STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS ON THE USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA IN THEIR WRITING CLASS

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ABSTRACT

Writing is one of five skills in English subject, and it is also one of the communication tools in which students express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Unfortunately, writing is considered a difficult skill to master. That is why a tool is needed to be used in the teaching of writing. An electronic tool is one of the tools that can support the teacher in delivering the materials in a writing class. Among many electronic tools, PowToon is one of the tools that is suitable for teaching the skill. The web-based software presents the materials with animation features, such as cartoons and transition effects. This research is aimed at investigating the advantages and disadvantages of using PowToon in teaching descriptive text. The respondents were 10 students of a senior high school. The researcher used qualitative research with a narrative inquiry design. Documentation (reflective journal), questionnaires, and interviews were used as instruments for collecting the data. Based on the data collected, it can be seen that the advantages of PowToon as an electronic teaching tool made the learning process interesting, happy, fun, motivating, and understandable. However, the researcher found some disadvantages of this tool as the unclear sound produced by the tool. They could barely hear what the speaker was saying. In addition, the duration of the video was too short, so it made the speech fast and not catchable by the students.

Keywords: Descriptive Text, Narrative Inquiry, PowToon, Writing Skill

INTRODUCTION

Writing is one of the five skills in English and one of the communication tools in which students express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Writing can be used to express ideas and thoughts or to send a message to the readers (Muthoharoh and Anita, 2018). Salikin et al., (2017) state it involves an active process to organize, formulate, and develop ideas on the paper so the readers can know and understand the author's message.

Writing is the process of finding ideas, expressing ideas, and arranging words into sentences whose purpose is to communicate something with others indirectly. However, students may have difficulty developing ideas when composing a text, such as a lack of vocabulary, sentence arrangement, and development of ideas. They may have some ideas on their mind. However, they do not know how to express it in writing. According to Alisha et al., (2019) students face some problems such as organizing text, grammar, and lack of vocabulary when constructing a sentence, or a paragraph. These problems are nowadays can be solved using technology.

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Today, technology has become an essential actor in supporting students' learning needs, especially in teaching writing. However, there are many kinds of technology for teaching. The teacher must choose a tool that can make the students helped and excited in the learning process. The tool also has to make the learning process meaningful. According to Fauziah et al., (2021), the teachers usually use teaching tool with many slides and sentences, which causes the students to be unmotivated during the writing lesson. There are lots of learning tool that can be used by the teacher to deliver the message or share the information. In the past, blogging was an alternative to make students interested in writing. Blog is easy to use and it is also affordable. Teachers can use blog to boost the students' literacy. They can read their friends' writing and they can also have their own writing read by other students (Warschauer, 2010).

After the era of blogging, the next teaching tool for writing is Wikis. Even though writing on Wikipedia is not so popular, yet teachers can use resources from Wikipedia as the model of writing to be shown to the students. Hence, Wikipedia is another alternative of teaching tool (Wang, 2014). In the last decade, automated writing evaluation (AWE) programs have been developed. The programs offer not only a software for scoring an essay but also providing word banks, graphic organizers, model essays, grammar checkers, and many more (Zhang, 2020). After the era of AWE, teachers also use more teaching tools to teach writing in more than one modes. Some tools provide writings and also pictures for stimulating the students to write. Among all similar tools, one of the tools is PowToon.

PowToon is one of the teaching tools that have been proven effective. It is web-based software that presents the material with feature animation, such as cartoon pictures and transition effects. It helps students understand the material presented by the teacher. PowToon will also affect the quality and teaching methods of teachers to be more innovative (Raditya and Kristiani, 2020; Santika, 2022). According to Semaan and Ismail (2018) PowToon is a web-based tool that offers a wide selection of media, graphics, cartoons, and animated images to create animated presentations that flow smoothly and logically. Moreover, Semaan and Ismail (2018) state that PowToon is user-friendly, teachers can create their own video or presentation to convey the material to students without having to constantly search for suitable ready-made videos. Therefore, by using this tool, teachers can create learning material that looks interesting and attractive to foster the students' motivation to learn and improve students' learning outcomes.

Some other advantages that can be gained by using PowToon in the learning process are reported by Ningsih (2021) that the use of PowToon is able to create a joyful class, raise the students' motivation and enthusiasm in writing, make the students aware to be independent learners; and develop the teachers' creativity. Almost similar to Ningsih (2021), the findings from the research done by Rahmawati et. al (2021) showed that PowToon can be beneficial to improve students' English skills during the learning process, it provides the users with many choices of text, music, animation, character and audio-visual that enhance its user's language skills, PowToon is a fascinating and interesting application, and it upgrades students' interactive and motivation, learning descriptive text through animation video create better learning process and it assist students to absorb it easier.

Hence, it can be concluded that PowToon has many benefits and students give positive attitudes (Haifani, 2023; Oktaviani et. al., 2020) so that it is recommended that PowToon should be used in teaching English, especially writing. This research would like to show how students reflect their learning with the assistance of Powtoon in their writing class.

METHODS

In this research, the researchers used qualitative research with narrative inquiry design to investigate the use of Powtoon on students' ability to write a descriptive text. According to Barkhuizen et al., (2014) narrative inquiry gathers storytelling and research by using stories as research data or as a tool for data analysis or presentation of findings. This research conducted in a senior high school in Bogor. The participants are students in 10th grade.

However, there was only one class chosen. The researchers used three different data collection techniques: documentation, questionnaire, and interview. The documents used here were the students' reflective journals that they wrote during the writing class using PowToon. In the journals, they wrote whether or not PowToon helped their writing process, the weakness and strength of the tool. Questionnaires were distributed to the students with some statements checking what they think about PowToon. The statements investigated the same things as the reflective journals did. After reading the students' reflective journals and their responses on the questionnaire, the researchers interviewed them using semi structured interview questions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first data collecting technique was documentation. The documentation was reflective journal written by students after they had learned descriptive text using PowToon. Students wrote their reflective journal in Padlet. The result can be seen in figure 1 below.

Last week my friend and I learn about descriptive text from powtoon, then we made a mind mapping about our favorite place. And this week we learn descriptive text and watch powtoon video again. After that we made sentences, then a text based on our mind mapping last week.

Learning using powtoon video is interesting, simple, and be easy to understand what material has been learnt.

Last week we learned descriptive text, starting from the meaning of descriptive text, structure of descriptive text, we also watched powtoon video, it made easy for us to understand! we made mind mapping about favorite places.

Today we make a descriptive text, but before that, we watch powtoon video again and make a sentences. So we understand more about descriptive text.

Powtoon video makes the learning more interesting and it is not make me bored and sleepy, because there is animation that we see.

last week we learn descriptive text, we watch a video about descriptive text from powtoon. after that we make mind mapping about favorite place,

and today we learn descriptive text and watch a video from powtoon again. then we make a text about favorite place from mind mapping.

i like video from powtoon because **there is animation so it makes the video interesting** and not boring

Last week I learned about descrptive text. Before making descriptive text, Kak Mella ask us to watch a video from powtoon, then make mind mapping about my favorite place.

This week, I watch the video again. After that we make sentences and descriptive text based on my mind mapping last week. So, I got a lesson about descriptive text, start from making mind mapping until making a descriptive text.

Learning using powtoon media make the atmosphere very enjoy and calm, **not boring.**

This is my journal for 2 weeks of learning English

I learn a descriptive text using video from powtoon. The video is very fun, creative, solid, and clear. how to deliver the material is clearly easy to understand.
I think the way of learning is like this what I want because it is easier to understand and not be too rigid in the lessons, so **I don't get bored** and rebuild the spirit again.

The 2 weeks of learning that had been taught using powtoon was very **exciting.** the material is about what is a text description with groups and the next material is about describing the tours we have visited and making mind maps. **it's very fun** and can add knowledge and insight. **learning with videos from powtoon also helps us in learning.**

It's just that the voice in video is less audible and the duration of video too fast.

But I think the video is too short and if possible the duration can be added.

But I'm still a bit confused about the subject because **the video is fast.** So, I think I need more explanation.

Figure 1. Students' Reflective Journals

From the reflective journals above, the students wrote that PowToon helped them understand the materials better. Not only that, the tool also inspired them about what they had to write for their assignments. However, they also wrote some statement saying that PowToon still has some shortcomings such as the duration of the video which is too short so that the speakers in the video speak too fast. Probably it happens because the speakers would like to convey as many materials as possible, yet the duration is limited.

It can be inferred that there are many benefits that can be felt by students when they were learning using PowToon. The advantages were: helping students to understand the materials easier, making the learning more interesting and not boring, creating fun atmosphere. However, the picture also shows that there were still disadvantages of using PowToon as a teaching tool. Most of the respondents said the video was too fast. Besides, some respondents experienced that they could not hear the video well because the sound was unclear. It made them need more explanation about the materials and think that it did not help their comprehension. This is in line with the findings of the research done by Oktaviani (2020). Table 1 presents the result of five statements related to the advantages of using PowToon as a teaching tool. The results of the questionnaires reported as follows:

Table 1.
The Result of Questionnaire about the Advantages of using PowToon as teaching media

Indicator	Statements	N	Yes	No
Advantages	1. I can understand a descriptivetext through PowToon.	36	97.2%	2.8%
	2. The learning process using PowToon is more interesting and not boring.	36	91.7%	8.3%
	3. The learning process using PowToon makes enjoyableatmosphere.	36	94.4%	5.6%
	4. The learning process using PowToon can motivate me in learning.	36	77.8%	22.2%
	5. I pay attention to descriptive text through PowToon.	36	100%	0.0%
	6. The learning process usingPowToon is better.	36	77.8%	22.2%

From the data above, it can be seen in the first statement. There were thirty-five (97.2%) students chose yes, while there was one (2.8%) student chose no. It means that PowToon as teaching media helped them to understand the material. In the second statement, thirty-three (91.7%) students chose yes. Three of them (8.3%) choose no. It means that students felt PowToon was more exciting and not boring. In the third statement, thirty-four (94.4%) students chose yes. Two (5.4%) students choose no. It means the learning process using PowToon was enjoyable. In the fourth statement, twenty-eight (77.8%) students chose yes, while eight (22.8%) students chose no. It means that using PowToon could motivate them to learn. In the fifth statement, 36 (100%) students chose yes, showing that they were paying attention to the video given by the teacher. In the last statement, twenty-eight students (77.8%) thought that the learning process using PowToon was better. However, there were eight (22.2%) students chose no. Table 2 presents the result of five statements related to the disadvantages of using PowToon as teaching media. The results of the questionnaires reported as follows:

Table 2. The Result of Questionnaire about the Disadvantages of using PowToon as Teaching Media

Indicator	Statements	x	Yes	No
Disadvantages	1. I cannot focus watching the video, if someone talks.	36	55.6% 20	44.4% 16
	2. I do not understand the material because the picture and sound are not	36	47.2% 17	52.8% 19

Indicator	Statements	x	Yes	No
	clear.			
	3. The content is not appropriate with the material.	36	5.6% 2	94.4% 34
	4. The duration of the video was too fast.	36	63.9% 23	36.1% 13

There were four statements in the second indicator. The first statement was about students' focus when they watched the video. Twenty (55.6%) students choose yes. If someone talks, they cannot focus on watching the video. Meanwhile, there were sixteen (44.4%) chose no. The second statement was about students' understanding. There were seventeen (47.2%) students who chose yes. They did not understand the material because the video and sound were unclear. Meanwhile, nineteen (52.8%) students say no. It means they understood the material because the video and sound were clear. In the third statement, two (5.6%) students chose yes. It means that the content was not appropriate with the material. However, there were thirty-four (94.4%) students who chose no. It showed that the content was appropriate with the material. The last was about the duration of the video. Twenty-three (63.9%) students choose yes. Students felt that the duration was fast. Meanwhile, thirteen (36.1%) students choose no. It means that some students felt the duration was not fast. From the responses of the questionnaire, even though there are some disadvantages, yet it can be inferred that students agree that the use of PowToon is helpful in the teaching of English, especially writing (Ningsih, 2020, Minarni, 2023).

Therefore, based on the responses given by the six respondents in the interview session, the researchers asked about the advantages of using PowToon as a teaching tool. The first question was about students' feeling after they learned descriptive text using PowToon. The researcher found most of them stated that they felt happy when the teacher used PowToon during the learning process. It can be found in excerpt 1.

Excerpt #1

> R#4: *Perasaannya senang, mudah dimengerti juga karena   penjelasannya di dalam eee video itu tu udah jelas.*
> [I feel happy. It is easy to understand because the explanation in the video is clear.]
>
> R#7: *Perasaan saya senang, karena pembelajaran materi   descriptive   text menggunakan video PowToon kemarin itu membuat saya jadi lebih apa ya mudah paham dan mudah mengerti tentang materi yang dijelaskan di video PowToon tersebut.*
> [I feel happy. Yesterday, I learned descriptive text using PowToon video and it made the materials easy to understand.]

The researcher found another statement from the respondents that PowToon was fun to use. PowToon made the learning process more exciting and not monotonous. The results can be seen in excerpt 2.

Excerpt #2

> *Belajar descriptive text menggunakan PowToon sangat menyenangkan dan lebih mudah dipahami.*
> Learning descriptive text using PowToon is fun and easier to understand.]

In the next question, the researchers asked about their understanding of a descriptive text. Some respondents answered that they could understand the materials presented by using PowToon as it can be found in excerpt 3.

Excerpt #3

Perasaan saya ketika belajar menggunakan PowToonkemarin eee itu tuh seru gitu loh kak, menurut saya media PowToon ini membuat belajar menjadi lebih menarik dan mudahdi mengerti, juga membuat pembelajaran tuh gak itu itu aja jadi gak bosan karena ada animasi yang kita liat.
[My feeling when I learned by using PowToon was fun. I think PowToon media makes learning more exciting and makes materials easy to understand. It makes learning not monotonous, so we do not get bored because there were animations that we see.]

In their opinion, when the teacher used this tool in the classroom activity, it could motivate them to learn. Some respondents said they did not feel sleepy or bored during the learning process. The researcher found those results in excerpt 4.

Excerpt#4

Belajar descriptive text menggunakan PowToon sangat menyenangkan.
[Learning using PowToon was very fun.]

Excerpt #5

Menurut saya itu sangat membantu selain penjelasan itusingkat dan mudah dimengerti disitupun tersedia contoh descriptive text yang membuat kita lebih memahami tentang materinya.
[In my opinion, this is helpful. Besides having brief explanation and easier to understand, there was an example of descriptive text that make us more understanding about the materials.]

Excerpt #6

Ya saya sangat mudah untuk mempelajari decsriptive text dari PowToon rasanya karena itu dalam bentuk animasi jadi bukan guru yang bicara kepada muridnya dan tidak langsungharus menulis karena saya merasalebih memahami eee apa pelajaran yang ada dari PowToon tersebut.
[Yes, it is easy for me to learn descriptive text from PowToon. Because it is in animated form, it is not the teacher who talks to the students and does not have to write. I feel I understand better the lesson from PowToon.]

Excerpt #7

Ya sangat memotivasi saya dan harusnya guru-guru memilih belajar dengan muridnya menggunakan PowToon karena saya pikir itu lebih mudah untuk diresap dan semua murid saya pikir bakalan menyukainya.
[When the teacher uses PowToon during learning, it can motivate us because it makes me enthusiastic to learn. It makes easier for me to understand the material or makes me more understand the lesson so I am more excited to learn it.]

Excerpt #8

Jika guru menggunakan PowToon saat pembelajaran bisa memotivasi kita dalam belajar karena saya sangat semangat belajar karena memudahkan saya memahami materi atau membuat saya lebih paham dalam pelajaran tersebut sehingga saya lebih bersemangat mempelajarinya.
[Yes it really motivates me and teachers should choose to teach using PowToon because I think it is easier to absorb and all students will like it]

Excerpt #9

Ya, termotivasi karena kalau misalnya ada guru yang ngejelasin materi ini tapi dengan bantuan video, video PowToon kayak gitu itu tuh bisa menambah semangat belajar kalau menurut saya. Semangat belajar yang emang lebih lebih lagi di dalam kelas. Karena biasanya kan kalau dijelasin dengan eummm guru aja gitu kadang suka cepet ngantuk dan lain sebagainya. Nah kalau misalnya dengan media PowToon ini, dia kan bentuknya video dan videonya itu ada animasinya gitu jadi kita juga gak bosan gitu loh gak apa ya, videonya itu kan gak monoton gitu aja tapi ada bentuk animasi animasinya gitu jadi bisa nambah semangat gitu.

[Yes, I am motivated. For example, there is a teacher who explains the materials with the help of videos, such as PowToon. It can increase enthusiasm for learning, in my opinion. The enthusiasm for learning is even greater in the classroom. Usually, if the teacher without any tool, I fall asleep quickly. However, with this PowToon, it is in the form of a video, and the video has animation. We do not get bored, what is it, the video is not monotonous, because there is an animation so that it can add the enthusiasm.]

After asking some questions of the advantages of using PowToon, the researchers asked the disadvantages of this tool. There was one student who answered that the teacher had technical problem when she wanted to show the video. The problem was connecting the laptop to the LCD projector. The following is what the student said:

Excerpt #10

Ada beberapa kendala saat ingin memulai pembelajaran menggunakan PowToon salah satunya memasukan ke proyektor.

[There were some obstacles when started learning using PowToon,one of them was connecting the laptop to the projector.]

Then, the researcher found out that the majority of their answers was about the duration of the video which was too fast. The results can be seen below:

Excerpt #11

Pembahasan yang ada di dalam video animasi PowToon hanya terbatas dan durasi yang diberikan itu dibatasi oleh karena itu mungkin materi yang disampaikan panjang atau berdurasi lebih dari 3 menit.

[The explanation in the PowToon animated video was limited while the materials may be longer or the duration needed is more than 3 minutes.]

Excerpt #12

PowToon yang dipake untuk media pembelajaran disitu durasinya terbatas jadi penjelasannya tidak dijelaskan secara jelas sehingga saya sendiri kurang paham.

[PowToon which is used for teaching tool has limited duration and the explanation was not explained clearly. Therefore, I don't understand it.]

Excerpt #13

Saat pembelajaran dengan media PowToon tentang materidescritpive text kemarin itu videonya emm pendek-pendek berpart part gitu terus suaranya itu kurang jelas, menurut saya itu.

[Yesterday, when I learned with PowToon about descriptive text, the video was short, with parts, and thesound was unclear; I think it is.]

Excerpt #14

Menurut saya kendalanya hanya ada di durasi, saya kemarin itu belum selesai membaca tetapi sudah lanjut ke materi selanjutnya.

> [In my opinion, the only problem is the duration. Yesterday, I had not finished reading the text but it had moved on to the next materials.]

Excerpt #15

> *…. videonya harus sesuai dengan durasi.*
> [… The video must be in accordance with the duration.]

Based on the data gained from the interviews, the researcher found four advantages of using PowToon. The respondents felt this tool made them happy and it was fun because it contains characters with funny features. They understood the material about descriptive texts. They said if the teacher used PowToon in the classroom activity, it could motivate them since the PowToon contain not only the materials but also some examples of the targeted texts. They can also replay it anytime they want to, even when the teacher is absent. The learning process was not monotonous because of the use of animation in PowToon. However, the researcher still found two disadvantages of using PowToon. There were a technical problem, and the majority of respondents felt the duration of the video was too fast. The same findings were gained from the research done by Rahmawati et. al. (2021). This problem gives some inspirations to the researchers such as creating more PowToon videos with high quality of sounds and chunking the materials so that one video contains only specific materials that can be understood easier by the students instead of making PowToon videos with loaded materials that make the speaker talk too fast and caused confusion to the students who view the video.

CONCLUSION

The researchers conducted the research entitled "Students' Reflection of the Use of an Electronic Teaching Tool in a Writing Class". The research was conducted to 10 first graders in a senior high school. This research investigated the advantages and the disadvantages of using PowToon.

The researchers found six advantages and two disadvantages of using PowToon in teaching writing skill. The data was collected through documentation, questionnaire, and interview. PowToon as teaching tool made the learning process interesting, happy, fun, motivating, and helpful in understanding the materials. The researcher found three disadvantages of using this tool. They were the short duration, the unclear sound, and technical problem.

Based on the research finding above, the researcher addressed two suggestions to the teacher and the other researcher who wants to conduct a similar topic. The first suggestion is delivered to the teacher. Based on the data, the researchers found that some students were interested when the teacher taught the material using PowToon. Hence, it is recommended that teachers used.

The second is for the other researcher who wants to conduct a similar topic. The next researcher can analyze about PowToon in teaching English language. Therefore, the result of this research can be helpful to provide information or references with different discussions.

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