

INVESTIGATING A TEACHER'S STRATEGIES TO TEACH ENGLISH DURING COVID 19 PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

Teaching strategy is a crucial element of teaching and learning process especially when students and teachers cannot meet directly due to the covid-19. Technology and internet access become essential to connect them, but for schools that do not have technology and internet access, it will be difficult to conduct the teaching and learning process. The condition appears in MA Al Ikhsan Beji where most of students stay in Islamic boarding school, and they are not allowed to bring their mobile phones. Therefore, this research focuses on the strategies used by the English teacher of MA Al Ikhsan Beji. This study was a descriptive quantitative research. The researchers employed interview sheet and questioner to gather the data. Then, the researchers analysed the data obtained through data coding, data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion. This study revealed there were some strategies employed by the English teacher. The teacher used planning, drafting, and writing in teaching writing, and she also employed bottom up strategy to teach reading. Meanwhile, dialogue was the strategy for teaching speaking. In short, limited technology encountered by the teacher had been overcome by implementing several teaching strategies.

Keywords: teaching strategy; limited technology; Islamic boarding school

INTRODUCTION

Teaching strategy is one of the significant aspects of teaching and learning process. According to Thompson (2012), teaching strategy is an approach used across curricular areas to

support the learning of students. Teaching strategy should be well-prepared, so the students can achieve the learning objectives and enjoy the teaching and learning process. Every teacher as the facilitator has a role to choose the most effective strategies needed.

Nowadays, we have different teaching and learning situation. It is caused by novel Corona virus or also well-known as Corona virus. Many schools should do the teaching and learning process online. The phenomenon makes new challenge for education world. According to Aniuranti et al., (2022) add that during online classes, the challenges can be faced by several parties such as teachers, students, parents, and those problems may vary. Marisa & Ningsih (2022) add that the significant problems of online learning are encountered by students and teachers. Online learning can minimize the infection of the virus, but this condition forces schools to create new teaching strategies. The strategies are important to make student keep studying even though they should study at home. The strategies employed should be suitable with students' environment. Students in city centre probably have easy internet access. On the contrary, the students of Islamic boarding schools cannot access the internet easily.

Islamic boarding school is one of the alternative education which combines Islamic value and education. According to Solichin (2019), Islamic boarding schools are traditional educational institutions that bear and grow together with the arrival of Islam to Java. Thus, Islamic boarding school constitutes the oldest educational institutions and native (indigenous) in Indonesia. One of school in Banyumas that has boarding school is MA Al Ikhsan. The school is a school that using Islamic value as main points of the school.

Many students of MA Al Ikhsan Beji stay at Al Ikhsan Islamic Boarding School. They have many activities besides school. Most of their activities are done outside the dormitory, but covid-19 has changed it. They cannot do their activities as usual. They should do all of their activities at dormitory including learning process normally done at school. This online or distance teaching learning leads to a new problem for students because they are not allowed to bring mobile phone and laptop. At same time, students should study together in the hall with other students in different level. They are grouped based on their classes.

This situation forces the teacher to prepare some strategies in teaching English. In normal condition, the teacher can meet the students directly, so that teaching English is commonly done by integrating some skills. In pandemic era of Covid 19, the teacher should make new strategies

to teach classes. The role of teacher in this case is required to make effective learning process. According to Sarode (2018), an effective teaching strategy helps students to achieve their goals and success in life.

Based on the fact, researcher wants to conduct a research about phenomenon of English teacher strategies to teach students in pandemic era. There are some previous studies discussed teacher's strategies in teaching English during the attack of covid-19. First, there is a study from Sarjan & Mardiana (2017). She conducted research about an English teacher strategy on reading comprehension. There were two strategies called Scaffolding and SQR. Second, there is also a research from Utami (2020). She analysed an English teacher strategies in pandemic era. This study showed that in writing activity, the teacher had some strategies namely planning, drafting, and editing. In listening, teacher used a song as media. Third study came from Lestrai, et al., (2019). She discussed about English Teaching Strategies for Young Learners in an International Primary School in Surakarta. The strategies are divided into several parts. The parts are planning, teaching implementation, and assessing.

Based on the previous studies, researcher did not find research about English Teacher strategies which conducted to Islamic Boarding School especially Islamic Boarding school that does not have any internet access. Therefore, researchers did a research that conducted in MA Al Ikhsan Beji. This study was used to find out the English teacher's strategies to teaching during pandemic era of Covid 19.

METHOD

In this research researcher used descriptive quantitative research focusing on English teacher's strategies to teach classes in Pandemic era of Covid 19 at MA Al Ikhsan Beji. The method was used to analyse and identify kinds of teaching strategies. Qualitative research is a study of behaviour in natural setting or uses people's accounts as data and usually no manipulation of variables (Baverly et al., 2007). Furthermore, they added that qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. In short, qualitative research is a research analysing a phenomenon in society without changing the variables.

One of types of qualitative research is descriptive qualitative. According to Sandelowski (2000), descriptive qualitative studies researcher do not penetrate in any interpretive depth. Those studies present comprehensive summary or phenomenon or of events. In conclusion, descriptive

qualitative research was a research that gives a summary of a phenomenon or events. Researcher could explore phenomenon or event using the method. The exploration could give new information or detail of an event based on investigation, analysis and validation of data.

The subject of this research was an English teacher of MA Al Ikhsan Beji. The researchers collected the data through an interview with the teacher. Then, to support the data, the researchers also administered a closed questionnaire to some students. The total number of the students was 120 students, so the team took 10% of the population (12 students). The data from the questionnaire were analysed through simple statistics descriptive analysis such as mean and percentage. Meanwhile, after collecting the data from the interview, the researchers analysed the data through some phases. Saleh (2010) states that there are some stages in analysing the data called coding, reducing data, displaying data, and drawing conclusions or interpretations. Here are the explanations:

1. Coding

In qualitative research, data coding plays a crucial role in the process of data analysis and determining the quality of data abstraction of research results. Codes in qualitative research are short words or phrases that symbolically summarize, highlighting the message, and capturing the essence of a portion of data. This encoding can be based on language or visual data. In short, codes are short words or phrases that contain the essence of a data segment.

2. Data reduction

Reducing data means summarizing, choosing the main thing, focusing on the things that are important. Thus, the reduced data will provide a clearer view, and make it easier for researchers to conduct data collection, and look for it if necessary. Data reduction can be assisted with equipment, such as computers, notebooks, and so on.

3. Data display

Data display is the process to simply the data in the form of sentence, narrative, or table. Data display refers to show data that have been reduced in the form of patterns. It benefits to help the researcher in understanding the data.

4. Drawing conclusion

This stage can be called as final stages of a research. In this stage, researchers find a valid result after investigating. Commonly in qualitative research is new findings that have

never before existed. The result can be from description or description of an object. Hypothesis from researcher becomes clear after investigating and relating data based on fact or theory.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Based on the interview there are several strategies of English teacher. They are three different strategies. They are as follows:

1. Strategy of Writing

a. Planning

“Biasanya dalam tahap planning saya akan beri contoh dulu dalam bentuk print out. Kemudian di dalamnya saya biasanya memberikan intruksi ke pengurus agar anak mengamati contohnya dulu di halaman pertama print out untuk kemudian akan mengamati halaman berikutnya setelah mengamati halaman contoh” (Commonly, in planning stage, I give printed material that consists of an example on the first page. Then, I tell the committee to ask the student to observe the example given first. Then, they can continue to the next pages.)

b. Drafting

“Pada tahap ini pengurus akan memandu siswa menulis point point apa saja yang akan mereka tulis dalam sebuah surat. Hal ini termasuk siapa penerima suratnya dan alamat (In this step, the committee will guide the students to wrote the points that they are going to write in a letter including the receiver and the address).

c. Writing

“Setelah membuat draf penulisan nanti siswa akan membuat langsung surat mereka (After drafting process, the student directly will write their letter)”

Teacher’s statements about writing strategies are supported by the students. The result of question no 9 and 12 support this finding. In item 9, most of the students (58.3%) strongly agree that their teacher often gives tasks in form of writing and reading. Item number 12 also shows that most of the students (50%) strongly agree that the teacher gives assignments that train creativity of students.

Based on interview, most of the assignments given are reading and writing. In process of writing, students do the stages of planning, drafting, and writing. In those processes, the

students' creativities may develop directly. In planning, the students arrange their idea. Then, in drafting process, their collect their idea into some points. The whole points written before they turn their idea into a letter. Process of finding, arranging and writing of an idea to make a letter makes an improvement of students' creativity. They can express their own idea freely.

2. Strategy of Reading

"Kita kasih nanti sebuah teks lalu anak anak mencari kata kata sulit dalam teks tersebut. Kan mereka berarti sambil membaca dan mencari kata kata sulit. Nanti saya cek apakah perlu peningkatan atau tidak (We provide a text, then, the students should find out the difficult words in the text. It means that while reading they are looking for the difficult words. Then, I will check whether they need improvement or not)"

The students also expressed that the teacher often gave exercises in writing and reading activities. This can be seen from the result of the questionnaire (item 9). Most of the students (53.8%) strongly agreed that the teacher frequently gave writing and reading exercise. In short, the strategy used in reading can be called as bottom up strategies. This is caused by the teacher's decision to ask her students understand the difficult words first while trying to understand the whole text.

3. Strategy of Speaking

"Biasanya untuk skill seperti speaking itu nanti akan di latih oleh pengajar bahasa pondok. Biasanya materi yang ada di program bahasa pondok itu mengikuti materi yang di ajarkan di sekolah. Jadi siswa juga tetap mendapat kemampuan speaking (Generally, in speaking area, English teacher of Islamic boarding school will help them. Normally, the materials taught in boarding school are the same with the materials at school. So, the students still get speaking skill.)

The teacher's statement about speaking strategy applied is supported by the data from the questionnaire (number 11). Most of the students (50%) strongly agreed that the English teacher often collaborated with the boarding school committee to teach the students. Furthermore, the result of questioner number 2 also showed that most of the students (50%) strongly agreed the teacher gave the students change to have question and answer session with the teacher through virtual interaction facilitated by committee from the boarding school. This virtual interaction was conducted through *Whatsapp*.

Discussion

1. Strategy of writing

In writing process, teacher uses strategy of planning, drafting and writing to develop students' writing skill. According to Alves (2008), process of writing may be a more effective method of teaching writing as it helps to focus on process of creating text through the various stages idea, drafting, revising, and editing. Those strategies are nature to students develop their idea and put it in written form for example in drafting process students concentrate to produce their idea.

Richard & Ranandya (2002) point that drafting is specialized by the students to concentrate to make it fluent in writing. In addition, teacher's strategy is possible strategy to support teaching learning process of students who stay at Islamic boarding school. In the writing strategy students make construction before produce written form. Harmer (2007) states that stages of writing divided into four stages. They are planning, drafting, editing, and final version.

In this study, the teacher only employed planning, drafting and writing stages. This was caused by the limitation of the facility. The teacher could not reach the students directly through online teaching platforms. Finally, the teacher used printed material then gave to the committee of the boarding school. The cut of writing process also appeared because the teacher and students had limited access to communicate. The teacher could not control the students directly. For instance, in process of editing, the teacher could not give comment to the students' work and ask them to revise their work, therefore, the teacher skipped revising phase. Three stages (planning, drafting and writing) in teaching writing was the adjustment from the teacher to solve the problem.

2. Strategy of Reading

In teaching reading, there were several steps used. They were providing a text, asking the students to find out difficult word while reading the text, asking the students to answer some questions related to text, and giving explanations on a note given to the committee. This strategy was in line with reading strategies discussed by Klein & Whitehead (2012). One of

reading strategies is called Bottom-Up Strategy. This strategy is generally used at the beginning of class learning, and is also used to understand the text that has a high degree of difficulty. The difficulties encountered could be a matter of language, can also be about the content of the text and methods used in this strategy is to use the method of spelling. In short, this relates to the teacher's statement that the students should find difficult words from the text first.

In addition, Eunjeo in Suraprajit (2019) figure outs that this model is defined as focusing on individual words, pausing for grammatical difficulties and repeated readings. Difficulty finds media to connect between teacher and students directly make this strategy is appropriate to apply students who stay in Islamic boarding school. Students can construct meaning or information in a text before reading activity. However, Islamic boarding school has a lot of dictionaries that they can borrow. This condition makes this strategy suitable for them.

3. Strategy of Speaking

In teaching speaking, the teacher did not mention any specific strategies. She just said that in teaching speaking the teacher gave the students opportunity to communicate with her by doing discussion session facilitated by the committee of the boarding school. The conversation strategy is explained by Hussain (2018). He points out that dialogue is a classroom technique used for practicing functions of language like greeting, agreeing, disagreeing, apologizing, suggesting. In addition, dialogue is process social interaction of people. Rusandi (2021) adds that dialogue is a conversation that is held between two or more people who discuss a problem topic that is done to improve speaking skills, the application of dialogue strategies can also be done online via zoom. Furthermore, Littlewood in Liu (2010) explains that dialogue is one of method based on communicative language teaching which provides whole-task practice, allows natural learning, and create a context which support learning

CONCLUSIONS

Teaching strategies are crucial in every teaching and learning process especially in special condition like online learning. After investigating, the researchers found out some strategies

employed by the English teacher to teach English during pandemic era. In her school, the students do not have any internet access. The teacher used planning, drafting, writing in teaching writing, and she also employed bottom up strategy to teach reading. Meanwhile, dialogue was the strategy for teaching speaking.

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