

## TRANSFORMATION OF WRITING GUIDANCE SCHEME IN THE POST-PANDEMIC PERIOD: STUDENTS' VIEWPOINT

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**Abstract:** The Covid-19 pandemic has left many changes that have just made people aware of the importance of technology mastery, especially in terms of language learning. Learning writing skills, for example, has experienced a shift in the scheme of writing guidance from the practice of using paper to digital-based applications. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students' views on this shift in writing guidance scheme concerning the effectiveness of giving and responding feedback. This research was an interview study involving 4 students as participants whose perceptions were investigated through semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that students had to adapt themselves in writing guidance scheme in the post-pandemic. Students stated that they were facilitated in responding to writing feedback asynchronously and could track their writing progress. Some opportunities for improvement were also identified, namely less time-consuming to check students' work. Further research are suggested to explore more about the lecturer's viewpoint on the transformation of writing guidance scheme in the post-pandemic.

**Keywords:** Post-Pandemic, Transformation, Writing Guidance

### INTRODUCTION

The learning system has undergone many changes after the Covid-19 pandemic, including language learning. This is the impact of adjusting the learning system during a pandemic which demands changes (Churiyah, Sholikhah, Filianti, & Sakdiyyah, 2020; Onyema, et al., 2020) due to limitations that cannot be avoided for more than two years since the pandemic has been present. Through various evaluation processes, apart from the negative impacts caused by the pandemic, there were also many positive impacts that resulted in various innovations to be implemented continuously even in the post-pandemic period (Gyimah, 2022; Tan, Rudolph, Crawford, & Butler-Henderson, 2022). For example, some of the innovations still implemented today are the use of technology which is the basis for the development of learning instruments such as media, materials, methods, and assessments.

In learning language skills, the methods applied now have been highly developed and integrated with technology since the pandemic has indirectly forced all learning systems to rely entirely on the use of technology (Squire, 2022; Chick, et al., 2020; Winter, Costello, O'Brien, & Hickey, 2021). In writing skills, for example, there is a significant change in the writing guidance scheme. In the pre-pandemic period, many lecturers still depended on paper-based writing guidance because it made it easier for them to check students' writing and immediately provide feedback in the form of scribbles on the paper. In the post-pandemic period, however, this scheme shifted slightly to digital or application-based writing guidance because the lecturers were getting used to the patterns they were working on during the pandemic which turned out to provide many conveniences.

Learning language skills is dominantly implemented using project-based learning methods (Essien, 2018; Poonpon, 2017), especially for speaking and writing skills as productive

skills. Especially in learning writing skills, students need to do a lot of writing practice in the form of projects such as making simple sentences, paragraphs, essays, and other scientific writings. One of the main characteristics of implementing project-based learning is the role of the lecturer or teacher as a facilitator (Habók & Nagy, 2016; Nguyen, 2011; Holm, 2011; Bell, 2010) who monitors and directs students in working on projects so that they are in accordance with learning objectives. That way, the process of guidance and monitoring in learning writing skills using the project-based learning method becomes very crucial.

The guidance scheme for writing projects in the pre-pandemic period still depended on paper, so that a lot of paper was wasted to complete the project during the learning process in a certain period. In addition to the negative impact on the environment, this can also make it difficult for students to recap all of their guidance notes, so that the history of revisions made during the completion of the project is also vulnerable to being lost. As a consequence, students will find it difficult to track the progress they are working on if there is a need that requires them to check certain parts of the entire process.

During a pandemic that limited the movement of students and lecturers in the learning process, all aspects depended heavily on the use of technology. In learning writing skills, the most widely used technology is the review features (Ebadi & Rahimi, 2017; Hoang & Hoang, 2022; Ngui, Pang, Hiew, & Wah, 2020) available in Microsoft Word and other document reader applications such as Adobe Acrobat Reader. These features facilitate the review process in writing projects and store a history of revisions made to a document, so that each user can find out which parts need to be revised and track the revision process. Thus, the process of learning writing skills becomes more effective because of technological assistance that facilitates guidance activities so that it can help students produce quality written work.

There have been many previous studies that explored the use of technology in writing guidance schemes in learning writing skills. However, students' perceptions of changes in the writing guidance scheme from previously paper-based to digital-based in the post-pandemic period have not been revealed much. In this way, this study aims to investigate students' views on this shift in writing guidance scheme concerning the effectiveness of giving and responding feedback. The research question to raise is "how do the students perceive the shift in writing guidance scheme in the post-pandemic period?"

## **METHOD**

This research was an interview study that focused on exploring students' perceptions of changes in writing guidance schemes before and after the pandemic. This approach was employed with the aim that the perceptions held by students could be revealed in a more comprehensive manner through in-depth interviews. Every question that was asked tried to explore their experiences while taking writing courses during the pandemic and now as well as their opinions on the writing guidance scheme that was applied.

Four students were involved as research participants who were selected through purposive sampling. They were selected based on several criteria that were deemed suitable for the research objectives, namely having good writing skills as indicated by their previous writing course scores, having taken all writing courses, and having taken writing courses during the pandemic. All of these participant criteria were determined so that the answers obtained from the interview questions were able to answer the research questions.

The research data was analyzed qualitatively using three stages of analysis popularized by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), namely data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data validity or trustworthiness could also be fulfilled through a comparison of the answers submitted by each participant, so that the general

perceptions concluded in this study were able to represent the answers of all students who took the courses.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

Based on analytic results, there were five research finding themes. They are writing projects that students had before and after the pandemic Covid-19, how the lecturer guided their writing projects before and after the pandemic, how students adapt to new ways of lecturers' guidance, and students' points of view on the strength and weaknesses of current writing guidance by the lecturer. These findings were expected to elaborate the answer to the research question 'how do the students perceive the shift in writing guidance scheme in the post-pandemic period?'

### Writing projects that students had before and after the pandemic

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, students had several assignments in their writing class. The work started from simple tasks into complex ones, for example writing independent and dependent clauses into writing essays.

*Before the pandemic, I did not have project for writing class but was taught to **write sentences or connect between independent and dependent clause. After the pandemic, I had to write the essay and an article.*** (Participant A, interviewed on 11 February 2023).

***The project I had after the pandemic was writing essay and an article.** Before the pandemic, there was no writing project but **sentence writing.*** (Participant L, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

*As far as I remember, there was no writing project before the pandemic, but essays and articles **after the pandemic.*** (Participant N, interviewed on 11 February 2023).

***Before the pandemic, my writing project was writing simple sentences, for example, introduction of topic, outlining, dependent and independent clauses. After the pandemic, the writing project I got was complex, for instance writing a complete essay.*** (Participant H, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

### Lecturers writing guidance pre-pandemic Covid-19

Before the pandemic, the lecturer taught face-to-face writing courses. Students submitted their work in form of a piece of paper and the lecturer write the feedback on it.

*We are guided after submitting the draft **in piece of paper.** We got the feedback after that.* (Participant A, interviewed on 11 February 2023).

*The lecturer guided in the writing class and explained **it in my drafts.*** (Participant L, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

*The lecturer guided me through **feedback that was written in my work.*** (Participant N, interviewed on 11 February 2023).

*All writing projects and guidance we had were **written in my paper.*** (Participant H, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

### Lecturers writing guidance after the pandemic Covid-19

After the pandemic, students were more comfortable tracking their writing feedback history asynchronously, having a face-to-face classroom process, and writing guidance explanations. They had no difficulty understanding the lesson and writing instructions.

*After the pandemic, **we should submit the writing project to Google Drive. Then the lecturer gave feedback on our work. We could see and track the feedback on our draft.** If we had difficulty in writing, the lecturer **guided face-to-face** and was more effective because there were so much time and chance to ask and consult. Before the pandemic, **I struggled to track my progress because I could not keep my draft well.*** (Participant A, interviewed on 11 February 2023).

*After the pandemic, students were guided on writing projects like article writing by **seeing feedback on our drafts on Google Drive. The students were given time to consult with the lecturer face to face, and the lecturer could help and guide them immediately. The lecturer's explanation***

was easy to catch by the students. There were different schemes of guidance after the pandemic. Before pandemic, I write my work on paper, see the comment on my draft. (Participant L, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

**After the pandemic, the lecturer guided us directly in the classroom and gave comments on our writing online. It was more effective because of clear guidance and easy to understand. If there were obstacles, we could ask the lecturer. It was different during the pandemic, which was difficult to understand and unclear.** (Participant N, interviewed on 11 February 2023).

**After the pandemic, the lecturer explained writing guidance effectively and efficiently in the classroom. We also can see the lecturer's feedback history in our writing draft online, which was submitted on Google Drive.** (Participant H, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

### Students' way of adaptation on new writing guidance scheme

After the pandemic, Lecturers give writing guidance by writing feedback on students' drafts online and in face-to-face classroom settings. The participants in this study have to adapt themselves by tracking their progress on their draft online and actively asking and consulting about their writing project. Furthermore, students felt more comfortable with the new writing guidance scheme. They could understand the guidance easily and effectively.

**I consulted more and asked about difficult things because of new writing guidance schemes** during the pandemic, which students had to do online. (Participant A, interviewed on 11 February 2023).

At first, **I was confused because I was accustomed to written guidance on the paper. However, it was easier and more effective** when the lecturer gave feedback online where I could track it and be guided face-to-face, so I adapted by following the lecturer's guidance. (Participant L, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

I tried to understand slowly and **consulted to lecturer** if I did not understand or discussed with friends about unclear writing guidance. (Participant N, interviewed on 11 February 2023).

**I habituate myself by seeing the feedback given the lecturer on Google Drive or Docs online.**

I would ask friends or the lecturer if I could not understand the feedback. The new writing guidance scheme is better than before the pandemic, **I could monitor my progress without being afraid of losing it.** (Participant H, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

### Students' point of view on the strength and weaknesses of current writing guidance by the lecturer

From students' point of view, the strength of the new scheme of writing guidance after the pandemic is easy to understand and effective in following the lecturers' feedback and progress. Furthermore, the lecturer gives face-to-face consultation sessions to the students. On the other hand, the students

*The strength of new writing guidance after the pandemic is better than pre-pandemic because I could communicate face to face and track the lecturer's feedback. The weakness is that some students could not clearly understand the writing project.* (Participant L, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

*The strength of the current writing guidance scheme is that students can easily understand because of face-to-face consultation and online feedback. Therefore, students could fulfil the writing project. The weakness was that it was better that the consultation was conducted step by step.* (Participant N, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

*The strength is that it is easier to understand the task, while the weakness is that many projects should be done with tight deadlines.* (Participant H, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

*The strength of new writing guidance schemes is that I could understand the lecture's instructions or feedback. There were no difficulties in following the guidance.* (Participant H, interviewed on 12 February 2023).

### Discussion

Before the pandemic, the learning process is conducted face-to-face. The lecturer's feedback is written on students' papers that the students submit to their lecturers. However,

students face difficulties tracking and revising their writing because they cannot keep their drafts well. Consequently, both lecturer and students have difficulties monitoring students' progress, and project-based learning implementation could not run well because of the monitoring characteristic absence.

The existence of technology for teaching writing facilitates the students to review their writing draft, revise and track the history (Ebadi & Rahimi, 2017; Hoang & Hoang, 2022; Ngui, Pang, Hiew, & Wah, 2020). From the finding, it is indicated that participants are comfortable with new writing guidance after the pandemic. They submit their work on Google Drive, and the lecturer gives feedback on their draft and offers face-to-face writing consultation. In this scheme, the lecturer performs as the facilitator in monitoring and directing students in the writing project (Habók & Nagy, 2016; Nguyen, 2011; Holm, 2011; Bell, 2010) which help students complete their writing project. The existence of technology also facilitates the students to review their writing draft, revise and track the history. (Ebadi & Rahimi, 2017; Hoang & Hoang, 2022; Ngui, Pang, Hiew, & Wah, 2020). Students only face practical challenges in following the guidance because of tight deadlines with other class projects.

## CONCLUSION

There are significant differences in writing guidance schemes before and post the pandemic. Previously, students and lecturers depended heavily on face-to-face classroom processes and paper for writing projects. In the post the pandemic, the writing guidance scheme transform into online and offline process which requires students' adaptation. All of the participants feel more comfortable with the new writing guidance scheme. The existence of reviews the writing feedback and tracking the changes help the students to complete their writing project. Face-to-face consultation is also considered valuable support for students. This research focuses on students' viewpoints. Further research is suggested to explore the lecturer's viewpoint on transforming the writing guidance scheme in the post-pandemic.

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