teacher, the participant still lack of knowledge and experience in teaching. Moreover, if a pre-service English teacher conducted teaching writing in classroom, might she could improve the learning activity to be more enjoyable and follow every steps of writing process. During writing process, a pre-service couldn't follow the stages of writing based on genre-based approach effectively.

The last problem that faced by a pre-service English teacher was students' motivation. The pandemic situation made the students be more indolent and lesser motivation in studying through online.

A pre-service vignette 6

"I didn't know about either my students really motivated to learn the lesson or not. So, they should have an encouragement to seriously learn the lesson that I have taught"

A pre-service felt that the students were lack of motivation because during teaching through online, a pre-service teacher never interacted and communicated with the students, therefore a pre-service teacher was difficult to build students' motivation during teaching learning process.

Theme 2: Media in online teaching writing

One of a pre-service English teacher's problems during teaching online writing was the limitation of tools, nevertheless she tried to find suitable tools in teaching writing asynchronously, such as the use of mobile application: Youtube, Google Classroom, and Animaker. These tools was utilized as a method to solve the problem in teaching writing asynchronously.

A pre-service vignette 7

"When I used Google Classrom they had flexible time, then the reason why I used Youtube, because Youtube was one of media that facilitated by government, which they gave free quota data and it was accessible to open Youtube, it meant they could open Youtube freely as long as they have quota data from government. The reason in utilizing or delivering the course through Animaker that I have uploaded to the Youtube, because in my opinion, if junior high school students only see a lot of text, like Power Point, it would be bored, I'm sure that they were not interested to read it. If I used animated-video from Animaker, they will more interest, because there is animation that what is it… will attach what it is… like catch their interesting, something like that"

A pre-service English teacher explained why chosen mobile application: Youtube, Google Classroom, and Animaker in facilitating her in teaching writing. Firstly, Google Classroom was one of application that included in government program, which the government gave a lot of quota data in order the students easily accessed the application and the teachers could deliver the material through Google Classroom. Secondly, the use of animated-video from

Animaker was regarded as a friendly application for a pre-service teacher to create material into video. Lastly, after a pre-service teacher created the material into video, then uploading on Youtube. The video link can be attached on Google Classroom. The use of Youtube also could enlighten a pre-service teacher in knowing the number of views. It meant that if the number got a few of viewers, a pre-service teacher asked to the students to learn the material through video.

Theme 3: Pre-service English teacher's goals that wanted to achieve during teaching writing.

The reason why a pre-service teacher chosen descriptive writing was because she wanted to make the students have a capability in describing something, especially family member. Additionally, a pre-service teacher emphasized that teaching writing was not only about grammar and structure, but how the students express their own idea into writing and create the text by themselves.

A pre-service vignette 8

"In teaching context, I want to achieve in teaching writing, the first was they were able to make the text with their own words, not from copy-paste, etc. So they could implement it in their life. In real life, they can do what is it… describe something if there someone who ask eh… "How is your family?" They immediately describe or explain toward something after they learned descriptive"

A pre-service vignette 9

"Because they are still in junior high school grade, so my focus in teaching writing wasn't about the structure yet, grammatical structure, I was more eh… ah... or focused on how they write the paragraph. I emphasized about how they show or their vocabulary ability and creative idea in transferring their idea into the writing, and then I also want to know how creative they are in describing their family condition, something like that"

Because the students are still in junior high school, hence a pre-service teacher was not focus on both structure and grammar.

Based on the description above, the result shows the following explanation:

Problems in teaching writing via asynchronous learning environment

Based on the findings of the data, the author found out that a pre-service English teacher faced several problems: limitation of tools and availability of internet, problem in writing process, and students were lack of motivation. These problems forced a pre-service English teacher had to conduct teaching learning through asynchronous learning environment. With the limitation of tools, it affected to a pre-service English teacher's method in teaching writing through online. A pre-service English teacher was difficult to create and deliver a suitable material for the students. The limitation of tools and availability of internet also impacted the communication and interaction between a pre-service English teacher and students. If they were used video-conferencing application in teaching learning process, such as Zoom or Google Meet (G-Meet). Fatani (2020) notable that Video conferencing usage has positive impacts toward distance education: increased students' satisfaction, cognitive, and social interaction. If a pre-service English teacher used those application, it wouldn't be difficulty for a pre-service English teacher in teaching writing, delivering the material, and controlling students' writing process. Moreover, a pre-service English teacher might wouldn't do just the three stages of genre-based approach, but involved the join construction stage, where a pre-service English teacher divided the students into several groups and asked them to discuss and create the text and share it with their classmates.

The way to analyze the progress of students' writing was from feedback. A pre-service English teacher admitted that she was regret because not equipped the feedback column on Google Classroom. Essentially, Google has an application that can facilitate teacher in teaching writing that is Google Docs. Google Docs has several features enable students to create, edit and collaborate with others. These features supported students to more effectively enhance their writing skill by creating, sharing, and peer-editing (Ebadi & Rahimi,

2017). A pre-service English teacher never received the draft of students' writing process, instead just received the final result of student's writing process without knowing the originality the text they made, whether from their own words or copy-paste from Google. In addition, students have lack of motivation. The students were not pushing themselves in learning, it might they never interacted and communicated with their classmates and the teacher.

Online Tools in teaching writing through asynchronous

Even though a pre-service English teacher has the limitation of tools, but she tried to find the appropriate tools in teaching writing through asynchronous learning environment. The following tools were an order from a pre-service English teacher's guide counselor: Google Classroom, Youtube and animated-video maker (Animaker). Google Classroom is one of most-used education application in Indonesia, because it's a friendly application to be used. Youtube was one of application that given free quota data from government thus Youtube can be used in supporting the students to learn any time. Moghavvemi, Sulaiman, Jaafar, Kasem (2018) proved that Youtube was effective as one of learning tools for teaching learning that helped students to discover new information and learn, moreover Youtube also elucidated the students in answering the problems or questions related to course. Animaker is an animated-video maker application. It was very easy for a pre-service English teacher in creating video material. In addition, delivering material through animation video was attracted students' interesting learning process. It assisted by images, graphics, sound and animation content (Hamidiyah, Warsono, Anggraini, Jatmika, 2020). The use of animation video was a method to deduct of a monotonous teaching process during distance education, which it was helpul.

Pre-service English teacher's goals that want to achieve during teaching writing. There was reason why a pre-service English teacher taught descriptive writing: in order students has an ability in describing something. Furthermore, a pre-service English teacher has goals that wanted to be achieved in teaching descriptive writing comprised increasing students' vocabulary, originality of writing. A pre-service English teacher used genre-based approach in teaching writing in order her teaching constructed effectively. Genre-based approach was beneficial in teaching writing, which the students experienced the improvement of vocabulary and grammar ability, able to write the focus genre, and the development of the teacher's teaching competency (Hutabarat & Gunawan, 2020 p. 106). Another positive proof of genre-based approach stated by Montero-Arévalo (2017) that the students were able to understand the text properly, expand their idea in writing which they created more detail of the story, implement the writing structure according to the teacher's instruction. Unfortunately, a pre-service English teacher had a shortage of time in teaching writing, consequently a pre-service English teacher was able to achieve all her goals during teaching writing through asynchronous learning environment.

CONCLUSIONS

The experience of pre-service English teacher in teaching descriptive writing via async hronous learning environment as following: (1) Problems in teaching writing via asynchrono us learning environment, (2) Tools in online teaching writing, (3) Pre-service English teacher's goals in teaching writing. The researcher proposes several implication for teachers, student s, and other researchers as following: (1) The teachers should be reflected toward the teachin g learning process that only conducted via asynchronous learning environment for students. Each student has different cognitive level, which not all students understand to the course. T he teachers can't just rely on asynchronous learning, but also should combine it with synchro nous learning, so that teacher can maintain the communication and control students' writing process. In addition, selecting more appropriate media in facilitating teacher to teach throug h online should be more considered, because junior high school students tend to be bored in

online learning process. (2) The students should not ignore the teachers' feedback for their w riting improvement. Although they have lack of motivation in online learning process, the be st way to understand the topic of material is to keep asking the teacher through Google Class room whenever they don't understand it.

REFERENCES

Aliyev, A. (2017). Improving English writing skills of non-native undergraduate learners wit h the help of movies supported by online technologies. *Journal of Education in Black S ea Region*, *2*(2).

Alkhataba, E. H. A., Abdul-Hamid, S., & Ibrahim, B. (2018). Technology-supported online wr iting: an overview of six major web 2.0 tools for collaborative-online writing. *Arab W orld English Journal (AWEJ) Volume*, *9*.

Ardiasih, L. S., & Rasyid, Y. (2019). Online collaborative writing technique using Wiki: how e ffective is it to enhance learners' essay writing?. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, *16*(2), 531.

Asilestari, Putri. 2018. Improving Students' Writing Ability To Write Narrative Text Through Write Pair Share At X Grade Of Sman 2 Kuok. Retrieved on https://jele.or.id/index.php/jele/article/view/35

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in p sychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Donald Yates. (2017). *Google Classroom Easiest Teacher's Guide to Master Google Classroom.* Cop yright 2017 by Donald Yates - All rights reserved.

Feldman, R., & Zucker, D. (2002). Teaching and Learning Online-Communication, Communi ty, and Assessment. *University of Massachusetts*.

Ge, Z. G. (2012). Cyber asynchronous versus blended cyber approach in distance English lear ning. *Educational Technology & Society*, *15*(2), 286-297.

Hamidiyah, H., Warsono, A. I. A., & Jatmika, S. (2021). The Implementation of Whiteboard A nimation Video Based on Local Wisdom in Work and Energy Concept to Improve S enior High Schools Students' Learning Interest. In *6th International Seminar on Science Education (ISSE 2020)* (pp. 552-556). Atlantis Press.

Hutabarat, D. S. A., & Gunawan, W. (2021). GBA in Teaching Writing to Scaffold Students in Online Learning. In *Thirteenth Conference on Applied Linguistics (CONAPLIN 2020)* (p p. 102-106). Atlantis Press.

Mayadas, F. (1997). Asynchronous learning networks: A Sloan Foundation perspective. *Journ al of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, *1*(1), 1-16.

Moghavvemi, S., Sulaiman, A., Jaafar, N. I., & Kasem, N. (2018). Social media as a compleme ntary learning tool for teaching and learning: The case of youtube. *The International J ournal of Management Education*, *16*(1), 37-42.

Montero-Arévalo, S. J. (2019). Effects Of Genre Based Approach (GBA) In EFL Reading Com prehension And Writing. *GIST–Education and Learning Research Journal*, (19), 84-100.

Richards, L., & Morse, J. (2007). *Readme first for a user's guide to qualitative methods* (2nd ed.). T housand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Sarikaya, I. (2021). Teaching writing in emergency distance education: the case of primary sc hool teachers: Teaching writing in emergency distance education. *International Journ al of Curriculum and Instruction*, *13*(2), 1923-1945.

Selvarasu, E., Thomas, A., Sundareswaran, I., Rahaman, A., Farzana, S., & Pareli, M. K. (2021) . Teaching writing using online tools: an experimental study at the University of Tec hnology and Applied Sciences. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Trans lation*, *4*(6), 196-201.

Suwaed, H. H. (2011). *Teachers' cognition and classroom teaching practice: an investigation of teach ing English writing at the university level in Libya* (Doctoral dissertation, University of

Glasgow).

Wargadinata, W., Maimunah, I., Eva, D., & Rofiq, Z. (2020). Student's responses on learning in the early COVID-19 pandemic. *Tadris: Journal of Education and Teacher Training*, *5*(1), 141-153.

Yin, Robert K. (2002). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications.