

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the research background of the study, research questions, research objectives, and research significances.

1.1. Research Background

The Covid-19 outbreak led to the issuance of a minister of education's circular number 4 of 2020 concerning the implementation of online learning to prevent the spread of Covid-19 virus (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2020). Online learning utilizes online content that can be accessed on the internet, including YouTube videos, PowerPoint, e-book, audio, etc. (Jeffrey, Milne, Suddaby, & Higgins, 2014). The teachers also teach the students via online conferencing systems or email (Cheawjindakarn, Suwannathachote, & Theeraroungchaisri, 2012). Online learning is different from face-to-face learning, where face-to-face learning provides a human psychological sense toward the learning process (Lalima & Dangwal, 2017) and social interactions (Lalima & Dangwal, 2017) needed by students to construct their knowledge in learning (Hurst, Wallace, & Nixon, 2013). Students also find it easier to understand a concept if the teacher explains it directly.

However, online learning does not provide direct interaction in the learning experience. Therefore, online learning must continue to be improved. It should not be a barrier for students to have easy to understand and fun learning even with limited direct interaction. The students must be facilitated to carry out online learning independently at home easily and comfortably. Hence,

improvement in every aspect should be done to make online learning effective, especially in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL).

Writing is one of the four skills taught in EFL. Writing skills are crucial for communicating knowledge, specifically in educational settings (Kamariah, Husain, Atmowardoyo, & Salija, 2018). It gives students more “thinking time” and more opportunity to process language (Harmer, 2007). Besides, writing requires complex critical skills (Harris & Graham, 2016), including cognitive and affective skills (Rijlaarsdam, Bergh, & Couzijn, 2005). Developing writing skills requires writing practices and lessons since this complex skill cannot naturally develop (Graham, 2019). Therefore, it is important to teach writing at school even in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has led to online learning.

This sudden change from face-to-face learning to online learning resulted in a lack of student, teacher, and school readiness. However, not all teachers are ready with online learning, especially for those who are not familiar with online learning. Hence, the emergence of problems in the early implementation of online learning, including English subjects, is inevitable.

A preliminary interview was done with one of the English teachers of 8th grade in SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara. SMP Dharma Nusantara is a private national school in Denpasar that employs Curriculum 2013 to guide teaching-learning activities. The interview with the teacher revealed that the majority of students already learnt English in Elementary school. They already had background knowledge about vocabularies, such as numbers, things, animals, and food in English. However, the students still had difficulties in

forming a sentence. Problems found in students' writing were generally related to grammatical errors, misspelling, wrong diction, or vocabulary choice. Online learning at school was carried out using WhatsApp and Google Classroom. The school had tried to do online learning with video conferencing using Zoom, but student learning facilities at home made it impossible to do so, where not all students had personal cellphones. Many of them used their parents' cellphones and also shared cellphones with their siblings who were also studying online from home. So that, students had to take turns using the cellphone.

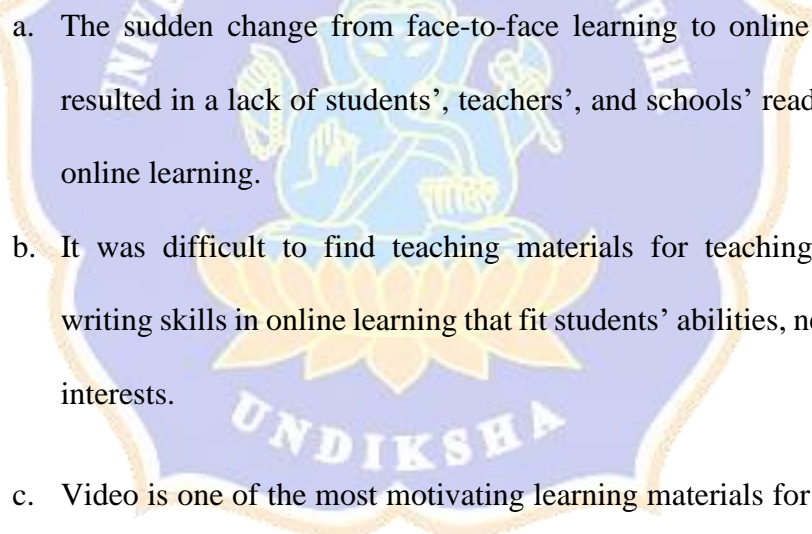
The interview also showed that the teacher had difficulties in teaching writing through online learning. The problem was mainly caused by a lack of teaching materials that suit the curriculum's expectations, the context of distance learning, and the language ability or levels of students. The teacher believed that teaching writing could be more effective in online learning by using video. However, it was difficult to find videos that fit students' abilities and needs and follow the theory of a good instructional video. As a result, the teacher decided to explain the material by using voice notes and attempted to adjust his/her explanation to the level of the students' ability to absorb the learning material. Sometimes, the teacher also used PowerPoint to deliver the learning materials.

Considering that the online teaching of writing in EFL had very limited support, there must be an effort to assist teachers to be ready to teach online classes that are interesting and easy for students to follow. Since one of the factors that influence teaching writing is the readiness of the teachers' preparation and beliefs about writing (Graham, 2019), it is important to develop

teaching material for online learning, especially in writing skills, to equip the teacher with good learning materials which meet the student need and suit the level of students' language skills. Accordingly, this study developed teaching material for teaching writing skills via online learning in SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara in the academic year 2020/2021.

1.2 Problem Identification

English writing skills should be taught in junior high schools, even in online learning. However, there were some problems found in teaching English writing skills through online learning at the eighth grade in SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara. The problems are elaborated below:

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- a. The sudden change from face-to-face learning to online learning resulted in a lack of students', teachers', and schools' readiness for online learning.
 - b. It was difficult to find teaching materials for teaching English writing skills in online learning that fit students' abilities, needs, and interests.
 - c. Video is one of the most motivating learning materials for teaching EFL in general, or writing in particular.
 - d. Videos as learning materials that follow the theory of a good instructional video need to be developed.

1.3 The Limitation of the Problem

This research was limited to the eighth-grade students of SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara in the academic year 2020/2021. The research focused on

developing teaching materials in the form of instructional videos for teaching English writing skills in online learning.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions of this study were formulated as follows:

1. How to develop the teaching material for teaching writing through online learning for the eighth-grade students at SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara in the academic year 2020/2021 in order to produce the materials as needed?
2. How is the quality of the teaching material for teaching writing through online learning for the eighth-grade students at SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara in the academic year 2020/2021?

1.5 Research Objectives

In accordance with the research questions, the purposes of the study are:

1. to develop the teaching material for teaching writing through online learning for the eighth-grade students at SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara in the academic year 2020/2021
2. to identify the quality of the teaching material for teaching writing through online learning for the eighth-grade students at SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara in the academic year 2020/2021.

1.6 The Expected Specification of the Product

The expected specifications of the product are:

1. The teaching materials can be used to teach English writing skills in an online learning environment for the eighth-grade students at SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara.

2. The teaching materials can meet the student's needs and interests.
3. The teaching materials are in the form of instructional videos that follow a good instructional video theory.

1.7 The Urgency of the Study

Learning material is essential for learning. The learning material must be in accordance with the student's needs and abilities. However, learning materials in online learning were still unavailable, especially for teaching English writing skills in the eighth grade of SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara. Therefore, it was very urgent to develop the teaching materials for teaching English writing skills in online learning. These teaching materials were expected to meet the students' needs and achieve the learning goals.

1.8 Assumption and the Limitation of the Development

The limitations of the development are presented as follows:

1. The product is developed based on the need and characteristics of the eighth-grade students in SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara, so the product is only for the eighth-grade students in SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara.
2. This development research only assesses the quality of the product being developed, not to assess the effectiveness.

1.9 Definition of Key Terms

This part presents the definition of key terms. The definition of the key terms is explained both conceptually and operationally.

1.9.1 Conceptual Definition

1.9.1.1 Online learning

Online learning is learning supported by the internet, where the internet provides the learning material, as well as the access for the interaction of teachers and students (Bakia, Shear, Toyama, & Lasseter, 2012)

1.9.1.2 Instructional Videos

Instructional video is a video lesson used to assist people to learn the material (Fiorella & Mayer, 2018). It can be in various formats, production styles, and sources (Norman, 2017).

1.9.1.3 Teaching Writing

Writing is one of the critical skills (Harris & Graham, 2016) that requires cognitive and affective skills (Rijlaarsdam, Bergh, & Couzijn, 2005). Teaching students to write is more than teaching the students the way how to write. It also provides the students the writing experiences by giving various writing assignments to develop confidence and the quality of the writing (Shadiow, 1981).

1.9.2 Operational Definition

1.9.2.1 Online learning

Online learning is learning that uses internet with WhatsApp and Google Classroom as learning platforms, that is carried out in the eighth grade of SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara.

1.9.2.2 Instructional Videos

Instructional video is a video that contains information about the topics being learnt in English subject for the eighth grade of SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara.

1.9.2.3 Teaching writing

Teaching writing refers to a process to teach the students how to write and to provide the writing experiences to the students related to the topics being learnt in English subject on the eighth grade of SMP Pelangi Dharma Nusantara.

