

## TEACHERS' CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING E-LEARNING TO TEACH EFL WRITING

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**Abstract:** *The demand of the advancement of technology requires several skills to face the challenge of education in this 21<sup>st</sup>-century. In order to keep pace with the changing trends, educational systems all around the world are in the process of integrating ICTs and learning process. The outcome of this integration is e-learning. E-learning, with its all facilities, provides a lot of benefits. However, in small city likes Bojonegoro teachers face several challenges in implementing e-learning, especially to teach EFL Writing. Therefore, the aim of this study is to reveal the teachers' challenges in implementing e-learning to teach EFL Writing, and offer strategies to successfully overcome the challenges. In order to achieve this aim, a number of issues in SMAN 2 Bojonegoro were identified through in-depth literature review and discussion with the teachers. This study is in the form of case study design with qualitative approach. The discussion is conducted online through Google form. The research results showed that there are five main issues faced by teachers in implementing e-learning. They are technical difficulties, English competency, need for face to face interaction, level of awareness, and resistant to change.*

**Keywords:** *challenges, e-learning, EFL Writing, SMAN 2 Bojonegoro*

**Abstrak:** *Tuntutan dari kemajuan teknologi membutuhkan beberapa kecakapan untuk menghadapi tantangan dunia pendidikan di abad ke-21. Untuk mengikuti perubahan tren tersebut, sistem pendidikan di seluruh dunia sedang dalam proses mengintegrasikan TIK dengan proses pembelajaran. Hasil dari integrasi antara TIK dengan proses pembelajaran adalah e-learning. E-learning, dengan segala fasilitasnya, menyajikan berbagai manfaat. Namun, di kota kecil seperti Bojonegoro guru mengalami beberapa tantangan dalam menerapkan e-learning, terutama untuk mengajar EFL Writing. Maka dari itu, tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengungkap tantangan guru dalam menerapkan e-learning untuk mengajar EFL Writing, dan menawarkan strategi untuk mengatasi tantangan-tantangan tersebut dengan sukses. Untuk mencapai tujuan ini, beberapa masalah di SMAN 2 Bojonegoro diidentifikasi melalui tinjauan pustaka dan diskusi yang mendalam dengan guru. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam desain studi kasus dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Diskusi dilakukan secara online melalui Google form. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada lima tantangan utama yang dihadapi guru dalam menerapkan e-learning. Diantaranya adalah kendala teknis, kompetensi Bahasa Inggris, kebutuhan akan bertatap muka, tingkat kesadaran, dan menentang perubahan.*

**Kata Kunci:** *tantangan, e-learning, EFL Writing, SMAN 2 Bojonegoro*

## INTRODUCTION

In this 21<sup>st</sup> era, students must be able to use reading and ICT media to acquire the knowledge, to synthesize information from the sources, or even to elaborate the argument (Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skill, 2008). According to United Nations (Seamolec Online Course Module 2, 2006), the challenge of education in this 21<sup>st</sup>-century is developing a knowledge-based society who owns: 1) ICT-media and literacy skill; 2) Critical thinking skill; 3) Creative thinking skill; 4) Effective communication skill, and 5) Collaborative skill. Hence, creative and innovative teaching techniques, methods, or approaches should be implemented in the teaching and learning process (Ghufron, M. A., & Nurdianingsih, F., 2019).

However, it is a common consensus that students are not keen on writing and less enthusiastic about writing as their reason to write is only due to classroom-bound activities at schools. It is a challenging homework for teachers in order to make students fall in love with writing and stimulate them to engage themselves in the process of writing personally. Therefore, teachers are supposed to find out suitable learning methods by looking for any possible assistance to provide students with engaging and practical teaching and learning. E-learning is the outcome of the innovative transfer of knowledge and learning which has significantly been-influenced by the advent of the internet and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

Nevertheless, integration of instructional technology in education may face numerous barriers, such as infrastructure of technology, students' competence, technology satisfaction, and instructors' motivation (Surry, Ensminger, & Haab, 2005). Therefore, this paper aims to identify the issues and challenges faced by teachers in implementing e-learning, especially to teach EFL Writing. This study

helps the educational institutions in addressing the identified issues through recommended strategies so that wasting resources, time, and skills could be prevented.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The goals of this study were to describe how is the implementation of e-learning to teach EFL Writing and to reveal the challenges faced by teachers in implementing e-learning to teach EFL Writing in SMAN 2 Bojonegoro. This study involved 3 teachers of SMAN 2 Bojonegoro. The choice of participants was based on the principles of purposive sampling technique. In this case, the participants were chosen based on criterion sampling. Criterion sampling is a choice of the sample which involves the cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance (Patton, 2002). The participants of this study were chosen based on these criteria: 1) they should be conducting a project of teaching EFL writing, and 2) they should be willing to participate in this study.

There are two instruments used in this study which were used to gather the information dealing with the challenges of implementing e-learning to teach EFL Writing. Those two instruments are interview protocol and questionnaires. The interview protocol consists of 15 open-ended questions. The researcher held online interview using *Google Form*. The researcher used a questionnaire of e-learning implementation and teachers' motivation for triangulation. The survey questionnaire of e-learning implementation consists of 7 items. This survey used 5-point Likert scale. The ranges of the responses are from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Meanwhile, the survey questionnaire of teachers' motivation consists of 5 items. The ranges of the responses are from *never* to *always*. These survey questionnaires are created by the researcher and has been approved by an expert.

The qualitative data were analyzed using interactive model analysis (Milles and Huberman, 1994: 10), which consists of three activities like; reducing data, displaying data, and drawing conclusions. In reducing data activity, the researcher does the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying and transforming the data by summarizing or paraphrasing the interview transcripts. In displaying data, the researcher organized and compressed assembly of information or reducing data systematically in the form of a pattern, table or chart and picture, then begin to draw a justified conclusion. The conclusion is gained based on the analysis of interview transcripts and questionnaires which have passed step 1 and step 2. To check the validity of data, the technique used by the researcher is triangulation. The triangulation techniques are: data, methodological, investigator, and theory triangulation. Among those triangulations,

methodological triangulation was brought in this research.

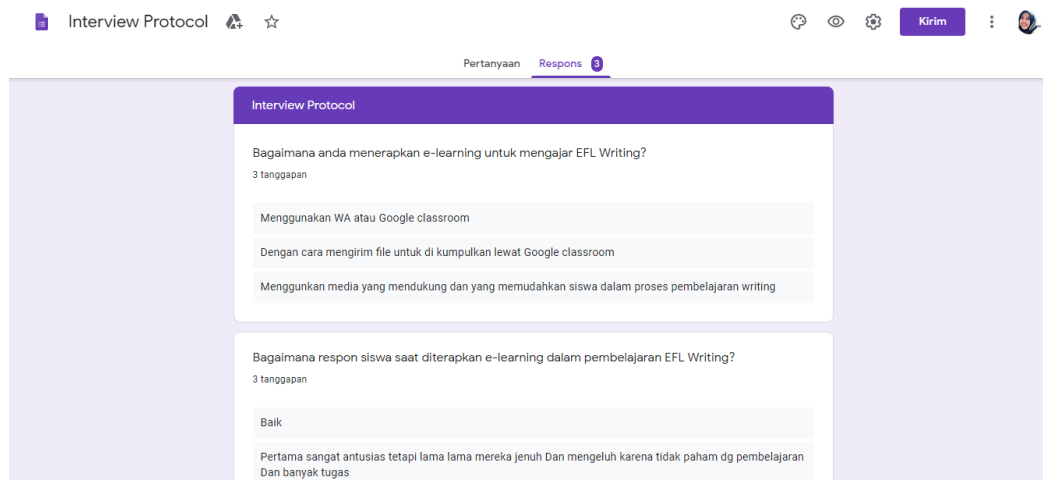
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Results

#### 1. The Implementation of E-Learning in Teaching EFL Writing

The data dealing with the implementation of e-learning in teaching EFL Writing were yielded from the in-depth interview. The researcher held online interview using Google Form. The interview protocol consists of 15 open-ended questions, so the respondents could elaborate their answer. The following link is the interview protocol and questionnaire that teachers should access:

<http://bit.ly/instrumenmila>



The screenshot shows a Google Form titled "Interview Protocol". The form has two questions and their responses. The first question is "Bagaimana anda menerapkan e-learning untuk mengajar EFL Writing?" with 3 responses. The responses are: "Menggunakan WA atau Google classroom", "Dengan cara mengirim file untuk di kumpulkan lewat Google classroom", and "Menggunakan media yang mendukung dan yang memudahkan siswa dalam proses pembelajaran writing". The second question is "Bagaimana respon siswa saat diterapkan e-learning dalam pembelajaran EFL Writing?" with 3 responses. The responses are: "Baik", "Pertama sangat antusias tetapi lama lama mereka jenuh Dan mengeluh karena tidak paham dg pembelajaran Dan banyak tugas", and "Baik".

Figure 4.1 Overview the Interview Protocol in Google form

Figure 4.1 shows the responses of interview protocol given by the respondents. Through open-ended questions the respondents could elaborate their answer freely. From the interview, it was known that mostly teachers

implemented e-learning using Google Classroom, Google Form, and WhatsApp. The researcher found that students give good response in the implementation of e-learning in EFL Writing class.

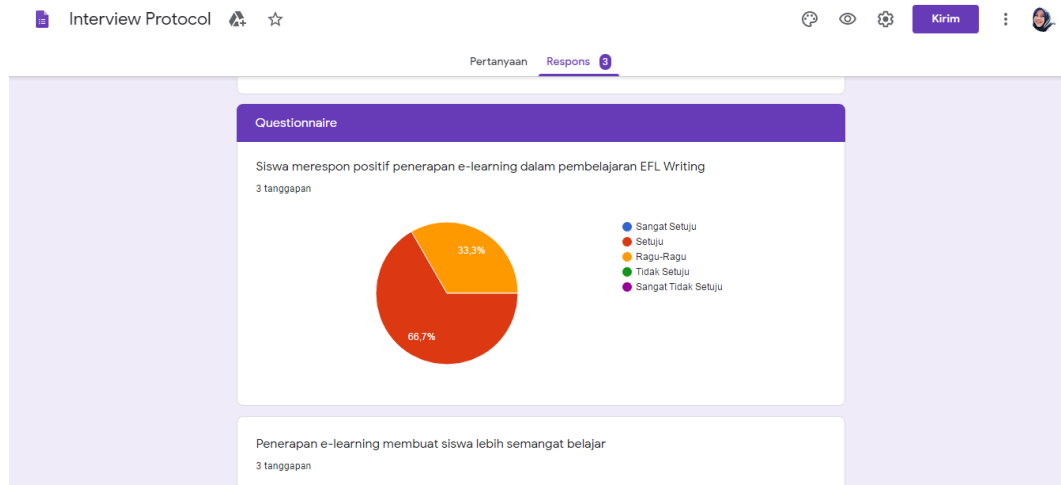


Figure 4.2 Overview the Questionnaire in Google form

Figure 4.2 shows the responses of questionnaire given the respondents. It shows that 66,7% of the respondents agreed that the students give positive response towards the implementation of e-learning. The 33,3% of the respondents assumed that the students showed their high enthusiasm and interest at first, but some of them felt bored at the end because in e-learning they could not understand the lesson and there were so many tasks also. However, there were only few students who could not follow or were left behind during e-learning implemented. Mostly students used smartphone and notebook PC to support the learning process.

## 2. The Teachers' Challenges in Implementing E-Learning to Teach EFL Writing

The data dealing with challenges in implementing e-learning to teach EFL Writing were yielded from both the in-depth interview and the questionnaire. From the interview, the researcher found that there are many challenges faced by teachers during implementing e-learning in EFL Writing class. The biggest technical difficulty is on the poor signal or internet connection. While some other challenges are: (1) Not all students could submit the task on time; (2) The teacher cannot give explanation freely and the time is spent only for online that other activities become

ignored; (3) Students' response in e-learning is not as fast as conventional model or face to face directly, and teachers cannot guarantee whether or not the task they submit is their own work, and (4) It is hard to grow students' interest in writing.

However, the implementation of e-learning affects the students' achievement in learning EFL Writing. It affects the students' learning motivation also. But not all teachers agree if the implementation of e-learning able to increase the students' English competence. One of three teachers does not agree with this. The researcher tried to reveal the advantages and disadvantages of the implementation of e-learning in Writing Class compared to conventional one. Then she found that the advantages are: (1) Students can be more relax; (2) Fast in the process of giving task; and (3) Students can improve their skill easily by the support of application provided. Meanwhile, the disadvantages are: (1) Students' honesty in doing the independent task was questionable; (2) Students do not understand the material; and (3) Active participation of the students cannot be recorded directly. All those disadvantages need to be overcome. Teachers overcome those by always motivating students to keep confident and honest; giving live examples or through YouTube; and always giving material

to be responded. Finally, talking about the effectiveness, all teachers agree if e-learning is not more effective than the conventional one.

The researcher used two kinds of questionnaires for triangulation; they are questionnaire of e-learning implementation and questionnaire of teachers' motivation. The survey questionnaire of e-learning implementation consists of 7 items. This survey used 5-point Likert scale. The ranges of

the responses are from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Meanwhile, the survey questionnaire of teachers' motivation consists of 5 items. The ranges of the responses are from *never* to *always*.

The followings are the results of the survey questionnaire of e-learning implementation:

Table 4.1 Items related to e-learning implementation

No	Statement	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
How important is each item in describing the implementation of e-learning in your EFL Writing class?				
1	There is technical difficulty in implementing e-learning to teach EFL Writing.	3	4,67	0,58
2	Students give positive response to the implementation of e-learning in teaching EFL Writing.	3	3,67	0,58
3	The implementation of e-learning makes student more motivated to study.	3	2,67	0,58
4	The implementation of e-learning can improve students' English competency.	3	3,33	1,15
5	The implementation of e-learning makes students depend on software / application.	3	4,33	0,58
6	The implementation of e-learning decreases the students' creativity in writing article.	3	4,67	0,58
7	EFL Writing using e-learning system is more effective than conventional learning.	3	2,33	0,58

The first item is about the existence of technical difficulty in implementing e-learning to teach EFL Writing, the mean score is 4.67, which means that the majority of the teachers strongly agree that there is technical difficulty in implementing e-learning to teach EFL Writing. The second item is about the students' response to the implementation of e-learning in teaching EFL Writing. The mean score is 3.67, which means that the majority of students give positive response. The third item is about the students' motivation to study

caused by the implementation of e-learning. The mean score is 2.67, which means that the majority of teachers disagree that the implementation of e-learning makes student more motivated to study. The fourth item is about the effect of the implementation of e-learning towards the students' English competency. The mean score is 3.33, which means that the teachers have an average view at this point. The fifth item is about the negative impact of the implementation of e-learning. The mean score is 4.33, which means

that the majority of the teachers agree that the implementation of e-learning makes students depend on software / application. The sixth item is about the impact of the implementation of e-learning towards the students' creativity in writing article. The mean score is 4.67, which means that the majority of the teachers strongly agree that the implementation of e-learning decreases the students' creativity in

writing article. The seventh item is about the effectiveness of EFL Writing conducted in e-learning compared to the conventional one. The mean score is 2.33, which means that the majority of the teachers disagree that EFL Writing using e-learning system is more effective than conventional learning. The followings are the results of the survey questionnaire of teachers' motivation:

Table 4.2 Items related to teachers' motivation

No	Statement	Number of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
How important is each item in describing your motivation in implementing e-learning in your EFL Writing class?				
1	I monitor my students during studying using e-learning system.	3	4	1
2	I motivate my students to do the task in e-learning thoroughly.	3	4,67	0,58
3	I check the tasks submitted by my students.	3	4,67	0,58
4	I warn the students who are dishonest (copy-paste) in doing the task.	3	5	0
5	I can overcome the difficulties of the implementation of e-learning to teach EFL Writing.	3	4,33	0,58

The first item is about the frequency of monitoring students during studying using e-learning system. The mean score is 4, which means that the majority of the teachers often monitor their students during studying using e-learning system. The second item is about the frequency of motivating students to do the task in e-learning thoroughly. The mean score is 4.67, which means that the majority of the teachers always motivate students to do the task in e-learning thoroughly. The third item is about the frequency of checking the tasks submitted by students. The mean score is 4.67, which means that the majority of the teachers always check the tasks submitted by students. The fourth item is about the frequency of

warning the students who are dishonest in doing the task. The mean score is 5, which means that all the teachers always warn the students who are dishonest (copy-paste) in doing the task. The fifth item is about the ability to overcome the difficulties of the implementation of e-learning to teach EFL Writing. The mean score is 4.33, which means that the majority of the teachers are able to overcome the difficulties of the implementation of e-learning to teach EFL Writing.

## B. Discussion

This section elaborates the discussion of the findings which have been presented in the

previous section. Based on a literature review and survey, several e-learning issues relevant to the context of SMAN 2 Bojonegoro have been identified and explained below:

### *1. Technical Difficulties*

Technical difficulties are a significant aspect of implementation and integration of e-learning technologies in education system. They include availability of latest technology, installation, uninterrupted supply of electricity, fast internet connection, administration, maintenance, security and absence of technical support. Bakari, Tarimo, Yngstrom, and Magnusson (2005) assert that most of the developing countries lack quality experts for implementation and maintenance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The dominant technical difficulty found on this research is dealing with internet connection. Most of teachers said that their students feel difficult to access Google Classroom due to the poor signal quality. It is because the geographical site of students' house is different each other. Students who live in outlying villages mostly feel difficult to have proper signal to access the internet. This affects the punctuality in submitting the task given by teachers. Not all students can submit the task on time. Hence, it is clear that fast internet connection is a significant aspect of implementation and integration of e-learning technologies in education system.

### *2. English Competency*

English as a medium for instruction is a serious hindrance for promoting e-learning in non-English speaking countries like Indonesia. Students having low proficiency are not likely to use e-learning because of low confidence in understanding the contents of English written materials. The research conducted by Shraim & Khalif (2010) in Palestine found that most of the respondents felt language was a barrier to e-learning. This finding is consistent with

studies in other developing countries. For example, the UNESCO (2004) report indicated a need for adequate Thai courseware for e-learning in Thailand.

English competency affected students' habit also. According to the result of this research, students with low English proficiency tend to be dishonest in doing the task given by their teacher. In e-learning context, all students may submit the task whether on time or late. But who can guarantee the originality of their work? E-learning system makes students feel free in doing their task. They can simply browse in Google about their task. With the improvement of Google Translate, they can use it whenever they are asked to compose English text. This ease makes students being depended on application. That is why most of the teachers strongly agreed that the implementation of e-learning decreases the students' creativity in writing article. It is obvious that language is a barrier to e-learning, as stated by Shraim & Khalif (2010).

### *3. Need for Face to Face Interaction*

The need of students to have personal engagement with instructors is a significant factor in student satisfaction. However, e-learning often lacks this kind of interaction, which students can have in traditional education systems. Therefore, a balanced approach should be adopted which comprises online sessions as well as face to face learning. Sweeney, O'Donoghue, and Whitehead (2004) found similar feelings from their students with significant preference for face to face learning.

The research result shows that both the teachers and the students need a face to face interaction. Some teachers said that students' response in e-learning is not as fast as face to face or conventional model. Teachers cannot record the active participation of the students directly. Also, in e-learning system the teacher cannot give explanation freely and most of the time is spent only for online and it makes other activity becomes ignored. The students also

need direct explanation from their teacher. Most of them cannot understand the materials given in e-learning. Those facts show that both teachers and students have significant preference for face to face learning.

#### 4. *Level of Awareness*

In the context of information systems, level of awareness is the knowledge of the existence and significance of computer technology. Knowledge and understanding of the e-learning benefits motivate the students to participate. Klamma et al. (2007) found that user's satisfaction is closely related to active participation and commitment. Students unaware of the benefits of e-learning are likely to get frustrated easily as they may take it as a time wasting activity. Without realizing the importance of a particular technology and its contribution to the achievement of goals, successful integration of technology is difficult.

The result of this research shows that most of students feel bored with the implementation of e-learning. They feel interested and show their enthusiasm only at the first time e-learning implemented, but they get bored easily then. The students haven't seen the benefits of e-learning. It affects their active participation and commitment in engaging themselves into e-learning. It makes the teacher difficult to reach the successful implementation of e-learning. Hence, it is obvious that user's satisfaction is closely related to active participation and commitment, as stated by Klamma et al. (2007).

#### 5. *Resistance to Change*

Student resistance shows the degree of negative attitudes towards the use of technology. Research shows that new things are intimidating and they cause resistance or rejection (Jager & Lokman, 1999). Students studying in a system where they are used to being "spoon fed" are likely to show negative attitudes or even reject e-learning. This

dependency on the teachers' presence is likely to induce frustration and dissatisfaction with e-learning. In such cases, students perceive the classroom as the most appropriate place for teaching and learning (Andersson & Gronlund, 2009). Thus, a shift to the asynchronous approach that is generally used in e-learning is likely to make the students uncomfortable.

According to the data obtained from this research, most of students cannot understand the material given in e-learning. They prefer direct explanation from their teacher. They also complain about the amount of task given during e-learning. Some of them feel that it is too many. This attitude shows that most of students in Bojonegoro haven't ready yet for the implementation of e-learning. They reject the new thing, in this case is e-learning system, and prefer the EFL Writing done in conventional system. It is proven that new things are intimidating and they cause resistance or rejection (Jager & Lokman, 1999).

Thus, the implementation of e-learning to teach EFL Writing in SMAN 2 Bojonegoro faced five main issues. Difficulty in understanding English can be crucial in engaging students in learning. Low signal quality in accessing the material deters students' participation. Also, it strengthens students' trust of the traditional educational system where face to face interaction with the teacher tends to lessen the language barrier issues. Consequently, the students may feel uncomfortable when forced to shift from traditional instructor led teaching style to e-learning (Andersson & Gronlund, 2009).

## CONCLUSION

ICT with its huge potential to improve learning and education provides a lot of benefits. The benefits of e-learning are believed to be great enough to allow the educational institutions to meet the growing need of education effectively. But there are a



number of issues faced by the teachers in the implementation of e-learning in SMAN 2 Bojonegoro. The five main issues are dealing with technical difficulties, English competency, need for face to face interaction, level of awareness, and resistance to change. Difficulty in understanding English can be crucial in engaging students in learning. Low signal quality in accessing the material deters students' participation. Also, it strengthens students' trust of the traditional educational system where face to face interaction with the teacher tends to lessen the language barrier issues. Therefore, it is crucial for educational institutions to address the above mentioned issues in the most effective manner for the specific regional contexts. However, e-learning has to be acquainted to students to prepare them for the challenges of education in 21st-century. Unless the students will be left behind to keep pace with the global trend and the future of learning.

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