CHARACTERIZING THE IDEAL AUDIO-VISUAL LEARNING CONTENT OF WRITING COURSE LEARNED IN DISTANCE

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to discuss the need for a learning tool that was capable of presenting audio and visual aids to accommodate students in learning writing. It was urgently needed as a logical consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, which disallowed face-to-face learning to be conducted. The research was conducted at the Department of English Education, Faculty of Teachers Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Parepare, by utilizing a questionnaire to explore the characteristics of ideal writing material restricted to visual aids. The research was participated by the second and fourth-semester learners as the population and recruited the samples based on simple random sampling. Every individual in the population had an equal chance to be chosen as a sample. There were 30 undergraduate students who enrolled in basic writing and advanced writing courses who became the subject of the research. Based on the research findings, eight characteristics of good audio visuals are recommended by the students. Those characteristics include the visual and audio elements/items, creative and innovative content, language and expression, operations and mechanisms (various learning opportunities and preferences), and eve-catching form/shape/design, which deliver brief and clear learning material under several considerations. Furthermore, following the findings, it also indicates that the effectiveness of delivering audiovisual aids materials in the learning process depends on how clear the audiovisual item (i.e. the text and audio, how efficient the material and audiovisual durations provided, how interesting and well-organized the design to attract students' learning intention, how good the visual quality and how the audiovisual) can be produced into a small size to minimize the use of internet data. The research concludes that audiovisual learning materials need to be selectively chosen and periodically and systematically evaluated to best facilitate students in dealing with writing.

Keywords: audiovisual aids, learning content, writing course, COVID-19 pandemics

INTRODUCTION

The main goal of English instruction is that students could master language skills involving listening, speaking, reading, and writing at the end of the study. Concerning writing competence, the goal is to enable the students to express the meanings in written interpersonal and transactional discourses formally and informally in the forms of recount, narrative, procedure, descriptive, and report in the context of daily lives. Due to the changing learning system during the pandemic, today's teachers need to adapt to the various media in supporting the learning process, especially the technology-based media (Mashudi, Komariah, & Irvan, 2021). To achieve this goal, many innovations have been applied. According to Indahri (2020), many educators have developed creative teaching models such as allowing students to learn from workshops around their house or school, optimizing WhatsApp application for online classes, developing project-based learning through educational applications, and utilizing audiovisual to explain material and uploading it to YouTube in order to be accessed by every student. The innovations made by the teachers, as mentioned, should synergize with the demands of the time and also should be easy to be accessed by every student in order to minimize the learning facilities gap between one and another who lives in a different region.

One of the characteristics of learning in the globalization era is the use of textbooks in teaching integrated with the use of audiovisuals (Holleran, 2021; Nicolaou & Kalliris, 2020). The use of audiovisual aids is believed reliable in assisting both teachers and students in teaching and learning English skills (Aini et al., 2020; Arif, 2020; Salazar & Larenas, 2018). Visual aids could be in the form of designated materials provided by the teachers or commercial products which are provided by the publisher or any company. Visual aids can be in the form of pictures, films, charts, animation films, and many others. According to Elbechir (2018), in promoting English language teaching, the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is the best choice. Again, he promotes that using audiovisual aids in teaching will result in a more creative and interesting teaching process.

The use of audiovisual aids has been already proven effective by many researchers. One of them is Ammade and Ziska (2021), who have found that if animation film is used consistently, it can promote the learner's positive energy in writing. Moreover, short animated brain health films effectively affect people's attitudes and effectively educate them (Brennan, Geary, & Gallagher, 2021). Due to the massive amount of information provided on the internet, visual content can change the massive information into brief information that requires minimum time to understand the material. In accordance with this, Moltaji (2018) has also found that the information provided in social media, especially in the form of visual and audiovisual information, gives greater influence to the international students in determining their choice and strengthens their decision which helps them to choose their study destination.

Teaching in general or English teaching, in particular, combines various pedagogical components to achieve a certain goal. It means that teaching success is not merely determined by a single component but by the roles of all components involved. A teacher needs to bring and apply all components into the classroom, especially during the pandemic, which disallows regular face-to-face meetings that prevent the psychological relationship between teacher and students. Unfortunately, the current situation produces many challenges for the teachers. According to Aini et al. (2020), there are several challenges faced by some points of view; they are the lecturers, the students, and the academic institutions. The challenges not only come from the lack of motivation and ICT knowledge but also from the internet connectivity and e-learning issues, including how the teacher manages the materials and maintains students' engagement (Aini et al., 2020). Therefore, in the teaching-learning process, teachers need to choose the proper learning media that could help minimize the learning challenges faced by the students during learning from home and learning with limited supported facilities.

Some researchers have conducted studies on audiovisual aids in the learning of English. Audiovisual aids applied in English as a Second Language (ESL) countries with a low speaking level positively impact them. The audiovisual material can produce interactive learning, fun, and effective education for the students during the COVID-19 outbreak. As a result, audiovisual materials help the Malaysian education system to teach the students from home and make them understand the courses better (Kathirvel & Hashim, 2020). Visual aids can also be used to attract students' attention in writing class, making lessons more fun. It can also be used to create classes more clearly that the students have big enthusiasm in the teaching-learning process in writing class (Fauzi, 2019; Irmawati, Ihsan, & Rasmi, 2020).

The trend of research on audiovisual learning can be seen in Figure 1. From Figure 1, information is obtained that the trend of research on the use of audiovisuals in the learning process is very high. However, based on VOSviewer overlay data – a software applied in this research to describe the relationship between research variables, research on ideal audiovisual characteristics during the COVID-19 pandemic is very low or even nil. Figure 1 describes the most significant variables discussed in literature published during the COVID-19 pandemic.

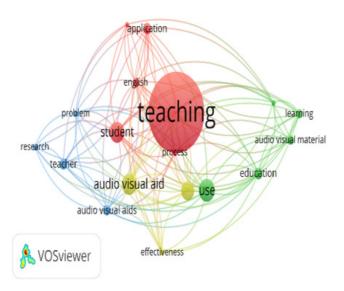


Figure 1 Research of Audiovisual during COVID-19

Thus, the problems faced by the teachers during a pandemic, such as limited time for live courses, overwork due to the student's homework and administrative stuff, limited access to the registered courses, and lower interaction for students, produce an ineffective learning process. The students' difficulty in conducting the online learning makes it difficult to utilize the online system because of the technical problem in accessing the live session (Özüdoğru, 2021). Therefore, researchers are challenged to revisit the audiovisual characteristics that are attractive to students that can be easily opened anytime, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learning writing is not only putting a letter together into a word, clause, sentence, or paragraph, but it refers to creating a meaningful arrangement of the letter into a word, clause, sentence, or paragraph. Therefore, some experts claim that writing is one of the most difficult skills for students (Al Zahrani & Ismaiel, 2017; Mamad, 2020; Stapleton, Zhang, & Berman, 2021; Tanjung, 2019; Tanyer & Susoy, 2019). There are several crucial issues concerning the teaching of writing.

One of them is that writing is neglected in school (Abas & Aziz, 2018; Cheong et al., 2019; Wright et al., 2020). Another issue is that it seems very difficult to produce good writing at the first touch (Heard, 2019; Labaree, 2020; Rogers, 2017) since several stages should be applied to achieve good writing. In general, those stages include pre-writing, writing, and re-writing, which are interrelated. On the other hand, many students find difficulties when they are asked to write because they do not know how to start (Ernawati, Budiman, & Latifa, 2020; Popović & Novović, 2016; Syafii, 2019; Puspitasari & Herawati, 2019), and what topic they should choose (Maolida & Mustika, 2018; Misra, 2021; Winarto, 2018). Another issue related to writing courses is unsuitable teaching techniques (Allo, Wahibah, & Thayyib, 2020; Ingale, 2017; Isni, 2018; Pertiwi & Kareviati, 2021), which can influence students' interest in writing in English.

The various obstacles mentioned are becoming increasingly difficult as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Learning from home demands creativity and innovation for the sake of continuing fun writing and having an impact on student achievement. Therefore, the selection of learning media is mandatory and very urgent. One learning media recommended by previous researchers is the video (Faridha, 2019; Farida & Novita, 2020; Hashim, Yunus, & Hashim, 2019; Sianna, 2018). However, being selective in choosing learning media is an absolute requirement. The media selected must meet the needs of the user. Therefore, this research aims to explore the requirements of audiovisual aids desired by learners.

METHODS

The research applies a survey research with questionnaires as an instrument. Survey research

is a kind of research that considers samples from a population and applies questionnaires as the primary instruments. Therefore, the research applies a questionnaire as the primary instrument. The items on the questionnaire are specially addressed to second and fourth-semester students of the English Department Students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Parepare.

The subjects of the research are 30 undergraduate students majoring in teacher education enrolled in basic writing and advanced writing courses. The descriptive information generated from the survey is analyzed and presented in tabular form.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The result of the research shows that researchers should show their sensitivity to audiovisual applications in learning. Based on data generated through the questionnaire, 11 crucial components are revealed, which aim to know the preferred audiovisual characteristic content that suits the learning process and meets the students' needs, especially during the pandemic.

Figure 2 illustrates the students' response toward the implementation of audiovisual in teaching writing. To investigate the students' responses, the researcher provides 11 questions in the form of yes or no questions. The items existed to know whether (1) the size of the audiovisual content affects the effectiveness of language learning; (2) the audiovisual content should be provided in short content with a short duration; (3) the content should produce a colourful and eye-catching design; (4) the content accommodates various learning preferences; (5) the content applies interactive voice and intonation in expressing the material; (6) the content leads to creative and innovative visualization and voice-over; (7) the students experience difficulties during the use of audiovisual content as the source of learning; (8) the content affects the students' writing skills; and (9) the respondents utilize audiovisual material during learning English.

The questionnaire results reveal that the application of audiovisual aids in learning helps the participants learn and improve their writing skills. In another line, they never find any difficulties learning English through audiovisual. However, the bar chart in Figure 2 also summarizes the students' needs related to the implementation of audiovisual. They agree that some aspects must be considered in using audiovisual aids in the learning process.

The aspects are the visual and audio elements/ items, creative and innovative content, language and expression, operations and mechanisms (various learning opportunities and preferences), and eyecatching form/shape/design. These aspects will affect the effectiveness of delivering materials through audiovisual. Additionally, most of the students agree that audiovisual aids should provide colourful content, and the material should provide short content. Lastly,

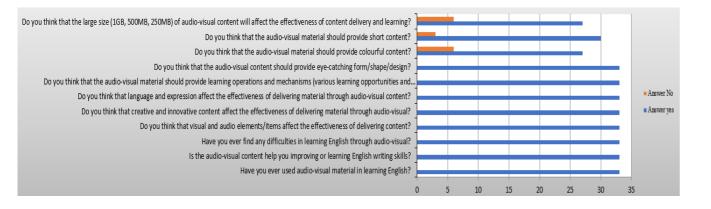


Figure 2 Students' Response

they also vote that the large size (1 GB, 500 MB, 250 MB) of audiovisual is one factor that also affects the effectiveness of content delivery and learning. In conclusion, they are the dominant choice 'yes', while just a few of them voiced 'no', where some think that the content can exist for a long duration according to the kinds of the material provided. In addition, a large content size with a less-coloured design is not a big deal.

To examine and strengthen students' opinions related to the yes-no questions, the researcher provides 11 open-ended questions. It focuses on some points; students' obstacles, students' expectations, students' suggestions, and the benefit of audiovisual for students. There are some obstacles illustrated by the student related to the learning through audiovisual; they are difficult to understand, large size videos, and consuming many internet data. To solve the obstacles, they claim some expectations should be considered in providing audiovisual aids in learning.

They expect the visual item/element of audiovisual aids to provide clear video, clear sound, creative, and short in terms of duration. These items are the main factors to support students' understanding of the materials. If one of the items/elements does not work optimally, then the student will not get an accurate understanding of what they learn. All items/ elements should support each other to ensure that the students can get the most benefit from learning through audiovisual aids. It will be useless if the video is clear but the sound is not clear or if the audio and sound are clear but do not engaging and are not sufficiently long in terms of duration because the factors potentially make the students bored and, in turn, decrease the students' participation in learning.

Besides the focus on items/elements of audiovisual, it is also essential to create innovative, funny, and educational content that is supported by good language and expression with good intonation and clear pronunciation. Each student has a different motivational state and level of focus in the classroom. Therefore, innovative content is extremely needed. This is to avoid boring classes that cause the level of students' motivation and focus on decreasing. One of the innovations that can be chosen in creating content is to include funny elements in the video to create an enjoyable class for students. The enjoyable class will affect the students' performance in class. The students will easily understand the lesson and actively participate. Furthermore, apart from providing innovative and funny content, the videos will continue to focus on matters related to education.

After creating innovative, funny, and educational content, another support comes from good intonation and clear pronunciation. To avoid misunderstanding, good intonation and clear pronunciation must be achieved. Intonation is the high and low tone that puts pressure on a sentence to properly convey the meaning of the sentence. Intonation errors in sentences will lead to misunderstandings that cause learning objectives to be difficult to achieve. In essence, different intonations lead to a different meaning. Therefore, intonation is one of the most important things to be noticed. In the same line, pronunciation is also a factor that determines whether or not audiovisual content is good or not. In English, there are several words with similar pronunciations (homophones). If there is any inaccurate pronunciation in producing a word, the person receiving the information will find it difficult to know the speaker's meaning. In other words, the information received will potentially miss-interpret information.

On the same page, the students suggest to create appropriate and eye-catching content. The students perceive eye-catching content as good contrast. Furthermore, the students suggest that the color combination applied should match to make the content comfortable to watch. To maximize the degree of comfortability in watching the content, it is also momentous to create content that is easy to access and understand and exists in good quality, interactive, simple and well-organized. In addition, the content is suggested to be playable for around 5 to 10 minutes with approximately 250-500 MB in size.

The findings related to the long size audiovisual duration of around 5 to 10 minutes are also supported by research conducted by Chauvet et al. (2020). He has suggested short-run video to be applied in lectures

because it brings more advantages and has a higher possibility of being viewed completely rather than the long duration. Followed by the assessment conducted by Slemmons et al. (2018), she has tried to compare 20 minutes video with 10 minutes video. The result shows that most students prefer the short video duration rather than the long video. The reason is simply that the short video can help students to recall the information contained in the video.

Supporting the results in the research, rationally, short video durations could minimize the internet quota consumption that is expected by students, depending on the size quality of the audiovisual presented. Interestingly, related to this, the content that is lifted into audiovisual needs to be considered to strike a balance between the duration of the video and the ensuing quality. Research directed by van der Keylen et al. (2020) displays that the nature of the content can affect the quality of the resulting video over time. Nevertheless, this can happen when the audiovisual material contains visual content that comprises many details, such as in an action movie that presents fast-motion. Furthermore, to produce efficient audiovisual learning materials, teachers should consider several aspects, not only selecting the right content but also paying attention to how the video is displayed, having clear explanation and voice over, good intonation, and eye-catching design. All aspects are determining indicators of whether the learning process through audiovisual will run well or not. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure all aspects are represented properly because each aspect has its strength to support the audiovisual as media in the learning process. Furthermore, it should be in accordance with the student's voice as collected through the questionnaire.

Based on the students' expectations and suggestions, proper audiovisual aids are provided to increase and strengthen the benefits of audiovisual aids previously experienced. It is intended to increase their learning intention and vocabulary mastery to facilitate comprehension of the material by repeating the material independently. The audiovisual content could also help students with different learning problems during the pandemic, such as having difficulties accessing internet connection or having limited internet data and phone storage to accommodate the audiovisual material. In addition, by providing audiovisual aids according to the student's needs, students can maximize their opportunities to learn through audiovisual aids.

CONCLUSIONS

It is observed that many audiovisual aids are difficult to correspond with the students learning desires. Therefore, the role of teachers in teaching and learning English in this pandemic era should go along with the desired ideal audiovisual aids demanded by the students. Evaluation of the use of audiovisual aids in learning is very urgent to be carried out periodically to avoid student saturation in learning. In addition, the ability and foresight of a teacher in choosing audiovisual aids for learning purposes also greatly determines the results of the learning process. The teachers also need support, training, and technical direction to help them conduct online learning, especially in producing effective audiovisual material for their students. Having limited skills and avoiding the change will hamper the educators from producing better materials, being facilitators for their students, and contributing to society. Therefore, there must be a real effort to encourage the audiovisual literacy skills of educators. The lack of audiovisual literacy of educators will have an impact on the audiovisual quality used in learning.

Based on the results of a survey conducted in the research, it is highly recommended for educators to select audiovisual aids content which offers (1) creative and innovative learning content; (2) emphasis on language and expression; (3) appropriate operations and mechanisms (various learning opportunities and learning preferences); and (4) eye-catching form/ shape/design. Furthermore, besides preparing the educators to be qualified in mastering the making of audiovisual material, further research on the audiovisual assessment rubric is also expected. The audiovisual assessment rubric for the purposes of the teaching and learning process prior to the COVID-19 pandemic needs to be reviewed in response to several findings in the research.

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