



**TEACHERS' REASON TO ENGAGE STUDENTS
IN LEARNING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT THROUGH ONLINE**

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ABSTRACT

Online learning is learning that takes place over the Internet. It uses electronic media (usually a computer) for a variety of learning purposes to access the learning materials and to interact with the teacher and with other students. Furthermore, students' engagement in online learning is very important because online learners seem to have fewer opportunities to be engaged with the institution. Hence, it is essential to create multiple opportunities for student engagement in the online environment. The objective of this study is to elaborate the reasons in engaging students to learn descriptive text through online learning. This study was conducted at grade VII of Junior High School students. A qualitative descriptive research design was applied and the data gathered from the sentences of teacher and students during online learning and when teacher was interviewed. This study followed the theory of Kuh (2009) about the reasons of engaging students during the learning through online learning. Furthermore, the result of the study showed that there were two reasons of engaging the students in learning descriptive through online; they were: 1) the engagement contributes students' better understanding and 2) the engagement is needed for cognitive development.

Keywords: *Online Learning, Engagement, ICT, Descriptive Text*

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INTRODUCTION

Online learning is learning that takes place over the Internet. It is placed into two

categories, namely synchronous and asynchronous, Gudea (2008:5). Synchronous form requires participants to interact in real and connecting instructors and students via streaming audio or through a chat room. Meanwhile, asynchronous lets students' access prepackaged software on their own time, working at their own pace and communicating with a teacher or even other students through e-mail or social media. Currently, many applications can be accessed free of charge to support the good learning process which is intended for learning such as Zoom, Google meet, cisco WebEx and so on. Using those applications as online learning tools as well as a good internet network is part of important factor for effectiveness online learning.

Engagement is crucial to student learning and satisfaction in online courses. According to Martin and Dorris (2018:206), engagement strategies are aimed at providing positive learner experiences including active learning opportunities, such as participating in collaborative group work, having students facilitate presentations and discussions, etc. Besides, to engage students during learning, teacher need appropriate teaching techniques, method, ways, approach, etc.

METHODOLOGY

The engagement assumption is the more learners know about a material, the better their understanding of it becomes, and the more they write and solve problems collaboratively and receive feedback from instructors, Kuh (2009). According to this idea, students' learning is enhanced and their continuing engagement in course activities is sustained if they engage in learning activities like having a discussion or cooperating to solve a problem. Kuh (2009) assert the importance of student engagement to online learning because they believe student engagement can be shown as evidence of students' considerable effort required for their cognitive development and their given ability to create their own knowledge, leading to a high level of student success. Cognitive development means how children think, explore and find out. Piaget asserted that cognitive development is a process of restructuring knowledge through interactions with students' environment, (Semmar. 2015). He believes children build knowledge through interaction with their world. In relation with that, Bloom (1956) states that the cognitive domain includes the ability to restate concepts or principles that have been learned, which relates to the ability to think, competence to acquire knowledge, recognition, understanding, conceptualization, determination and reasoning. That's the

reasons why teachers must engage their students during the teaching learning process. Teachers should think about student engagement and devise strategies to encourage it while they are studying.

This study was conducted by using descriptive qualitative research design. The data of this research were the teacher's utterances of reasons why he engaged the students during online learning. Furthermore, the source of the data was an online teacher of *SMP St. Paulus Sidikalang*. The data were collected by using interview techniques. Meanwhile, field notes used to avoid miss information that needed for the research. Data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verifying were technique of data analysis. Furthermore, to make the trustworthiness of this research, it applied audit trail which is provide a mechanism by which others can determine how decisions were made and the uniqueness of the situation.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Table 3.1. The Percentages of Teacher's Reason to Engage Students in Teaching
Descriptive text

Num.	Reasons	Percentages (%)
1	The engagement contributes students' better understanding	33.33
2	The engagement is needed for cognitive development	66.66
Total		100

From the table above, it can be seen that teacher has two reasons in engaging the students in learning descriptive text through online. In this section, this data was the interview between teacher and researcher. The data and analysis can be seen as follows:

1. The engagement contributes students' better understanding

Data 19 Ap6/P116/L99-L102

TC : In addition, if the students are more engaged by sharing idea or giving respond during learning, so they will have more knowledge about the lesson. They will also have better understanding of what I say.

RS : Yes, it's right

In data 19, the teacher explained his reason to engage his students during the learning. He said “*if the students are more engaged by sharing idea or giving respond during learning, so they will have more knowledge about the lesson. They will also have better understanding of what I say.* This data means, when the students are engaged during the learning, for example participate to answer questions or collaborate in discussion or solving problem, so it contributes to students’ better understanding.

2. Engagement is needed for cognitive development

Data 21 Ap6/P115/L85-L93

RS : So, why must you engage your students during the learning descriptive text through online learning Sir?

TC : A teacher, of course he wants his students to be engaged in every learning process, right? In my opinion, students' engagement will affect their cognitive development, their way of thinking. Why did I do that? Yes because I want to develop their cognitive, I want my students to get new knowledge from every lesson that I give. When they understand what I say, it means that our learning process is successful and of course, the learning objectives will be more achieved.

RS : Yeah, I think so.

Data 21 was analyzed by using the concept of the engagement is needed for cognitive development. In this data, the teacher told his reason in engaging students during learning descriptive text through online. He said: *In my opinion, students' engagement will affect their cognitive development, their way of thinking.* This means, when students were engaged in learning, they would gain more knowledge. They can have better understanding of the lesson; they can think critically, they can solve problems, etc. So, this can affect the students’ cognitive development. In the next sentence, the teacher also re-emphasized the reason for engaging students in learning. He said: *Why did I do that? Yes because I want to develop their cognitive, I want my students to get new knowledge from every lesson that I give.* So, it can be concluded that students’ engagement can give big effect for students’ cognitive development.

Based on the data analysis, the result of this study was found that there were two teacher’s reasons to engage his students during the learning First, teacher said that the engagement contributes students' better understanding and second is the engagement is needed for cognitive development.

Based on the research, it could be said that teacher had positive reason of engaging students in learning. Furthermore, giving appreciating words is important point to encourage students to be more engaged in class interaction. Beside, teacher can give students reward if they can answer questions while studying online. This is one way to treat students to be enthusiastic in learning. Then, teacher should be more creative. The online teacher must have a variety of techniques, methods or ways so that students do not get bored in learning. Teachers can use interesting learning media by combining funny pictures, music, interesting colors, etc.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, a conclusion was stated that there were two reasons why the students were engaged by the teacher in learning descriptive text through online learning based on theorist, they were: (1) the engagement contributed on students' better understanding and (2) the engagement is needed for cognitive development.

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