

TEACHERS' PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH ONLINE LEARNING

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Abstract: This study aims to describe the problems that English teachers faced in online teaching and learning activities during the Covid-19 pandemic and how they solved them. The respondents of this study were two English teachers, IT staff, and twenty-five students of State Senior High School 3 of Banyuasin III, South Sumatra, Indonesia. Teachers' solutions to these problems were to allow students with a lack of facilities to go to the school with health protocols that they must obey. As for difficulties in delivering online lessons, the teachers tried to create exciting learning media and provided group discussions for students.

Keywords: Online Learning, Online Teaching, English, Covid-19, Problems, Solutions

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the pandemic, online learning is implemented massively, even though face-to-face learning is still significantly better than online learning (Anderson, 2018), but for some urgent reasons or unexpected situations like an outbreak of a contagious virus that makes people must keep their distances from each other, online learning is the best choice to be implemented due to the effort to stop the spreading of Corona Virus Disease from Wuhan, China that has become worldwide pandemic since its outbreak on December 2019.

Before the pandemic, teaching and learning activities were primarily conducted face-to-face in the actual classroom, so the implementation of online learning needs more adjustment, and in the process of making teachers and students get used to online teaching and learning activities, problems tend to appear and

make the teachers struggled in teaching online. Problems in conducting online teaching faced by teachers are their disability in using technology, facilities that teachers have and facilities that schools provide are not sufficient to support online teaching and learning activities, and other problems such as the difficulty in explaining the lesson material and lousy internet connection problem can also be reasons why teachers are not ready to teach online (Lestiyawati and Widyanoro, 2020). Therefore, it can be said that the sudden massive implementation of online learning brings a massive change to educational activities.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Online Learning

Online learning does not require students and teachers to meet in the classroom (Anderson, 2018) physically. Online learning uses technology in education (Fuadi et al., 2020). Online learning is an open system that spreads with pedagogy devices (education tools) through the internet and technology-based networking to facilitate teaching and learning processes (Arnesi and Hamid, 2015).

Characteristics of Online Learning

Online learning is predominantly facilitated and distributed with electronic tools (Abaidoo and Arkorful, 2014). Characteristics of online learning as it depends on the use of technology, it is improving with the advance of computers (digital media and computer networking), it has independent lesson material that can be accessed by teachers and students anytime and anywhere, and it adapts to study schedule (Muntinah, 2015).

Advantages of Online Learning

Online learning can save time for the teachers as they can find many ready-made materials for students from the online database (Zounek and Sudický, 2012). The implementation of online learning can provide flexibility of time and place for teachers and students in the knowledge delivering and receiving activities (Abaidoo and Arkorful, 2014).

Disadvantages of Online Learning

Despite its significant advantages, online learning also has many disadvantages; online learning can cause resentment toward unmotivated students with poor learning habits due to teachers' expectation that students should be able to study independently. (Zounek and Sudický, 2012). The disadvantage of online learning, especially for teachers, is the difficulty of assessing students' tests. It will be hard for the teachers to control students' bad habits such as cheating (Abaidoo and Arkorful, 2014). The disadvantages of online learning are limited interaction between teachers and students, the tendency to ignore social aspects, teaching and learning processes tend to be more training as it is relatively new to be implemented that massive, therefore, there were limitations such as limited access to an electronic device and online platform to conduct online teaching and learning activities (Muntinah, 2015).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used the descriptive qualitative method to identify the problems that English teachers faced in conducting online teaching and learning activities and to know the teachers' solutions to solve those problems. The respondents of this study were two English teachers, IT staff, and twenty-five students in eleventh grade, which were chosen with nonrandom convenience sampling as students were chosen based on their availability at the given time. In collecting data for this study, the guided interview was used, which means that there were questions prepared beforehand to conduct the interview. There was also a close-ended questionnaire that was distributed to twenty-five students.

Three data analysis steps were used in this study; the analysis steps were data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was used to determine which data to be displayed and which data to be discarded from the recorded data of the interview and written data of the questionnaire. The next step was data display; after reducing the unnecessary data, the interview and questionnaire data were displayed descriptively. As for the questionnaire, it was also displayed with a chart.

4. FINDINGS

Problems in Online Teaching and Learning Activities

"No, not all students have a smartphone." – Alex Sander

Besides the problem of not all students having smartphones to conduct online learning, there was also the problem with a bad internet connection to conduct the online teaching and learning activities. Below is the part of the interview section with English teacher two about this problem.

"There is an internet connection problem because we live in a rural area." – Listriasydy.

Difficulties in Delivering Online Lessons

The second problem that teachers faced was difficulties in delivering online lessons. One of the difficulties was measuring students' abilities directly as what the teachers can do in face-to-face teaching and learning—the art of the interview section about this problem is as follows.

"Even with the tests that I gave them, it cannot measure the accuracy of students' understanding of the lesson, as sometimes they find the answers from Google." – Alex Sander.

Still, with difficulties in delivering an online lesson, there was also a problem with students who did not know how to use the application to open lesson material. Below is the part of the interview section about this problem.

"There are many students who did not know how to use an application such as Microsoft PowerPoint, so when I wanted them to open the lesson material with this application...." – Listriasydy

Especially during the pandemic when teachers and students conduct teaching and learning activities from different locations. Therefore teachers need to have skills in using technology to face challenges in online teaching and learning activities. Below are some solutions that the teachers came up with to solve their online teaching and learning activities problems.

Solutions for Lack of Facilities Problem

To solve the problems with the lack of facilities, the English teachers came up with solutions as follows.

Provide more extended deadlines for students

As the first solution to this problem, the English teachers provided more extended deadlines for students to join online classes. Therefore, it gave a chance to all students to join the class and submit the assignment. Below is the part of the interview section with the teacher.

"The solution is to give them a longer deadline in joining the online class to go to the school and use computers at the school." – Alex Sander.

Allow students to go to the school

After providing a more extended deadline, the second solution was to allow students who lack facilities to go to school for using computers at the school or submitting their assignments offline.

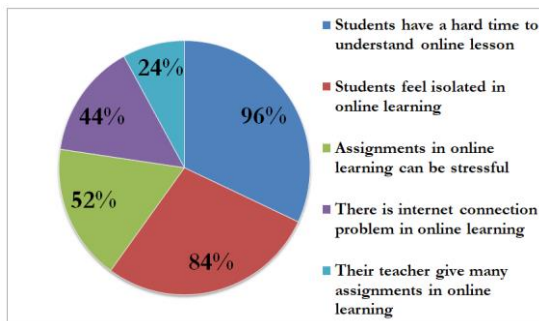
In addition to students who wanted to use computers at the school or submit their assignments offline, there was a rule that they must obey, as stated by the IT staff in the interview section.

"Yes, the students were allowed to go to school for taking and submitting their assignments with health protocols of Covid-19 that they must obey." – Januar Sandri.

Solutions for Difficulties in Delivering Lessons Online

In addition to problems in online teaching and learning activities, it was not only the teachers who faced problems, but the students also faced problems in conducting online learning. The students' problems in conducting online learning are presented in the chart as follows.

Chart 1. Students' Problems



More than half of the students who participated in this study agreed that assignments in online learning could stress them. However, it means that many students disagreed with this statement, as some of them stated that their English teacher did not give many assignments in online lessons, so that can be why some students agreed and some did not.

Solutions for Solving the Problems in Online Teaching and Learning

Teachers of the 21st century need to master the lesson content, and they must have teaching skills and be able to integrate the teaching activity with technology (Jan 2017).

English teachers came up with the following solutions to solve problems with the difficulties in delivering online lessons.

Provide exciting learning media for students

The teachers tried to create online lesson material as enjoyable as possible to make the students interested in online learning. Below is the part of the interview section with the teacher.

"I used media such as video and PowerPoint to make the lesson material interesting so that it can make students pay more attention to the lesson." – Alex Sander.

Provide group discussion to discuss the lesson

Online group discussions can be beneficial for online teaching and learning activities; therefore, the teachers created online group discussions on a few online platforms to help the students with online lessons and also help students to feel less lonely since they can communicate with their friends through the online platforms that the teachers provided for them. Below is the part of the interview section with the English teacher.

"I provide groups on WhatsApp, Telegram, and Google Classroom. However, mostly, I use WhatsApp because students know how to use it." – Listriasydy

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that problems that teachers faced in teaching English through online teaching and learning activities were divided into two main problems, the lack of facilities and difficulties in delivering the online lesson, and there were also students' problems with stress and loneliness feelings that the teachers solved. The lack of facilities problem that the teachers faced was that not all students had smartphones for joining the online class and lousy internet connection also disturbed the online teaching and learning activities. In order to solve those problems, the teachers gave more extended deadlines for students who had those problems; the teachers also allowed those students to go to the school with health protocols of Covid-19 that they must obey, and those students could also choose to take and submit the assignment offline, or they can use

computers at the school. The difficulties in delivering an online lesson the teachers faced, such as directly measuring students' abilities. Another difficulty in delivering online lessons was that not all students knew how to use an application such as PowerPoint to open the lesson material that the teachers shared. Therefore, the teachers came up with a solution such as providing interesting lesson material to make students pay more attention to the lesson in online learning. The teachers also tried to help the students who could not open applications for online learning by taking screenshots of the lesson material and sharing it on the group, e.g., WhatsApp. The teachers tried to help students who had loneliness and stress problems by providing online group discussions on Whatsapp, Telegram, or Google Classroom to help students discuss the part of the online lesson that they did not understand. The teachers can explain it again. The online group discussions also help students feel less lonely, as they can communicate through the teachers' platforms.

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