ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC : ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the English teachers perspective on the advantages and challenges (difficulties) of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. This research uses the case study method through interviews involving 4 respondents (English teachers) from various Public Schools in Riau, Indonesia. The results show that online learning is very effective and efficient, especially in terms of time and place in teaching, and can save cost on going to school an can be accesed anywhere and anytime. However, they also experienced some difficulties in preparing suitable teaching materials and methods to make the learning process interesting and teachers experience difficulties in monitoring or supervising students remotely and it is feared that they will not understand the lessons that have been delivered. The implication of this study calls for the online learning needs to be further evaluated to make it more efficient and effective in the future. So that when doing online learning it can minimize the challenges (difficulties) faced.

Keywords: *Covid-19 Pandemic, English Teachers, Online Learning, Perspective, Public Schools*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini menyelidiki perspektif guru bahasa inggris tentang keuntungan dan tantangan (kesulitan) pembelajaran online selama pandemic Covid-19. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi kasus melalui wawancara yang melibatkan 4 responden (guru bahasa inggris) dari berbagai sekolah negeri di Riau, Indonesia. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran online sangat efektif dan efisien terutama dalam hal waktu dan tempat dalam pengajaran, serta dapat menghemat biaya ke sekolah dan bisa diakses dimanapun dan kapanpun. Namun, mereka juga mengalami kesulitan dalam menyiapkan bahan dan metode pengajaran yang sesuai untuk membuat proses pembelajaran menjadi menarik serta guru mengalami kesulitan dalam memantau atau mengawasi siswa dari jarak jauh dan dikhawatirkan mereka tidak memahami pembelajaran yang telah disampaikan. Implikasi dari penelitian ini adalah pembelajaran daring perlu dilakukan evaluasi lebih lanjut agar lebih efisien dan

Kata Kunci: *Pandemi Covid-19, Guru Bahasa Inggris, Pembelajaran Online, Perspektif, Sekolah Negeri*

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efektif di masa mendatang. Sehingga ketika melakukan pembelajaran secara daring dapat meminimalisir tantangan-tantangan (kesulitan) yang dihadapi.

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by the SARS Coronavirus (SARS COV-2) which was discovered in Wuhan, China. This causes a pandemic that can affect all aspects of human life, especially in the field of education. Since March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Covid-19 a pandemic due to its exponential spread globally. The government of the Republic of Indonesia immediately issued Government Regulation (GR) No. 2 of 2020 concerning Large-Scale Social Restrictions in the Context of Accelerating the handling of corona virus disease 2019 (Covid-19) and Presidential Decree of the Republic of Indonesia No.11 of 2020 concerning the Determination of the Coronavirus Disease Public Health Emergency. The Ministry of Education and Cultured issued Circular No. 3 of 2020 concerning the Prevention of Covid -19 in Education Units and Circular No. 4 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Education in the Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19) Emergency Period. (Wakhudin, 2020 : 1-2).

The Covid-19 pandemic has spread rapidly throughout the world, especially in Indonesia. For this reason, in the context of detention or efforts to overcome this, Educational Institutuions are temporarily closed to reduce the impact of exposure to millions of students from the Coronavirus. Disturbances in the direct learning process between students and teachers and cancellation of learning assesments have an impact on the psychology of students and the decline in the quality of student skills. Aji (2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has had an significant impact on the world of education. The learning process forces us to do it online which was originally done face-to-face. So teachers or students are required to be able to adapt to the new learning environment by using applications that support the online learning process. Such as Zoom Meeting and Google Meet Aplications which display both visually and audio as well as WhatsApp Groups, Google Classroom, etc,.

During the online learning process, there are many challenges and several advantages faced by students and educators (teachers and lecturers). The challenges or obstacles faced are that they must be able to face dilemmas during the teaching and learning process in the Covid-19 era, in seeking and optimism these online learning facilities. We are required to learn independently in understanding the learning material provided. However, in every obstacles there must be an advantage. In this case, students or educators can access learning materials anywhere and anytime. One point that need to

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be realized early on is the importance of realizing success in online English learning. Azzahro (2021).

There are several previous studies related to the opinions of Lecturers or Teachers, both problems or challenges as well as advantages in the process of implementing online learning. First, Fitria, et al (2022) stated that in online learning, lecturers were satisfied with their lectures for 4 semesters even though there were challenges or obstacles such as difficulties in preparing materials that had to be creative and interesting so that students were more participatory, enthusiastic, and interactive. In addition, the difficulty in determining the assignments to be given, then controlling the class, evaluating and understanding students as well as difficulties in holding mid-test and final-test both orally and in writing. Second, Suartini (2020) stated that during the online lecture process, it was not too significant and ineffective. They found obstacles such as difficulty in delivering material because it was not directly (face-to-face) and limited internet quota so that it was difficult to access the internet. So it needs to be considered in policy making. Third, Anggianita, et al (2020) stated that during the online learning process there were significant differences in the learning atmosphere at home and in the classroom, thus affecting the learning motivation of students and being burdened with internet quotas, especially in areas that have network problems when accessing the internet. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluiate the implementation of online learning and provide maximum results in the future.

Many studies have discussed lecturers' perceptions of online learning during the Covid -19 pandemic, but only a few have discussed the teachers' perspective on the challenges and advantages of learning English in Indonesia during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the researcher wants to review or raise a study with the title " ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC : ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE IN INDONESIA ". For this reason, the problems of this research are : 1) What is the Teachers' View or Perspective on the Online Learning System during the Covid-19 Pandemic? And 2) What are the Advantages and Challenges of Teachers in the Online Learning Process during the Covid-19 Pandemic?.

METHOD

This research uses the case study method to explore an event, program, or activity. (Purbawati 2021). This research focuses on phenomena that occur in real life and also a series of activities that are the focus of attention. It provides information and opinions and describes in detail the situation experienced by individuals whose status is the subject of research. (Salmaa 2021). This study was used to find out the advantages and challenges of learning English during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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This study uses qualitative analysis. The population in this study were English teachers in Riau, Indonesia. The technique used in this research is the cluster sampling technique. Respondent in this study involved 4 teachers as research subjects. The research instrument used to determine the teachers perception of the advantages and challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic is an interview which contains 9 questions.
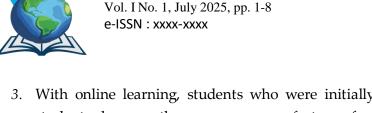
Data analysis in this study includes four processes as proposed by Miles & Huberman in Sugiyono (2017), namely data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and coclusion drawing or verification. In collecting data, researchers recorded all data objectively and according to reality based on the results of interviews in the field. Then, the researcher reduces the data by summarizing, choosing the main things by focusing on the things that are important and discarding those that are not needed in the study. After the data is reduced, the next step is to display or present the data which can be done in the form of a short description or narrative, charts, and relationships between categories. The last step is conclusion and verification, where the researcher summarizes the results of the data collected and analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigates the perspective of English teachers about the advantages and challenges in online learning during Covid-19. Based on the result of research using interviews with English teachers in Riau, Indonesia yielded advantages and challenges.

There are some advantages of online learning based on teachers perspetive :
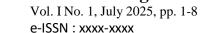
1. Online learning can save costs because students do not need to come to school, only with the internet students can access learning materials for free. As said by respondent I, *"Yes, of course. Because with online learning students don't have to bother coming to school, so students can save on transportation costs and pocket money, so they can be used to save."* Not only respondent I, respondent II also said, *"Yes, Alright. Because with online learning the costs we need are more affordable because we only have the internet instead of learning that is done face-to-face, where we have to pay for transportation . For that, I think online learning is more cost effective."*

2. Online learning can foster students' enthusiasm for learning by using the right method and strategy. As by respondent II said that *"As my experience, the students enthusiasm for learning depends on the competence of the respective teachers. Moreover, learning English in Indonesia regarding students interest in learning English is very low. For that, usually I am as an English teacher have several strategies such as knowing what the students learning style is like, always creating a fun learning atmosphere and not forgetting to also provide support, guidance and motivate students to keep it up of learning English."*

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3. With online learning, students who were initially passive become more active students, because there are so many features from applications that can make students interested in learning materials. As by respondent I said that "*Online learning actually can make students who were initially passive become active, if the teacher involves students in setting goals and student participation during learning activities and determining affective aspects in each learning activity, especially in the form of interaction between sudents.*"

4. With online learning students are more motivated in learning and can improve the quality of their learning because it is easier to access the material provided and understand it. As by respondent I said that "*Yes. If the teacher maximizes learning facilities and effort to build students motivation in online learning.*" Respondent III also said that "*Yes. Because student can easily access material that they may need understand by Youtube, Google and others.*"

5. In terms of place and time, online learning is more efficient and flexible than face-to-face because it can be accessed anywhere and anytime. All respondents said which is like Respondent IV said that "*Online learning more effective and efficient than face-to face in terms of place and time, because students can access it anytime and anywhere. which is can study can determine the time whenever we want to study, especially if there are obstacles when a teacher can not enter the class, such as training or other activities, so you can replace the study time at anytime.*"

Apart from the advantages, there are also challenges during online learning, incuding :

1. Difficulty in preparing teaching materials that are appropriate or suitable for use so that students easily to understand the material provided and do not easily feel bored. As by respondent II said that "*For the first time, I find it difficult to relate to teaching materials that are suitable for use in every application that is used, because each application has its own features, so I have to think about what kind of teaching materials are suitable if we use applications such as Zoom Meeting or Google Classroom. But, over time I finally got used to making teaching materials that are suitable for use in the online learning process.*"

2. Lack of stable internet connection so that students lose the informations provided. As by all respondents said like Respondent II said that "*Especially in terms of internet connection which is less stable and even some students complain about the network in their area is not good, so they have to fall behind in their subject or less information be provided.*"

3. Difficulty in supervising students remotely whether they are actually studying or not, because there is no direct interaction between teachers and students. As by respondent II said that "*The biggest challenge in my experience is the difficulty to*

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control students, whether they are studying or not and understanding the material presented or even falling asleep while studying and the students is doing other things with his/her gadget."

4. There are some students who do not have handphone so they can not join in studying with other students. As by respondent I said that *"not being able to contact parents to buy handphone that can support the learning process for their children."*

During the Covid-19 pandemic, English teachers implemented online learning for 2 years. Seen from the perspective of the teachers, online learning is effective but not too significant which has advantages and challenges in the learning process. The advantages is that they are easier to teach because they can be accessed anywhere and anytime, meaning they have the flexibility of time and place to teach and can save costs. But, English teachers also have challenges or difficulties in carrying out online learning such as difficulties in preparing teaching materials, controlling or supervising students remotely, causing concerns about students' abilities and grades, as well as overcoming students who do not have internet connections, and interference with the device being used.

This results is in line with the findings of Prasistyo etal.'s (2022) that online learning has several positive and negative things. The positif things is hat it an be accessed anywhere and anytime so it is more flexible. The negative things is that teachers cannot control students directly and there are lots of complaints about the internet connection that is not good. While the findings studied by Suartini (2020) have differences, they state that online learning is not effective and needs to be evaluated further. But, according to his, online learning also has advantages such as being more flexible.

Online learning has an impact on teachers and students both positively and negatively. (Qori Imam, 2020). Online learning can foster student motivation and enthusiasm for learning and can make students more independent and responsible. In addition, online learning can increase student activity which is driven by the many features of technology that can make students interested and learn according to their easy-to-understand learning styles. In addition, online learning also has disadvantages such as difficulties in monitoring students and also difficulties in delivering material. Online learning becomes less effective because it must have a good internet connection and supporting devices during the learning process, as well as difficulties in preparing suitable teaching materials so that the learning process is more interesting and not monotonous which can make students not easily bored and not enthusiastic to learn.

CONCLUSION

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Most English teachers implement online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, using various application features that support the learning. During online learning they have various advantages and challenges. As for advantages of doing online learning, 1) online learning save costs, can foster spirit of learnig, and can make students more active. 2) students are more motivated in learning, thus improving the quality of their learning because it easy to understand the subject matter given. 3) they have flexibility in time and place. English teachers also have experience difficulties or challenges in conducting online such as, 1) difficulty in preparing teaching materials. 2) internet connection handphone that are not supported. 3) they have difficulty controlling and supervising students remotely. 4) it is difficult to develop students emotional character. After doing online learning they feel satisfied and efficient even it is not too significant. English teachers find online learning more interesting than offline learning. In the future, it is hoped that there will evaluation of online learning , so that it gets maximum and more efficient.

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