EFL TEACHERS’ STRATEGY IN TEACHING ENGLISH NARRATIVE WRITING DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK

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ABSTRACT
The COVID-19 outbreak throughout the world forced the government of Indonesia to shift academic programs into online mode. The objectives of this study are to describe the teachers’ strategies for teaching narrative writing during the COVID-19 outbreak and to find out the teachers’ reasons to choose the strategies. Therefore, a qualitative research design was applied and the data was gathered through semi-structured interviews and online observation. Two exemplary teachers were involved as the respondents in the present study. Data coding was conducted to analyze the data gained from those research instruments. The findings revealed that the first respondent (JY) used cooperative learning, group discussion, and translation as her strategies in teaching English narrative writing text. Meanwhile, the second respondent (RN) used guided questions, cooperative learning, and translation as her strategies for teaching English narrative text during the pandemic. The findings showed that the first respondent (JY) utilized those strategies to increase students’ participation, enhance students’ vocabulary mastery, and developed student writing ability. Meanwhile, the second respondent (RN) utilized the aforementioned strategies to enrich students’ vocabulary mastery, and improve students sentence structure.

KEYWORDS
Cooperative Learning, COVID-19 Pandemic, Narrative Text Writing, Teachers’ Strategies

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Introduction
A deadly virus, known as COVID-19 that happened in 2020 made the world shocked (Yuzar, 2020). Many citizens of the world, including Indonesia, were infected, and some even resulted in casualties (Siagian, 2020). The rapid spread of the virus changes human habits, including in the educational sector (Aji et al., 2020; Parusi et al., 2021; Syahria, 2020). The learning and teaching process which was carried out in the classroom had been changed into an online system and conducted at home (Darmalaksana et al., 2020). The learning activities were done at home by using several internet-based learning platforms (Sutarto et al., 2020).

Teaching English is not an easy job as teachers must be creative and innovative. Therefore, teachers need to have several strategies to support the teaching and learning process. (Husna et al., 2022), stated that having had the situation made the students faced more challenges such as unstable connection, limited numbers of internet quotas, and lack of knowledge on using Google Classroom. Teachers found it difficult to adjust their teaching habits. Indeed, it is not easy to apply an e-learning system (Widarini et al., 2021).

Teachers need to create new strategies that can be more enjoyable, effective, and transferable to new situations. Having had a difficult situation, the utilization of an internet-based learning platform is highly recommended. According to (Abbad et al., 2009), the use of digital technology is mandatory in online learning and teaching. Meanwhile, (Nugroho et al., 2022), states that teachers' awareness of technology for
educational purposes is highly recommended. Teachers need to adjust their old habits to a new situation (Altan & Lane, 2018).

COVID-19 has been declared as a pandemic that occurs throughout the world (Hsiao et al., 2020). To cut down the chain of Coronavirus in Indonesia, the president of the Republic of Indonesia on March 11, 2020, implemented a strategy of briefly shutting down the learning and teaching process at schools, colleges, and offices, urging students to study at home and workers to work from home. To reduce and delay the spread of infectious diseases, the population took steps to reduce social distancing and self-quarantine (Yuliana, 2020). Quarantine, on the other hand, is a method of isolating and restricting people’s travel for some time to discourage disease spread. It lasts long enough to guarantee that the person has not come into contact with an infectious disease. Learning and teaching were in a very difficult time since the Corona Virus outbreak in Indonesia. This is a difficult task for all teachers, including English teachers, and students were not comfortable with their learning experience (Syaharuddin et al., 2021).

This hard time was also experienced by English language teachers at MAN 2 Yogyakarta. Learning English narrative writing during the pandemic is very hard for both students and teachers. Teachers and students found it hard to do online classroom or virtual learning, such as using google classroom, and zoom meeting as they have to use internet-based learning platforms. According to (Aslan et al., 2020), having had a difficult time, teachers need to adopt a new method, especially when teaching at the high school level. (Santri et al., 2022), confirm that writing as productive skill and considered as a demanding skill for English language learners as they have to generate the ideas together with appropriate structure, accuracy of grammar, and other language features of English.

The English teachers at MAN 2 Yogyakarta stated that introducing e-learning lessons was daunting for them because they had never done it before. The teachers must immediately enforce it due to a lack of time and preparation. Besides, teachers needed to adapt and develop new teaching strategies, especially in teaching narrative writing to eleventh-grade students. During the pandemic, the teaching and learning process is carried out online and utilized online media through several learning platforms. This situation derived the teachers to apply certain strategies to teach narrative writing to the eleventh-grade students.

The researchers were interested in investigating teaching strategies used by the English teachers of MAN 2 Yogyakarta in teaching narrative writing because strategies of teachers in teaching narrative writing during the COVID-19 pandemic were different from teaching in the non-pandemic situation. The researchers focus on teaching writing narrative text because the eleventh-grade students of MAN 2 Yogyakarta still found difficulties in developing their paragraphs of narrative text.

This research may provide some useful information about English language teachers’ strategies for teaching narrative writing during the COVID-19 pandemic. It may be used as a reference for teachers, students, researchers, and other related parties to acknowledge types of teaching strategies that might be applied in such situations which in turn help them solve the teaching problem in teaching narrative writing.

The present study is expected to bring positive contributions to learners’ learning outcomes. By considering each student might employ different learning styles, teachers can take certain strategies in teaching narrative writing to their students. By utilizing the appropriate strategies, both teachers and students will get benefit from the teaching and learning process.
The researchers are interested in conducting a study on teachers' strategies of two exemplary English language teachers in teaching narrative writing to the eleventh-grade students of MAN 2 Yogyakarta during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the research questions are set as follows: 1) What teaching strategies do English language teachers apply to teach narrative writing to eleventh-grade students during the COVID-19 pandemic? 2) Why do English language teachers utilize such strategies in teaching narrative writing skills to eleventh-grade students?

A review of the literature showed that teachers used several strategies in teaching English during the COVID-19 pandemic. Cooperative learning, translation, guided questions, group work, recording, reading text, and games are some of the teaching strategies applied by EFL teachers during the COVID-19 outbreak. Several considerations of applying those strategies were the availability of learning and teaching resources and students' learning styles.

Cooperative learning is derived from the term cooperative which refers to maximizing students’ learning to increase academic performance and comprehension, as well as to assist one another (Trianto, 2009). One of the supportive learning contextual learning styles is cooperative learning. According to Amri & Ahmadi (2010), cooperative learning is a teaching and learning approach that stresses attitude or mutual action in daily workgroups of two or more participants, and cooperative learning is a work or learning method organized community.

Furthermore, according to Wena (2009), cooperative learning is a form of group learning that follows a set of laws. The fundamental concept of cooperative learning is that students form small communities and instruct others to accomplish shared goals; clever students can educate students who are not as bright without feeling inferior. Cooperative learning is a paradigm that emphasizes student teamwork to accomplish learning objectives. Cooperative learning can foster interdependence among students, thus students’ learning opportunities include not only teachers and textbooks, but also their peers. Meanwhile, (Raimes, 1983), states that there are four strategies used in teaching writing skills, namely using pictures, using reading, using controlled writing, and the technique of teaching organization.

According to Rebecca (2003), the narrative text tells the story of a series of theoretically and sequentially connected events that are triggered or encountered by various causes. She states that having a sense of the storyline, theme, characters, and incidents, as well as how they connect, is crucial to understanding a story. Meanwhile, (Anderson, 2003) state that a narrative tells a story while still entertaining the viewer, character, environment, and behavior.

(Siagian, 2020), conducted a study on the teachers' teaching techniques and students' various learning styles in the English learning and teaching process. The purpose of the study is to learn how English teachers devise and incorporate instructional techniques in the English teaching-learning process during the pandemic outbreak. The results of the study showed that teachers used a variety of methods to address variations in students' learning styles. Moreover, the methods were developed to suit the learning objectives that the students would accomplish and the characteristics of the learning content. This result suggests that teachers should develop their skills and practice to better understand ideas and techniques for teaching English in e-learning classrooms.

The teaching strategy must be performed by the teachers to achieve learning objectives effectively and efficiently. Teaching strategy is a systematic and scientific way of teaching any subject (Patel & Jain, 2008). Meanwhile, (Hamid et al., 2009) explain...
that teaching strategies are more specific teaching acts used to provide better illustrations or a deep understanding of matter through an action.

Strategies in teaching writing focus on the teachers’ strategies and how they apply those in the classroom. Teachers must create some steps to give instructions that are appropriate to the technique used. According to (Brown, 2012), there are many various ways or strategies as an alternative technique for teaching writing, such as guided questions technique, connected sentences, and quiz team technique. In addition, (Supiani, 2017), confirms the writing technique of collaborative writing both a theoretical perspective and pedagogical procedures in teaching writing.

This study is worth conducting because knowing teachers’ strategies in teaching narrative writing during pandemic bring constructive contribution to learners’ learning outcomes. Furthermore, the teachers’ strategies applied during this outbreak in their learning instruction will be used as beneficial information for stakeholders to develop distance learning class virtually in years to come. Bearing in mind that each student might have different learning styles, teachers can take certain strategies in teaching narrative writing to their students. By utilizing the appropriate strategies, both teachers and students will get benefit from the teaching and learning process. Despite the plethora of studies on teachers’ strategies in teaching English, the study on teachers' strategies in teaching genre-based writing; narrative text at the secondary education level is still a few to the best of the authors’ knowledge.

Research Method

The present study used a descriptive qualitative research design to focus on the English language teachers’ teaching strategies in teaching narrative writing. Two example English language teachers of MAN 2 Yogyakarta participated as the respondents in the present study. The teachers were picked out because they have been teaching English for more than 10 years in MAN 2 Yogyakarta, and had experience in teaching narrative writing before and during the pandemic outbreak.

Observation and semi-structured interviews were used as the research instruments to gather data regarding the teachers’ strategies in teaching narrative writing during the pandemic. Furthermore, observation was conducted to find out what strategies were used by the English teachers in teaching narrative writing in the online classroom during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, an observation checklist was used to figure out what teachers and students did in the classroom. Besides, the researchers took several important notes to highlight the necessary information that happened during the learning-teaching process. Meanwhile, semi-structured interviews were conducted to further acknowledge the types and reasons behind the strategies applied.

The interview session cover the following issues, namely: students' opinions about e-learning, the learning content and the previous syllabus, e-learning and teaching process, teaching strategies used by the English teachers in teaching narrative text, and the reasons to use those strategies, and the benefits of using the strategies in teaching English narrative writing during the pandemic. After gathering the data, researchers did the coding system to determine the theme of the discussion and analyzed them using an interactive model which is purposed by (Miles et al., 2016), namely data collection, reduction, displaying, and drawing the conclusion. In analysing the data, researchers gather all data objectively and in line with the findings of observations and interviews. The results of the data that have been found by researchers through the aforementioned research instruments are grouped based on the points. The interviews results were
transcribed in text form so that it is easy for researchers to group them into points. Furthermore, researchers displayed the data in the form of descriptive, and finally made conclusions.

**Result and Discussion**

**Results of Interview on Teachers’ Teaching Strategies in Teaching Narrative Writing**

The present study focuses on the teaching strategies of two English language teachers at MAN 2 Yogyakarta in teaching narrative and their reasons to choose those teaching strategies during the COVID-19 outbreak. The results of the observation showed that teaching writing in the pandemic era is more difficult than in normal conditions because teachers should have digital literacy and acknowledge the internet-based learning platforms. Besides, teachers-student interaction was not running smoothly as they could not see students’ reactions and emotions, therefore, they found it difficult to handle the classes during the pandemic.

The two English teachers of MAN 2 Yogyakarta performed some steps to give instructions that were appropriate to the nature of the class. To know teachers’ strategies in facing the pandemic COVID-19, the researchers administered some questions and asked what teachers did in the classroom. The interview results with the first respondent (JY) showed that she used google classroom for cooperative learning in teaching her narrative writing class, JY’s statements can be seen in excerpt 1 as follows:

"The strategy that I applied was cooperative learning. I distributed the different narrative text to every group in the hope that students could work together to complete the tasks given, compose the story, found out the meaning, and presented it, translated as well into the Indonesian language" (JY).

Excerpt 1 showed that the first respondent (JY) utilized cooperative learning in teaching narrative text in her class. She divided the students into groups to complete the required tasks. Having had the tasks, students performed writing activities; constructed sentences into a paragraph, and presented the results of the group work. To her, it is interesting class activity because grouping them into several groups, makes it possible for them to work together.

She went on to say that before giving the tasks, she explained the language features, generic structure, and social function of the narrative text. Moreover, students worked with their group members to analyze and compose narrative writing. JY’s statements can be known in excerpt 2 as follows:

"...as I stated earlier, cooperative learning was applied in my English narrative writing class. I first explained the functions of narrative text, then I got involved in discussing the text together with my students within the groups, including the generic structure, language features, and its social function. Therefore, when I asked them to write narrative text, the students could complete it accordingly" (JY).

Another interview result with JY revealed that the group discussion and translation were also applied in her class. She provided several texts such as fables and fairy tales. She asked them to read and discussed the text together. Besides, a translation strategy was applied when students did not catch the idea in the text. The followings are JY’s statements as presented in excerpt 3:
“First, I explained the narrative text in a brief and divided them into several groups. I
distributed some different texts to different groups and asked them to discuss them together with
the member of the groups. For instance, the first group discuss fairy tales, and the second group
discussed fables. Upon completion of the tasks, I helped them to present the results. This strategy
made them highly participated in my narrative writing class activity” (JY).

The interview results with the second respondent (RN) showed that she utilized
what so-called guided question technique and cooperative learning to enhance students’
vocabulary mastery and students’ participation. Translation from the source language
(L1) to the target language (L2) was also used to facilitate students' learning of narrative
text. RN’s statements can be seen in excerpt 4 as follows:

“...when I gave them a task to do, I requested my students to work together with their
friends in a group of 4. Furthermore, I asked them several questions both in the Indonesian
language and English. They can also answer both in English and Indonesian language to make
them easy to understand. Thus, translation is useful in this case” (RN).

Another result of the interview with the second respondent (RN) showed that she
found some difficulties in teaching writing narrative text because of students’ lack of
vocabulary and knowledge of sentence structure. The followings are RN's statements
dealing with these issues, as addressed in excerpt 5 as follows:

“...students found some difficulties in completing the narrative text given because they lack
vocabulary and knowledge of how to construct sentences into a paragraph. Thus, they could not
complete writing the narrative text accordingly. In other words, they produced general paragraph
writing, not a narrative genre-based. Paragraph as instructed” (RN).

She went on to say that students found difficulties comprehending the sentences in
the paragraph since they have very limited vocabulary mastery. This concern reflects in
RN’s statements in excerpt 6 as follows:

“...the main problem is students have very limited vocabulary mastery and did not know
how to put words together into sentences and then finally compose them into a narrative
paragraph writing. Having had very limited vocabulary made it hard to develop good narrative
writing” (RN).

Results of Observation on Teachers’ Teaching Strategies in Teaching Narrative Writing

Apart from the interview session, observation was also conducted to further
confirm the information obtained from the semi-structured interview. The results of the
observation revealed that the first respondent (JY) tried to stick to the syntax of
cooperative learning. The utilization of cooperative learning during the pandemic in JY’s
class aimed to cope with the students’ problems in writing narrative text. JY applied
cooperative learning through some steps, first, she prepared narrative text material using
some pictures that related to the theme of narrative text; second, she divided students into
eight groups randomly; third, she requested students to write narrative text and tell a story
to each other through group discussion session; and the last, she provided an evaluation
for each student's writing progress.
In cooperative learning, students learned together in groups. Teachers explained the language features, generic structure, and social function of the text. The role of the teachers in the implementation of cooperative learning was to ensure students' participation in their class activities.

In the initial stage, students found some difficulties in comprehending the narrative text because they had very limited knowledge of the basic concept of narrative text. Using cooperative learning became the solution to increasing students' participation in the class. Developing paragraphs and a low level of vocabulary mastery were other problems encountered by teachers during the learning and teaching process. Therefore, teachers allowed their students to use the Indonesian language to express their ideas. Besides, translation techniques were also used to facilitate students’ learning needs.

The results of the observation of the second respondent (RN) showed that she found some difficulties in teaching writing narrative text. Moreover, RN experienced a hard time in writing lessons in general. Almost half of the students in the class had a problem writing narrative text. It was seen from the observation session that students found difficulties in knowing the meaning of the words. Thus, a low level of vocabulary mastery became the main problem that students experienced during the learning and teaching process.

In using cooperative learning strategies, the teachers asked the students to create groups and discuss the topic together. Next, they asked the students to write the narrative text, including the generic structure, language features, and social function. Students tried hard to develop their paragraphs and had it presented their final draft.

**Discussion**

The data gained from the interview and observation revealed that the first respondent (JY) utilized cooperative learning, group discussion, and translation in teaching her English class. Furthermore, students were divided into groups and did the tasks. Upon completion of the tasks, she helped students to present the results of the work. This strategy made them highly participate in her narrative writing class. To JY, it is interesting class activity because grouping them into several groups, makes it possible for them to work together. The present study supports the findings of Hamdayam (2016), who confirm that cooperative learning should obey the stages such as organizing students into learning teams and presenting the result of the work.

The second respondent (RN), utilized the guided question technique, cooperative learning, and translation in teaching English narrative text to her students. RN viewed that teaching strategies may solve the problem in her class and enhance their vocabulary and students’ participation. For instance, cooperative learning could help students find the solution and analyze the overall structure, language features, and social function of a narrative text. Having had the experience, students could write narrative text correctly in cooperative learning teaching activities. (Samosa et al., 2021) confirm that to assist students to improve their narrative writing skills, teachers need to choose an effective teaching technique.

RN tried hard to teach new vocabulary with an interesting strategy such as the guided question technique. RN asked several questions to the students both in English language and Indonesian language, then provided some probable answers in bilingual language. Students will find some difficulties to understand narrative text when they have a limited number of words (Martina et al., 2020). Mastering vocabulary then is mandatory for them to be able to compose good narrative writing.
The cooperative learning which was implemented by JY, and RN could facilitate their students in learning narrative writing. This fresh and new environment helped students to concentrate on developing sentences into the paragraph and fixing the structure of each sentence. It means that students will have opportunities to learn and improve their academic achievements. This result supports the findings of Trianto (2009), who states that cooperative learning aims to maximize students’ learning to increase academic performance and comprehension, as well as to assist one another. In implementing cooperative learning, the teacher emphasized collaboration among students who join the class.

In cooperative learning, the two respondents; JY, and RN, divided their students into several groups and requested them to work together. Besides, JY and RN created the lessons visually, distributed a narrative text to the students, and asked them to retell the story. From a theoretical perspective, the two strategies found in the present study are appropriate to the theory which was proposed by (Brown, 2012), the class activities may be conducted by making lessons visual, and utilizing cooperative learning strategies.

Conclusion
Several necessary points to be acknowledged concerning the present study are as follows: 1) In teaching narrative writing during the COVID-19 outbreak, the first respondent (JY) utilized cooperative learning, group discussion, and translation in teaching her class. Meanwhile, the second respondent (RN) used the guided question technique, cooperative learning, and translation; 2) The reasons to apply cooperative learning and translation as the teaching strategies for both respondents are to facilitate students’ learning of narrative text, enhance vocabulary mastery, and increase students’ participation in the class. Besides, cooperative learning and guided question strategies could promote students' confidence in learning English, especially learning narrative writing.

Recommendation
Several recommendations are addressed to teachers, students, and next researchers concerning the present findings. Teachers should be creative and innovative in their teaching activities. They must be able to find several teaching strategies that suit the needs of students learning styles and situations, for instance, to utilize English videos on YouTube and other e-learning platforms which are available online and offline. These efforts will provide a wide range of opportunities for students to explore their authentic learning materials. Next, students are recommended to select suitable English learning platforms which may help them to expedite their learning achievements, enrich their vocabulary mastery, and learn sentence structure to improve their English skills, especially in writing narrative text. For the next researchers, it is recommended to carry out a similar study on the use of other learning platforms, for instance, Kahoot, Quizzes, and Moodle to improve students' language skills by involving more respondents from the different semesters and using survey design.

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