



## The Use of Microsoft Sway 365 in Teaching Reading Descriptive Text: A Response to Pandemic Situation

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### Abstract

The aim of the study is to investigate the use of Microsoft Sway 365 in teaching reading descriptive text as a response in pandemic situation. The method used in the research was classroom action research. Subject of the research was 36 students from tenth grade of SMAN 1 Baros, Banten Province. Data collective techniques used in this recent study were test and questionnaire. The result of research shows that students achieve average scores 67.5 from reading test in pre-cycle. This result, of course, still lower than the ideal score 75. Since Sway Microsoft 365 is implemented, students' scores are increased. This can be seen from the average score in cycle 1 is 77.5; and it increases into 81.5 in cycle 2. These results also matched to the questionnaire result which 78% of students agree if Microsoft Sway 365 can be used as an alternative online learning media for reading descriptive text, especially proposed for pandemic situation.

**Keywords:** Microsoft Sway, descriptive text, pandemic

### Introduction

Innovation in learning is a necessity in today's digital era. This can be seen by the growing development of digital-based media and learning resources. Digital-based media and learning resources not only make learning faster and easier, but also more meaningful.

In current pandemic era, the demand for online learning is absolutely necessary. This online learning can be carried out synchronously or asynchronously. One of the synchronous online learning media or applications that are currently being used is Microsoft Sway 365.

This application was developed by Microsoft. Just like other online learning applications, this application is widely used

by teachers and lecturers in the learning process. As Istiqomah (2016) stated that this application can help improve student learning outcomes by up to 94%. In pandemic era today, the demand for online learning applications such as Microsoft Sway is absolutely necessary in helping the learning process for teachers and students. As reported by Bahasoan, Ayuandiani, Mukhram, and Rahmat (2020); Nirmala, Triaswati, and Rahmawan, (2020); and Susilawati, and Supriyatno (2020) that online learning can act as learning resource and media, and can keep students' enthusiasm for learning in the pandemic era.

Therefore, departing from the above problems, this study aims to examine how the Microsoft Sway application is used,



especially in teaching reading descriptive texts at the senior high school level. Reading descriptive text refers to the material learnt in tenth grade of senior high school. Since the pre-cycle is conducted, most students achieve lower result than the ideal score.

## **Theoretical Review**

### **Reading**

Reading is an activity to acquire knowledge, information, and stories from the textual form. Reading, obviously, is not a passive activity because it is an interactive activity between the reader and the text being read. As Alyousef (2005) defined reading as an interactive process between readers and texts that result in reading fluency. In general, reading activities can aim to gain basic knowledge (bottom-up) and advanced (top-down).

Moreover, Kintsch (1998) defined reading comprehension as the process of creating meaning from text; The purpose is to get an understanding of the text rather than to acquire meaning from individual words or sentences, and the outcome is the mental representation of a text meaning that is combined with the readers' previous knowledge.

Generally, reading activity can be classified into intensive and extensive reading (Hedge, 2003; Waring, 1997; and Yang, Dai, and Gao, 2012). The essential difference between the two lies in the purpose of reading. While intensive reading

is generally learning or learning-centered, extensive reading is generally for a broader purpose.

### **Descriptive Text**

Descriptive text is commonly used to describe particular thing, person, animal, place, or event to the readers or hearers (Gerot and Wignel, 1994; Knapp and Watkins, 2005). Moreover, Dirgeyasa (2016) stated that descriptive etimologically is derived from the word describe. It means to draw, to illustrate or to picture object, place and person in order to visual appearance of the object described. The process of describing is commonly starting from naming, classifying, and dealing with attributes, behaviors, functions, and so on. Thus, the readers/hearers can possibly know the thing which is being described as well as possible.

The nature of the text can be observed from its genre and type. As Baihaqi (2017) explained in his book that the term of genre refers to the social function of the text, the type, meanwhile, refers to the structure of the text. As a genre, descriptive text has primarily purpose to describe a person, place or thing in such a way that is formed in the reader's mind. As Pardiyono (2007); and Wardiman et. al (2008) said that the purpose of descriptive text is giving a description a particular person, place or thing; it has exactly communicative purpose to give description about an object. Furthermore, Pardiyono (2007) also said that the purpose



of descriptive text is to make our reader see, feel and hear what we have seen, felt and heard.

As a text type, descriptive is mainly built from schematic structures called identification and description (Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, & Yallop, 2000; Derewianka, 1990; Gerot & Wignel, 1994; Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Identification is aimed at introducing and identifying specific participant such as a person, a thing, a place, an animal, and or an event. Description, on the other side, is aimed to describe that participant from its characteristics, appearances, personality, and habits or qualities.

In terms of linguistics features, Derewianka (1990); Emilia and Christie (2013); Gerot and Wignell (1994); and Knapp and Watkins (2005) state that descriptive text has following features (a) focus on specific participants, (b) use present tense, (c) use linking verbs or relational process frequently, (d) use action verbs or material process and behavioral process, (e) use mental verb or mental process, (f) use adjectives and adverbs to add information to nouns and verbs, and (g) use adverbial phrases to add further information and explanation.

### **Microsoft Sway**

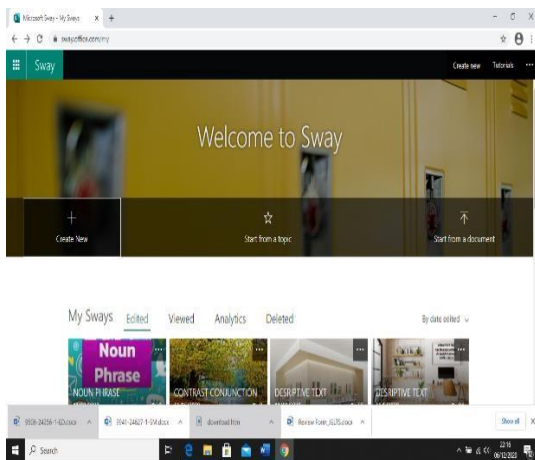
As one of the platform for online learning, Microsoft sway can help both

teachers and students to develop and advance their learning experiences. As Linberdg and Olofsson (2010) argued that an online learning design environment to support the professional development of teachers also needs to be adaptable for local use so that through the experience of planning learning, analyzing design decisions, and sharing resources and pedagogic design, each institutional community can build a collective understanding of learning design that is relevant to it. Savin (2004) also stated that the reasons for using online learning are many and various, yet most people who have developed online learning have begun by using it face-to-face in the first instance different from other forms of teaching and certainly differs significantly from the general types of moderation used in online environments.

Microsoft sway, moreover, is one of the platforms developed by Microsoft. Sway can be used to create interactive presentations and content that doesn't need a presenter (Hutchinson, 2020). It allowed to showcase and to demonstrate user's digital literacy skills rather than producing the usual Word document with pictures.

This application is availed at <https://sway.office.com> as shown in the following picture. To start the application, the users need to register and login to the program.

**Picture 1.** Microsoft Sway



Sway can also produce newsletters and 'how-to' documents that would be really useful for both teachers and students. It also creates presentations which might help people move away from usual form such Microsoft PowerPoint.

### Method

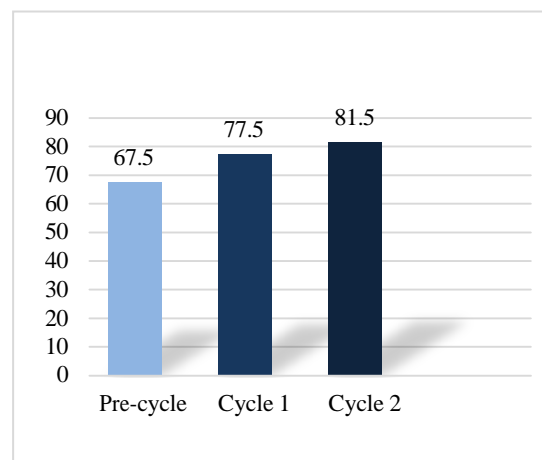
The method used in this study was classroom action research through Kemmis and McTaggart Model as its procedure. Each cycle is consisted of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Subject of the research was 36 students of tenth grade from SMA Negeri 1 Baros, Banten Province. In collecting data, the researcher used test and questionnaire. The test was used to measure students' achievements on reading descriptive text. The questionnaire, meanwhile, was used to investigate students' responses regarding the use of Microsoft Sway as an alternative learning media in reading descriptive text. In analyzing data,

the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

### Result

The result of students' tests on reading descriptive texts can be displayed as chart below.

**Chart 1.** Reading Test Result [X]

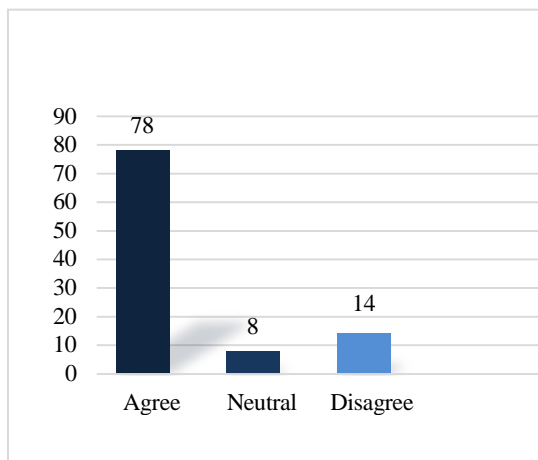


The result of research shows that students reach average scores 67.5 from reading test in pre-cycle. This result, obviously, still lower than the ideal score 75. There are only 23 students or 63.8% achieved average scores more than 75. Dealing with the result, the researcher, then, implements Microsoft Sway as an effort reflected to the pre-cycle. Since Microsoft Sway is implemented, students' scores are increased. This can be seen from the average score in cycle 1 is 77.5; it increases into 81.5 in cycle 2. There are 27 students (75%) for cycle 1 and 31 students (86%) for cycle 2 achieved average scores more than 75. These results

appear that the students not only comprehend the learning material, but they also relish the use of Microsoft Sway in learning descriptive texts.

These above results also correspond to the questionnaire result which can be showed as follows.

**Chart 2.** Questionnaires Result [%]



The above result shows that from 36 students, 28 or 78% of students agree if Microsoft Sway can be used as an alternative media in learning process of reading descriptive text especially proposed for pandemic situation. There are only 3 or 8% of students give no responses (neutral) and 5 or 14% of students disagree to the use of Microsoft Sway as an alternative media in learning process of reading descriptive text. Besides, they also argue that Microsoft Sway can help them to comprehend the learning material easily, build an interactive learning process, and help them to save, demonstrate, and share the materials.

This recent study proves that Microsoft Sway can help teachers and student to run faster and better teaching and learning process. As Istiqomah (2016) stated that this application can help improve student learning outcomes; Lestari and Chasanatun (2018); and Zakia, Sagala, and Siburian (2017) who proved that Microsoft Sway can help teachers and students to share, collect, format, and display presentations on web-based interactive canvas that looks good virtually any screen, and can create new Sway easy to add text, images, video, charts, or other content type. Correspondingly, Masrupi, Baihaqi, and Hakim (2020) stated that in presenting the learning process, the teachers need supporting facilities to help them in delivering the material to the students. Therefore, Sway can be used as an alternative media to support both teachers and students in managing teaching and learning process.

## Conclusion

Based on the result above, it can be concluded that since Microsoft Sway is implemented, students' achievement on reading descriptive texts are increased. This can be seen from the average score in cycle 1 is 77.5; and it increases into 81.5 in cycle 2. These results also correspond to the questionnaire result which 28 students or 78% agree if Microsoft Sway can be used as an alternative online learning media for reading descriptive text especially projected for pandemic situation today.



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