

Learning to Write During the Covid-19 Pandemic at SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the education setting across the world. The Indonesian government decided to close all educational institutions as an effort to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Many schools also decided to change their learning strategy from face-to-face to online learning. Online learning in learning to write is felt to be very ineffective. To overcome this problem, teachers are required to be more creative in delivering material to students. In order for students to easily understand the learning material, the teacher must take advantage of learning media. Based on these thoughts, this article discusses learning materials and media during the Covid-19 pandemic at SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya. The purpose of this qualitative research is to describe (1) writing learning materials and (2) writing learning media at SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya during the Covid-19 pandemic. Data from this study was collected using documentation, questionnaires, and interviews. Results showed that the learning material for online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic was based on the Emergency Curriculum. The Emergency Curriculum is a simplification of the National Curriculum (2013) by streamlining learning materials up to 50%. The learning media used by SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya teachers including series pictures, poetry reading videos, story videos, Vicon, Google Meet, Sway, Google form, flat shapes, and color discs.

Keywords: learning to write; learning material; learning media; the Covid-19 pandemic

INTRODUCTION

Learning language skills in elementary schools includes expressive and receptive language skills which include listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. These four abilities are based on the ability to think (Farris, 1993). In implementing classroom learning, these language skills are integrated into one unit. However, for the sake of developing students' language skills, each language ability can be appointed as the focus of learning. To develop students' writing skills, learning can be concentrated on developing writing skills. Writing is the focus of learning.

Writing is a thought process (Murray, 1993) because writing activities requires thinking activities. When someone wants to write, someone uses his mind so that he can produce writing. Ellis et al. (1989) also states that thinking skills are the basic skills needed in writing skills. Writing activities provide an opportunity for someone to find out their thinking skills (Combs, 1996). Vygotsky (in Dworetzky, 1990) states that language skills are closely related to thinking skills. In line with this opinion, Cox (1999) argues that writing is a way to know and discover what someone knows which is recorded in his mind.

Writing activities are also a process (Akhadiah et al., 1998) or a problem solving process (Ellis et al., 1989). In this process, there are stages of activities carried out to produce good writing. In simple terms, the stages a writer goes through are the pre-writing stage, the writing stage, and the revision stage (Akhadiah et al., 1998). At the pre-writing stage, a writer tries to come up with ideas or ideas he will write about. This activity basically reopens the experiences stored in memory. With these ideas and the ability to generate them, a writer will start writing activities. The second process is to write down the idea or ideas on paper using the symbol of the sound of the written language. It is at this time that a writer is required to have the courage to start writing down his ideas and keep on writing them down. The next process is to revise the writing. Revisions were made so that the writing was perfect and easily understood by others.

In connection with this opinion, Vacca et al. (year) (in Suparti, 2003) suggests that writing is an activity of compiling, a process of finding, and a way to understand and be understood. Writing is an activity using pencil / pen and paper to symbolically express ideas so that their representations can reflect the meaning and content to be communicated to others. In other words, writing is an activity of accumulating the whole experience which is reflected in the sound of written language. This means that the results of individual activities can be known and understood by others if they are written in the form of written language. Likewise, the writer's experience and appreciation can be followed properly through writing.

In line with this opinion, Syafi'ie (1988) states that writing is basically an activity of pouring ideas, opinions, feelings, desires, wishes, and information into writing and then sending them to others. Widyamartaya (1992) uses the term compose as a substitute for the word "writing". He calls writing a complex activity and understands it as a whole series of activities for someone to express ideas and convey them through written language to readers to be understood exactly as intended by the author. Writing activities within the above limits are characterized by the presence of someone's ideas, in writing, the presence of readers, and the reader's understanding.

At the elementary school level, writing is defined as an activity to re-express students' experiences on paper using symbols of written language (Dixon & Nessel, 1983). Writing at this level, apart from emphasizing the manifestation of experience in an essay, also emphasizes writing mechanics (letter forms, writing words, sentences, and paragraphs). In connection with this study, it is concluded that writing is an activity to re-express experiences in the form of ideas, ideas, feelings, and thoughts into the handwriting system so that their experiences can be known and understood by others.

There are several principles of learning to write that can be guided by the teacher. Following are the principles of learning to write which are summarized from the opinions of Dixon & Nessel (1983), Goodman (1986), and Jalongo (1992). *First*, student writing should be based on meaningful personal topics. *Second*, the conversation should take place before writing activities. *Third*, writing is not an easy activity. *Fourth*, correction of mistakes at the beginning or before they are fluent in writing should be avoided. *Fifth*, it should be linked between writing activities or tasks with reading or spoken language activities.

The purpose of writing is to communicate ideas to others (Farris, 1993). Therefore, writing activities will be able to achieve their goals if the writing can be read and understood by others. In order for a person's writing to be understood by others, a writer should go through the following stages of the writing process: (1) pre-writing, (2) writing, (3) rewriting, and (4) publication. Tompkins (1994) and Cox (1999) expressed the same opinion with Farris that publication plays an important role in the writing process. The stages of the writing process they describe are (1) pre-writing, (2) draft writing, (3) revision, (4) completion, and (5) publication.

Widyamartaya (1992) provides suggestions for writers with eight activities in the writing process, namely (1) finding and finding main ideas, (2) developing main ideas, (3) choosing one topic from the development results, (4) limiting the topic so that it becomes a clear theme, (5) formulating the topic and theme into a thesis and essay title, (6) breaking the thesis into a fairly detailed essay framework, (7) describing the detailed outline of the essay into paragraphs that form an essay, and (8) perfecting paragraph so that it becomes a finished essay.

DePorter & Hernacki (1992) suggest eight steps that can be followed to write confidently. These steps are (1) preparation, (2) draft writing, (3) sharing, (4) revision, (5) editing, (6) rewriting, and (7) evaluation. From the writing preparation stage until the evaluation appears as a linear flow. In practice, the flow is an activity that has a looping pattern. Akhadiyah et al. (1998), Cox (1999), Ellis et al. (1989), and Tompkins (1994) called it a recursive activity.

Writing skills in this modern era are very important in life for the development of science and technology. This is based on the fact that writing contains various potentials including expressing feelings or ideas (Sriasih, 2005). Writing skills are important skills that must be mastered by all students from school because this skill is indispensable in formal education in conveying information, ideas, feelings, and opinions. A study from Britton (1984) shows the need for writing proficiency in a variety of subjects studied in schools in England. Writing is an integral part of the entire learning process that students experience while studying at school. With writing skills, a person can achieve success in the job market easily.

One of the goals of learning to write in schools is to civilize students to write. In fact, writing is the most difficult thing compared to the other three skills. Writing skills are not easy skills. Writing requires a lot of continuous and constant practice. Writing is a learning that is taught at every level of education from Kindergarten (Kindergarten) to PT (Higher Education).

However, the results showed that the students' writing skills were still low (Alwasilah, 2003; Aziez & Alwasilah, 1996). This happens because the implementation of learning in schools has not fully implemented a communicative approach. Teachers' understanding of the communicative approach is still lacking (Kurniawan, 2016; Hartati, 2013). According to Kurniawan, Indonesian language learning has not been oriented towards the needs of learners and the learning method is still dominated by a structural approach. This results in low writing mastery and rhetoric in elementary schools (Budiyono, 1992) in secondary schools (Adidarmojo, 1993), and in universities (Alwasilah, 2005).

Indeed, writing skills are the most difficult skills compared to listening, speaking, and reading skills. In the last 20 years education in Indonesia from elementary school to university has not succeeded in teaching writing (Alwasilah, 2003). Therefore, the development of writing skills needs serious attention since elementary education because writing skills cannot be obtained naturally, but must be studied seriously. In this case, the school is a formal institution that has a very important role in coaching and developing student writing. The relationship between school and writing skills is interrelated because education without writing cannot develop and run well because writing is the main tool in education. Likewise, schools have developed a lot of roles in fostering and developing writing skills.

Since the presence of the audiolingual method in language learning, especially second language learning, writing does not get an adequate place in teaching. Linguists tend to view written language as the second form of expression. Until now, it is rare to find good writing skills as an official goal in the language teaching curriculum from elementary school to

college, although the aspect of writing skills still plays an important role in examinations in various countries (Hartati, 2009).

Learning Indonesian in elementary schools still shows shortcomings and differences between the learning objectives, the materials taught, the approaches and strategies used. Indonesian language learning is delivered using a communicative approach that relies on mastery of language that is meaningful, functional, and communicative. However, in its implementation in schools, especially in elementary schools, this approach has not been fully implemented due to the lack of understanding of teachers and the absence of socialization from language learning experts (Kurniawan, 2002).

Furthermore, Kurniawan (2002) states that Indonesian language learning has not been oriented towards the needs of students and the learning method is still dominated by a structural approach that has long been used in education in Indonesia. This results in low mastery and rhetoric of writing in elementary schools (Budiyono, 1992) in secondary schools (Adidarmojo, 1993) and in universities (Alwasilah, 2005). The results of this study confirm the assumption that writing skills are the most difficult skills compared to listening and speaking skills; and from elementary school to college, the proficiency of writing / writing is not satisfactory. In the last 20 years education in Indonesia has been from elementary school so that universities have not succeeded in teaching writing (Alwasilah, 2003).

This is very worrying for teachers and language education experts because essay writing is an important aspect of recording a language that involves thoughts, knowledge, techniques, style and the ability to use correct grammar rules. The skill of writing essays is a skill that students need to master to enable them to communicate effectively in the classroom or community environment formally or informally (White in Hartati, 2009). Indeed, writing skills must be considered, especially in elementary schools (Latae, 2014). Through writing, a person can express the ideas that are in his mind (Fauziya, 2016). Writing is a skill that can be learned (Sumantri et al., 2017)

In this connection, the role of the teacher is to balance the two aspects of learning, namely content and language as a result of student cognitive processes (Yarmi, 2017). In addition, the emergence of a communicative approach in language learning, especially writing, makes it a challenge for teachers to apply this approach to overcome the writing difficulties of students, especially elementary school students who have just been given writing lessons (Hartati, 2009). Weaknesses in writing essays, especially in elementary schools, are because teachers still use conventional approaches and do not even know the approach or rules used (Alwasilah, 2005).

However, with the Covid-19 pandemic, everything has changed, including the world of education. The Indonesian government issued a policy to close all educational institutions. This was done in an effort to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Therefore, schools must also change the learning strategy from face-to-face learning to online learning. Online learning is of course very influential on learning to write. Learning to write in face-to-face learning as described above is the most difficult learning among other language skills learning. Of course learning to write in online learning during this pandemic is much more difficult than in face-to-face learning. For this reason, learning to write during the Covid-19 pandemic in online learning was felt to be very ineffective. To overcome this problem, teachers are required to be more creative in delivering material to students. In order for students to more easily understand the learning material, the teacher must take advantage of learning media. Based on these thoughts, the authors are interested in discussing learning materials and media during the Covid-19 pandemic at SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya.

The purpose of writing this article is to describe (1) writing learning materials and (2) writing learning media at SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya during the Covid-19 pandemic.

METHOD

Research Design

This research is a qualitative descriptive research design. The choice of this design is based on the consideration that this research has the following characteristics: (1) carried out in a natural setting, (2) using humans, in this case the researcher as the main instrument, (3) data in the form of teachings and actions, (4) more concerned with process rather than results, and (5) data analysis is inductive (Bodgan and Biklen, 1992).

This research was conducted by following procedures (1) pre-field activities, (2) work in the field, and (3) data analysis (Bodgan in Moleong, 1988). Pre-field activities in qualitative design aim to identify the social environment, physical environment, cultural context and so on. The main activities that can be carried out in this research are (1) compiling a research design, (2) choosing a research field, (3) arranging research permits, (4) assessing the condition of the field, (5) selecting research subjects, and (6) prepare research items, such as a tape recorder and research diaries.

The stages of activities carried out in this research are as follows: (1) conducting a literature review to get a description of the theory, finding the research problem into an operational formula, (2) collecting data in the form of (a) learning materials and (b) writing learning media at SDN Sidoserma 1 Surabaya, and (3) analyzing data by performing activities (1) data reduction, (2) data presentation, and (3) drawing conclusions.

Data and Data Sources

The data in this study were in the form of materials and learning media for writing in grade 5 SDN Sidoserma 1 Surabaya during the Covid-19 pandemic. The data sources of this research are the curriculum and teachers of SDN Sidoserma Surabaya.

Data Collection Techniques

Data in this study was collected by using documentation, questionnaires, and interviews.

Documentation Techniques

Documentation techniques are a way of collecting data through the collection of written data, such as documents on the respondent or the subject under study related to learning material. In this research, the documented material is the 2013 Curriculum and the Emergency Curriculum. To take advantage of documents that are dense in content, content analysis techniques or content studies are used (Moleong, 2011), which is a research method that uses a set of procedures to draw valid conclusions from a book or document.

Questionnaire Technique

The questionnaire technique was used to collect data about the writing learning method at SDN Sidoserma Surabaya during the Covid-19 pandemic. The questionnaire was given to all 12 teachers of SDN Sidoserma 1 Surabaya.

Interview Techniques

The interview technique was used to collect data about the writing learning method at SDN Sidoserma 1 Surabaya during the Covid-19 pandemic. Interviews were conducted with 2 grade 5 teachers.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis of this research was conducted qualitatively which consisted of four simultaneous activity lines, namely data reduction, data presentation, data verification, and drawing conclusions.

Presentation of data is to present the data that has been collected with the activities carried out by compiling or organizing information so that it is possible to carry out the next stages of analysis, namely verification and drawing conclusions. Data analysis is carried out during the data collection process so that data accumulation does not occur. Thus, researchers can immediately reflect on the data and formulated conclusions can be more precise.

According to Rofi'udin (1998) data analysis can be done through the following steps: (a) examining all the data that has been collected, (a) reducing data: categorizing and classifying, and (c) concluding the data.

The data analysis steps in this study are as follows: (1) read carefully all observational data related to writing learning materials during the Covid-19 pandemic, (2) interpreting observational data related to writing learning materials during the Covid-19 pandemic, (3) formulate conclusions about writing learning materials during the Covid-19 pandemic, (4) read carefully all questionnaire data related to learning media in learning to write during the Covid-19 pandemic, (5) interpreting questionnaire data related to learning media in learning to write during the Covid-19 pandemic, (6) formulate conclusions about writing learning media during the Covid-19 pandemic, and (7) formulate conclusions about writing learning materials and writing learning media at SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya during the Covid-19 pandemic.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

In the section above, the purpose of writing this article has been explained. In accordance with these objectives, this section consecutively describes (1) writing learning materials at SDN 1 Sidosermo 1 Surabaya during the Covid-19 pandemic and (2) writing learning methods at SDN 1 Sidosermo 1 Surabaya during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Writing Learning Materials at SDN 1 Sidosermo 1 Surabaya During The Covid-19 Pandemic

Pandemic has caused changes in everything in life, including education. Learning to write also has its consequences. On the one hand there are advantages and disadvantages, but on the other hand there are also disadvantages and disadvantages that are obtained. In terms of writing learning materials, elements of weakness are more common. It is understandable that in online learning students cannot learn optimally.

Therefore, the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud) issued a Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 719 / P / 2020 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Curriculum in Education Units in Special Conditions. Educational units in special conditions can use a curriculum that is in accordance with the learning needs of students. Implementation of the curriculum in special conditions aims to provide flexibility for educational units to determine a curriculum that suits the learning needs of students.

Educational units in special conditions in the implementation of learning can 1) still refer to the National Curriculum; 2) using the emergency curriculum; or 3) to simplify the curriculum independently. The emergency curriculum (in special conditions) prepared by the Ministry of Education and Culture is a simplification of the national curriculum. In the curriculum, basic competencies are reduced for each subject so that teachers and students can focus on essential competencies and prerequisite competencies for continuing learning at the next level. Reduction of this basic competency by up to 50%.

The National Curriculum (Curriculum 2013) in elementary schools is thematic so that writing learning is included in the themes that are studied in an integrated manner. On this occasion, the authors provide examples of basic competencies in the national

curriculum for grade 5 elementary schools. The basic competencies in question cover the following topics: (1) main ideas, (2) classification of information with question words, (3) summary explanatory text, (4) print and electronic media advertisements, (5) extracting information from historical narratives, (6) the content and message of the rhyme, (7) the relationship between concepts in non-fiction text, (8) the sequence of events in non-fiction text, and (9) effective sentences in the invitation letter.

The basic competencies, which consisted of 9 topics in the national curriculum, were reduced to 5 topics. The five topics referred to include (1) information classification with question words, (2) summary explanatory text, (3) print and electronic media advertisements, (4) rhyme content and messages, and (5) effective sentences in the invitation letter. Thus, there are 4 topics that are omitted in the emergency curriculum, including (1) main ideas, (2) extracting information from historical narratives, (3) linking concepts to non-fiction texts, (4) sequence of events in non-fiction texts. The reasons for the omitted topic also vary. The topic of "main idea" is omitted from the emergency curriculum because it has been studied in previous classes. The topic "extracting information from historical narratives" is omitted in the emergency curriculum because this basic competency is considered to overlap with material on other basic competencies. The topic "the relation of concepts to nonfiction texts" was omitted in the emergency curriculum because the material was considered too high to be carried out in a home study environment. The topic of "sequence of events in non-fiction texts" is omitted in the emergency curriculum because it is considered less essential to be discussed than other, more important materials.

The five topics selected as basic competencies for the emergency curriculum were also accompanied by the reasons for choosing them. The topic "classification of information with question words" was chosen in the emergency curriculum because an understanding of question word classification is needed by children to be able to listen and communicate well. The topic "explanatory text summary" was chosen in the emergency curriculum because it gives students an understanding of the various texts. The topic of "print and electronic media advertisements" was chosen in the emergency curriculum because it is very important to be conveyed to children as materials for obtaining information from various sources. The topic "content and message of the pantun" was chosen in the emergency curriculum because pantun material as part of language material related to local cultural treasures, as well as literature that is recreational in nature, makes Indonesian language content even more interesting. The topic of "effective sentences in the invitation letter" was chosen in the emergency curriculum because it is needed as a basis for understanding the language related to sentences. Table 1 indicated a comparison between the 2013 curriculum and the emergency curriculum.

Table 1. Comparison between 2013 Curriculum and Emergency Curriculum

KD Curriculum 2013	KD Emergency Curriculum
Information classification with question words	Information classification with question words
Explanatory text summary	Explanatory text summary
Print and electronic media advertisements	Print and electronic media advertisements
Contents and messages of rhymes	Contents and messages of rhymes
The effective sentence in the invitation letter	The effective sentence in the invitation letter
Main idea	
Extracting historical narrative information	
The relationship between concepts in nonfiction text	
Sequences of events in nonfiction text	

From table 1 above, it can be seen that in the 2013 Curriculum there are 9 topics, while in the Emergency Curriculum there are only 5 topics. This means that the learning

material included in writing learning material during the Covid-19 pandemic is very lacking when compared to learning material in normal situations.

This fact is understandable because during the Covid-19 pandemic, online learning had many obstacles. All research on online learning during this pandemic concluded that online learning was ineffective. Anugrahana (2020) concludes that there are many obstacles in online learning in elementary schools: (1) there are some students who do not have cellphones, (2) incomplete facilities or features of students' cellphones, (3) limited internet connections, and (4) difficulty monitoring honesty students in doing the evaluation. Yolandasari's research (2020) also formulates the conclusion that online learning in Indonesian language learning is less effective. Learning because in its implementation students are only given assignments so that the teacher cannot monitor student understanding. Asmuni (2020) also concluded that the implementation of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic caused problems for teachers and students. Many teachers have weak IT mastery and limited access to supervision of students. Some students are less active in learning because of limited facilities and network access. The results of the research of Sim Continak & Krismantini (2020) show that in online learning there are three main obstacles, namely limited support facilities, learning management skills, and the use of digital media.

Indeed, there are negative impacts arising from-based learning *virtual classroom*, namely learning that makes students closer to the world of the internet. Another negative impact, the internet is a news source that provides all kinds of digital information needed by its users, even information that has a negative impact can be found on the internet (Rodhin, 2011). Although students are generally considered capable of using technology, many of them are less able to use it appropriately (Tang & Chaw, 2015). The internet, which makes it easy for humans to access digital information and share it through social networks, will actually result in a large amount of irresponsible information circulating widely through various electronic media without including a clear source of information (Nurjanah et al., 2017).

Writing Learning Media at SDN 1 Sidosermo 1 Surabaya During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Pandemic has changed the field of education (Daniel, 2020). Face-to-face learning turns into online learning. In order for online learning to be effective, it requires extra thinking for teachers, especially in making learning media creatively and innovatively. Especially in this millennial era, distance learning has become very popular (Yilmaz, 2015) and digital technology has become an integral part (Benson & Kolsaker, 2015). Online learning is developed as a learning medium that can connect online between teachers and students in *avirtual classroom* without having to be in one room physically (Fitriana, 2018). Online learning can be done with *virtual classrooms*, which are learning experiences in a synchronous or asynchronous environment using various devices (such as laptops or *smartphones*) with internet access (Zhu & Liu, 2020).

Teachers at SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya are also trying to create and use learning media creatively and innovatively. The learning media used by SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya teachers are series pictures, poetry reading videos, story videos, vicon, google meet, sway, google form, flat shapes, and color discs. The learning media is used to teach certain learning materials. Learning media along with the learning material being taught can be seen in the following table 2:

Table 2. Learning Media and Learning Materials at SDN Sidosermo 1 Surabaya

Learning Media	Learning Material
Drawing series	Writing stories based on pictures
	Composing simple sentences based on series images
	Interpreting the meaning of words
	Composing a suggestion sentence
Video reading poetry	Writing simple poetry
Video stories	Determining the main idea of stories
Vicon, google meet, sway, google form	Writing rhymes, paragraphs, pictorial stories , the main idea
Shapflat	Determines the shapeflat
	Determine the properties of two-dimensional figure
Cakram warna	Classify the colors in the sun

The results of this study are in line with several other research results. Atsani (2020) concluded that learning some vital lessons during the pandemic conducted via *personal computer* (PC) or laptop connected to the internet network connection using media learning such as WhatsApp (WA), telegram, instagram, zooming application. Handarini's research (2020) concludes that online learning requires laptops, computers, *smartphones* and internet networks. Anugrahana (2020) states in the results of his research that the online models used by teachers are *WhatsApps (WA), Google Form, Google Classroom, Google Drive, Youtube, WA group, Tuweb, Zoom Meeting*. Indeed zoom meetings are widely used in line with Monica & Fitriawati's result study (2020) which showed that *online* learning with *Zoom* makes learning more effective due to the number of support features.

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