

# ***Think, Talk, Write Strategy in French Writing Skill Learning***

## **An Online Teaching Context**

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### **ABSTRACT**

There have been many studies show that there are still problems and difficulties in obtaining writing skills in foreign language learners. Various methods and strategies for writing learning have been developed and studied, one of which is the *Think, Talk, Write* strategy. On the other hand, the evolution of teaching methodology has evolved where online teaching becomes indispensable. This study attempts to investigate the effects of *Think, Talk, Write* strategy in online learning French writing skills, in this case through the Zoom video-conferencing platform. The study is conducted using the quantitative method of true-experimental design, which is Pre-test Post-test Control Group Design. Sixty two second-year students of the French language study program at one university in Bandung - Indonesia are involved as the study participant who is divided into two groups: control group and experimental group. Data is gathered through pre-test and post-test. The data is analyzed by comparing the results of pre-test and post-test both from the control group and experimental group. The findings show that this strategy positively contributes to improving student writing skills. This study should help provide further insight into the design and results of the implementation of writing learning strategies in an online teaching context, notably through the video-conferencing platform.

**Keywords:** *French, Think Talk Write, online teaching, writing*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In learning foreign language setting, writing remains one of the difficult skills to acquire. Several previous studies have shown this problem. One example is (Phuket & Othman, 2015) who found that learners faced a problem in selecting the appropriate words, and that learners' mother tongue played a major role in learning process. Apart from this, there are several difficulties committed by learners in the composition of the text which are due to the problems of consistency and cohesion (Bourray, 2016); the shape (Bourray, 2016; Khatter, 2019); as well as vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar (Abderraouf, 2015; Pham & Do, 2019; Khatter, 2019). Moreover, several studies on the methodology or strategy for teaching writing have been developed and are still developing (Intarapanich, 2013; Algraini, 2014; Susanti & Tarmuji, 2016; Koura & Zahran, 2017; Selvaraj & Aziz, 2019). Among the existing strategies, the *Think, Talk Write* strategy is one of the strategies implemented in the writing teaching, as well as in other

language skills teaching. Moreover, this strategy was not originally developed for language learning. *Think, Talk, Write* was developed by Huinker and Laughlin (1996) in the science teaching, more specifically mathematics. Several studies in this fields has been many conducted (e.g. Supriyono, 2011; Supandi et al., 2018; Sitompul et al., 2019). However, this strategy has been also implemented in different teaching fields, for example economics (Yunikawati 2017), and in particular languages (Astuti et al., 2014; Ambarsari & Syarif, 2018; Silfia et al., 2019).

The implementation of this strategy in language teaching has shown a positive contribution. This contributes to improving reading comprehension skills (Ambarsari & Syarif, 2018), as well as the quality of texts produced by students (Astuti et al., 2014; Silfia et al., 2019).

Regarding the steps of *Think, Talk, Write* strategy implementation, in line with Huinker and Laughlin

(1996), Yamin and Ansari (2008) formulate the steps as follows:

- a. Learners read the text and take notes about what they have read (think), and then discuss it with their groups.
- b. Learners interact and collaborate with their groups to discuss notes (talk). In this activity, learners use their own words to explain the ideas in their group.
- c. Learners express the results of the discussion into a text (write). Writing can help students realize one of the learning objectives and measure students to understand the material that has been studied.
- d. Learners reflect and conclude about what they have learned. One student from each group presents their answer, while the other group gives an idea.

The development of technology in education has led to an evolution of online teaching. Moreover, in the current coronavirus pandemic situation, the entire learning process is required to adapt online learning, both synchronously and asynchronously. Talking about the development of online learning, Fukushima (in Alberth, 2011) stated that it has only been during the past ten years or so that online language learning programs have started to increase dramatically.

The success of an online learning depend on course design, learner motivation, time management, and comfortableness with online technologies (Song et al., 2004). However, technical problems such as a perceived lack of sense of community, time constraints, and the difficulty in understanding the objectives of the online courses as challenges to be consider (Song et al., 2004). In language learning setting, Alberth (2011) stated there are six critical success factors of online learning, include student characteristics, instructional design, provision of support to both instructors and students, teacher characteristics, technology, and language skills characteristics.

The question arises is: how lead an online learning in an effective way? Sun and Chen (2016, p. 157) stated that “it is dependent upon 1) well-designed course content, motivated interaction between the instructor and learners, well-prepared and fully-supported instructors; 2) creation of a sense of online learning community; and 3) rapid advancement of technology”.

The success of online learning can certainly contribute to improving the skills and / or performance of learners. In the context of language learning, especially speaking, Alshahrani (2016) research shows that online learning settings contribute to increasing enjoyment and enthusiasm in speaking. While in writing teaching setting, online learning environment contribute in enhancing the students writing quality (Nobles & Paganucci, 2015) and led the students to have positive experiences in the learning process (Pardo-Ballester & Cabello, 2016).

However, another question arises is: are online learning outcomes better than conventional (face-to-face) learning? Looking at the characteristics that determine the success of online learning that have been described above, of course the answer to this question can be relative. However, Chamorro (2018) research shows that there are no statistically significant differences in the outcomes of any of the four skills nor there is a difference in the overall scores; however this brings up the issue of time investment as it seems to vary based upon instructional method.

From various online learning platforms, video-conferencing is one platform that can be used. Vurdien (2019) stated there has been a growth in the popularity of the application of synchronous tools in the language classroom. The application of video-conferencing in learning could contribute to motivate students to build up their confidence and also stimulate learners to adopt a self-learning approach and collaborate (Vurdien, 2019).

However, studies regarding the implementation of Think, Talk, Write strategy in online learning settings using video-conferencing platforms have not received much attention. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate the effects of Think, Talk, Write strategy in online learning French writing skills using video-conferencing platform, namely Zoom. We formulate issues in the form of the following questions: (a) What is the result of this implementation? and (b) Are there significant differences in results between the experimental group and the control group?

## **2. METHODS**

### **2.1. Research Method**

This study is conducted using quantitative approach experimental methods. The research design used is the Pre-test Post-test Control Group Design. In this case, the researcher compared the results of learning French writing skills between the experimental classes where the learning process implements Think, Talk, Write strategy in an online teaching context, and the control class implements conventional strategies.

### **2.2. Participants**

Sixty two second-year students of the French language study program at one university in Bandung - Indonesia are involved as the study participants who are divided into two groups: control group and experimental group. The selection of participants is based on random sampling techniques.

**2.3. Data Collection**

The data collection instrument used in this study is a descriptive text writing test (total score 20) in the form of a pre-test and post-test. Regarding the assessment criteria for evaluating the test results, the researcher adapted the assessment criteria formulated by Tagliante (2005) as follows:

1. *Obedience to commands given (respect de la consigne)*
2. *Composition structure (performance globale)*
3. *Accuracy of information given/ideas/ideas (pertinence des informations données)*
4. *Use of appropriate simple sentence structures (structures de phrases simples et correctes)*
5. *Vocabulary suitability (lexique approprié)*
6. *Use of simple conjunctions such as “et”, “mais” and “parce que” (présence d’articulateurs très simples, comme “et”, “mais” et “parce que”)*

**2.4. Research procedure**

The research implementation design is conducted out in three stages outside the preliminary study, planning and development stages, namely: 1) the pre-test stage; 2) the treatment stage; and 3) the post-test administration stage. The research design is described in the following stages:

1. At the first meeting, students, both the control class and the experimental class, were given a pre-test to determine their ability to write descriptive text in French.
2. At the next meeting, students were given treatment in the form of learning to write descriptive texts. In both classes, namely the experimental class and the control class, the learning process is carried out online through the Zoom video-conferencing platform. This learning process lasts for three meetings.
3. After the treatment process is complete, students, both the control class and the experimental class, are given a post-test in the form of a test that is identical to that of the pre-test.

**2.5. Data Analysis**

The data is analyzed by comparing the results of pre-test and post-test both from the control group and experimental group. Data analysis is carried out to test the research hypothesis as follows:

- H0      There is no difference in the level of writing skills between the experimental and control groups
- H1      There are differences in the level of writing skills between the experimental and control groups

Therefore, statistical analysis based on the test results is carried out to test the hypothesis above. The analysis process is conducted using SPSS software.

**3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In this part, data analysis calculations will be carried out based on the data that has been obtained. The analysis results are divided into two, namely descriptive analysis and comparison test analysis to determine whether the Think, Talk, Write strategy in online learning strategy can improve the writing skills of elementary-intermediate French Learners.

**3.1. Descriptive analysis**

Descriptive analysis was carried out to obtain an overview of the research data obtained. In this case, it will be seen an overview of the level of writing skills of elementary-intermediate French learners before and after the intervention. The following are the results obtained based on 24 respondents in the experimental group and 24 respondents in the control group.

**Table 1. Writing Skill Level**

Writing Skill	Experiment		Control	
	Mean	Std.dev	Mean	Std.dev
Pre-test	18.31	2.49	17.27	2.54
Post-test	19.83	2.21	18.42	2.80
Deviation	1.52	1.57	1.15	0.98

Based on the results of the recapitulation in Table 1, it can be seen that the writing skills of elementary-intermediate French learners, before the intervention in the form of the Think, Talk, Write strategy had an average of  $18.31 \pm 2.49$  and the control group had an average of  $17.27 \pm 2.54$ . After the intervention in the form of the Think, Talk, Write strategy, it had an average of  $19.83 \pm 2.21$  and an average increase of  $1.52 \pm 1.57$ . Meanwhile, the control group had an average of  $18.42 \pm 2.80$  and an average increase of  $1.15 \pm 0.98$ .

**3.2. Comparative test analysis**

After knowing the general description of the changes in the writing skills of elementary-intermediate French learners, the next step is to do a comparison test to see the effectiveness of the Think, Talk, Write strategy in improving writing skills. Before entering into the comparative test analysis, first the normality test is carried out to determine whether the data comes from a normal distribution or not. This will result in the statistical test used, namely if the data is normally distributed then the parametric test (t test) is used and if it is not normally distributed then a non-parametric test is used. The results of the normality test based on research data can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Normality Test Results

Groups		Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	Df	p
Pre-test	Experiment	0.961	24	0.455
	Control	0.979	24	0.875
Post-test	Experiment	0.926	24	0.080
	Control	0.956	24	0.365
Deviation	Experiment	0.792	24	0.000
	Control	0.785	24	0.000

Normality testing is carried out using the Shapiro-Wilk test because the data in each group is not more than 50 samples. The data is said to have a normal distribution, if the probability value has a value greater than 0.05. Based on the results of the calculations in table 4.2, it can be seen that the pre-test and post-test data have a p value greater than 0.05 in both the experimental and control groups, so that the data has a normal distribution. However, the difference data has a p value of less than 0.05, so the difference data has an abnormal distribution. Thus, for normal data used parametric test using independent t-test and paired t-test (paired t-test), while for abnormal data using non-parametric test with the Mann Whitney test.

After the normality assumption is made, the next step is to test the hypothesis using a comparison test in accordance with the results of the normality test. The following are the results of hypothesis testing based on research data.

Hypothesis:

- H<sub>0</sub> There is no difference in the level of writing skills between the experimental and control groups
- H<sub>1</sub> There are differences in the level of writing skills between the experimental and control groups
- Test condition Accept H<sub>1</sub> if the p-value is higher than 0.05 and accept H<sub>0</sub> in other cases.

**Table 3.** Hypothesis Test Results

Writing Skill	Experiment		Control		P Value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Pre-test	18.31	2.49	17.27	2.54	0.158a
Post-test	19.83	2.21	18.42	2.80	0.058a
P Value	0.000c		0.000c		
Deviation	1.52	1.57	1.15	0.98	0.476b

a) *Independent t-test* b) *mann whitney test*, c) *paired t-test*

And Based on the results of the comparison test in Table 3, it can be seen that writing skills before being given the intervention did not have a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group because the p value was greater than 0.05 ( $p0.158 > 0.05$ ). Likewise, after the intervention there was

no significant difference between the experimental and control classes ( $p0.058 > 0.05$ ). The same thing happened to the data that the difference in increase had no difference between the experimental and control groups ( $p0.476 > 0.05$ ).

When viewed in each group, the experimental group who obtained the Think, Talk, Write strategy had a significant difference between before and after being given the intervention, where the p value was less than 0.05 ( $p0.000 < 0.05$ ). Likewise, the control group had a significant difference between before and after ( $p0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the results are almost as effective as the conventional method.

This finding can at least confirm one thing, that the implementation of the Think, Talk, Write strategy contributes to improving the quality of students' writing. This is in line with Astuti et al. (2014) who found that there is a significant increase in the quality of student writing, both in terms of the quality of generic structure, grammar, content, mechanic, and vocabulary.

In addition, these findings also confirm that online learning settings through video-conferencing platforms contribute to improving students' writing skills. This is in line with Yen et al. (2015) who found that students' writing skills improved via peer-to-peer and self-correction behaviour, which was also applied in the process of implementing the Think, Talk, Write strategy in this study.

However, in the context of comparing the experimental group and the control group, the effectiveness of implementing the Think, Talk, Write strategy does not show a significant difference. In contrast to Silfia et al. (2019) who found that students' writing skills between the experimental group and the control group had a significant difference.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the statistical findings, authors could conclude that that the Think, Talk, Write strategy contributes positively in improving students writing quality. Therefore, its contribution is not significant since the results are almost as effective as the conventional method. This can be seen from the difference in the increase that is almost the same: about 1 to 1.5 digits from the initial skill. Even though there are very slight differences, those who use the Think, Talk, Write strategy have a slightly higher improvement compared to the conventional method. Thus, the research hypothesis is rejected because the Think, Talk, Write strategy has almost the same contribution (not significantly different) in improving the writing skills of Elementary-Intermediate French Learners.

However, it is too early to conclude in general that the implementation of this strategy through online video-

conferencing platforms is effective or ineffective, due to the fact that it does not have a significant impact on improving students' abilities. This is because this paper does not discuss qualitative studies that examine the learning process through an observation. Therefore, we recommend that this study should be continued in a more comprehensive way by examining qualitative aspects. So it is expected that the research results can provide more comprehensive insights as well.

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