

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH DISTANCE LEARNING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CASE STUDY IN MAFAZA INTEGRATED SMART SCHOOL (MISS) NATIONAL PLUS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MALANG

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Abstract

Covid-19 pandemic has made all activities of the community very limited. Teaching and learning activities in schools must also be carried out by distance learning. Thus, this research aims to dig deeper information about how distance learning of English is carried out at MISS National Plus Elementary School Malang. In addition, researchers are also looking for supporting factors and inhibiting factors for the implementation of teaching and learning English through distance learning during Covid-19 pandemic. This research is a case study conducted at MISS National Plus Elementary School Malang with a qualitative research design. This is due to the MISS National Plus Elementary School is a elementary school level which use dual curriculum, those are K13 and Cambridge Curriculum. So, English is the everyday language used in schools in formal or informal contexts. The subject of this research is a grade 1 English teacher. Qualitative research instrument is the researcher himself because the researcher has full authority in collecting and analyzing data. So that, researcher collects the data through observation and interview. The result of this research is a description of how the implementation of English teaching through distance learning at MISS National Plus Elementary School, supporting factors and inhibiting factors for the implementation of these activities.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic, Teaching English as Foreign Language, Distance Learning

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia at the beginning of 2020 was shocked by the outbreak of the Covid-19. The virus, which is originated from Wuhan, China, spread rapidly throughout the world, including Indonesia. It indirectly affects toward various aspects of people's life, starting from limiting personal activities to large-scale of social activities. As the one of the countered aspects of Covid-19, education sector has to make a new innovation for teaching techniques during pandemic Covid-19. Based on Ministry of Education and Culture circular letter No. 4 of 2020, point 2, due to the entry of Covid-19 to Indonesia in March 2020, teaching and learning activities in schools must be avoided to prevent the Covid-19 transmission cluster and it is replaced by learning from home or distance learning.

English teaching and learning process has to be conducted, the teacher should perform the activity through distance learning, even though; they

encounter many difficulties. Distance learning activity requires all teachers in the school to work more actively in conducting teaching and learning process. Students are also required to be ready to participate in this learning process. The fundamental problem is about the unpreparedness teacher and students to conduct distance learning process. This can be seen from the changing of lesson plan, the way of delivering information and assignments to students, supporting facilities for distance learning, and the assessment stage which takes longer. Moreover, there are many students who are economically living below the poverty line which makes them difficult to have supporting facilities for distance learning such as computers or Android phones and internet networks.

However, teaching and learning must go on. The ministry of education decided to implement social distancing to prevent the spread of Covid-19 in the world of education. Malang city education office also responded to the provisions of the Ministry of Education to continue the socialization of the implementation of study from home for all students from kindergarten to senior high school level. Therefore, English teaching and learning process should be conducted through distance learning.

The problems that occurred in the world of education became the attention of the researcher to conduct research at Mafaza Integrated Smart School National Plus Elementary School Malang (MISS Malang).

MISS Malang is one of national plus elementary school that is quite advanced in Malang city. In terms of location, MISS Malang was located in the strategic area which is close to the center of community's economy and it is an area with a high educational activity. The uniqueness of MISS is a national school which integrates the K13 curriculum and Cambridge curriculum. So that English is the first language of instruction in school. Teacher, staffs and students use English in their daily communication. They speak in English in formal and informal settings. MISS famous with its 4 in 1 program, those are Full English, Full Day, Small Class and Religious Activity. MISS also has many features offered to the students, one of its excellent features is Overseas Field Trip. Therefore, the researcher is interested in taking the research in this school.

The research about the impact of Covid-19 pandemic can be conducted by maximizing electronic media that is used for distance learning. This case is very interesting to dig a deeper information about the implementation distance learning process at MISS National Plus Elementary School Malang, as well as to examine the obstacles and advantages of English teaching and learning process through distance learning applied by teachers at MISS National Plus Elementary School Malang.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

English Teaching in Indonesia

Indonesia, which has various ethnic groups with different languages and cultural backgrounds, has more than 400 regional languages that are spoken with different dialects. They are united with the national language, Bahasa Indonesia. While English is the first foreign language officially taught in Indonesia in order to facilitate Indonesians with international communication skills (Mistar, 2005). Mostly, students of EFL learn English for some different purposes, such as for passing their examination, to develop their career performance, for pursuing their education, etc. In Indonesia, English is a compulsory subject for junior and senior high school level. While in the lower level, such as elementary school and kindergarten, English can be taught as a content subject since English is not a compulsory subject for them.

Therefore, teaching English in MISS National Plus Elementary School Malang is teaching English as Foreign Language or TEFL. Quoted from the vision and mission of the MISS National Plus Elementary School where this research was conducted, although English is a foreign language for them, MISS makes English as their main language of instruction in schools. Two or more languages are best acquired from the earliest age in natural use. Broughton et al. (1980) stated that two or more languages are best acquired from the earliest age in natural use. Therefore, teacher should know the competencies required by EFL teacher.

Distance Learning

Distance learning is automatically supported by utilizing many innovations in information and communication technology (ICT). Darmawan (2011) mentions that at least there are two significant advantages in utilizing ICT for distance learning. First, ICT as the booster for education community (teachers, lecturers, trainers) to be more creative in maximizing educational process. Second, ICT gives the opportunity for the learners to access and develop the learning material from unlimited sources. Munir (2009) also stated in his book that the utilization of ICT in Education is expected to be able to improve the successful teaching and learning process, reduce the number of children who forced to abandon their school life, and to get equal educational opportunities that can reach multilayer of people.

2.2.1 Synchronous and Asynchronous learning

Munir (2009) explains that distance learning is surely supported by internet. Internet is a communication network that connects one

and other electronic media. The concept connects between students or between students and resources will be established by *synchronous* or *asynchronous*. Synchronous e-learning is teaching and learning process that the interaction between interconnected components occurs in the same time or real time. It such as the conducting teaching and learning process through online chat or video conferencing. Therefore, it is like a virtual class and it allows learners to ask question to the teacher directly. In contrast, asynchronous is a process interaction between interconnected component does not occur in the same time. Generally, it is facilitated by media such as email and discussion boards, thus the learners are able to access the e-learning environment anytime and download the learning material or send a message to the teacher or mate.

METHOD

In this research, the researcher uses qualitative research design. Qualitative research design enables to conduct in-depth study about a wide variety of topics, including favorite topic. Therefore, the researcher draws and describes the data through qualitative research approach.

The subject of this research is Grade 1 English teacher of MISS National Plus Elementary School Malang. Since MISS National Plus Elementary School Malang is a school with English as their compulsory subject, students must use English in their daily life at school in either formal or informal settings. Grade 1 students are transitional students from kindergarten level which not all students are familiar with English. Automatically, the teacher must have more effort to teach English to grade 1 students. The first grade teacher is a woman with a bachelor's background in education. She is very patient in teaching and able to speak English fluently. From the parents' testimonial, she is a creative teacher and always make a fun learning in the class.

In qualitative research design, The researcher is the key instrument, since the researcher has the authority to determine how to collect and analyze the data.

In collecting the data, researcher undertook two stages, those are observation and interview. Observation was done by attending 5 times online classes that were held. observes how the teacher delivers materials toward the students and the application that they used. Moreover, also takes an important note regarding to the English teaching through distance learning. The important notes that must be considered such as: how teacher starts the

English teaching and learning process, the obstacles that occur during English teaching and factors that support the implementation English teaching.

The data that has been obtained must be arranged into structural patterns, descriptions and categories through the data analysis process (Maleong, 2001). It is important to identify, and analyze data to conclude the findings. These three steps, those are data condensation, data display and drawing conclusion.

In the step of data condensation, the data that appears in the full corpus of written-up field notes or observation and interview transcripts are selected, focused, simplified, abstracted and transformed in order to make the data stronger.

Data display is the process when all the information needed have been collected. The informations are structured, so that conclusion can be drawn. According to Miles and Huberman (1983), qualitative data often presented in the form of narrative text. The presentation of the data will make it easier for the researchers to understand what happened and make it easier for the researchers to do the next plan based on what has been understood.

Conclusions are drawn through the data analysis and discussion process. Credible conclusions must be supported by valid evidence found during the research. The conclusions in qualitative research are new findings that have never existed before.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data that has been collected by the researcher are from the interview and observation process. The researcher described the findings in this chapter into three parts. The first shows the description of the implementation of distance learning during the Covid-19 era. It will explain the steps of the teacher for doing distance teaching and learning process. The tools and application also will be elaborated in this part along with its advantages and weaknesses. The second part described about the supporting factors for conducting distance teaching and learning. And the third part, the obstacles in conducting distance teaching and learning will be elaborated. It was aimed to find the solution to solve the problem.

The Implementation of Distance Learning During The Covid-19 Era

Distance learning in MISS National Plus Elementary School is done in two ways, those are synchronously and asynchronously. Synchronously is conducting online class meeting. So that, students can do online interaction directly with the teacher. Asynchronous is giving interaction, materials and assignment through WhatsApp group application. For this teaching and learning process, the researcher did the observation by joining the online class that was conducted by the English teacher. It was done in five meetings. The teacher preparation and teaching steps will be elaborated in this section. Here are the teacher preparation and teaching steps:

a. Learning Schedule

In MISS Elementary National Plus Elementary School, students have K13 subjects and Cambridge curriculum subject. They were taught by different teacher almost in each subject. In order to make the parents easier to follow the distance learning activity, the Curriculum teacher creates a special schedule during the Learning from home. The teacher divides the learning schedule into 2 weeks, those are week 1 and week 2. In week 1 several lessons are scheduled such as lessons K13, which are thematic. While week 2 is scheduled for subjects consisting of Cambridge curriculum materials, such as Language, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education and Information Technology. By arranging a schedule like this, parents can more easily help their children to study from home, and students can also focus more on learning.

b. Learning Instrument

Every new school year begins, the teacher must prepare several teacher administrations as teaching guidelines for one school year. The learning instrument prepared by teacher in MISS National Plus Elementary School are:

1. Syllabus

Syllabus is the basic foundation for the delivery of learning materials based on core competencies and basic competencies. Inside it is also written teaching materials, learning activities and student assessments

2. Lesson Plan

Lesson plan is the structured teaching sequence as the guidance for teacher during the learning and teaching activity in the class.

3. Academic Calendar

Academic Calendar is a schedule of learning and academic activities during the school year. It includes the starts of a school year, effective study time and also holidays.

4. Annual Program

Annual program is the materials that must be taught for one academic school year. In annual program is also written the time structure for one academic year. It is aimed that students can achieve the expected standards of competence and basic competencies.

5. Semester Program

Semester program is an arrangement of material that must be taught for one semester. The allocation of teaching time is also written in it. In addition, the semester program also includes student holidays and exam schedules. This makes teachers easier to map the material to be taught

6. KBM

KBM or *Ketuntasan Belajar Minimal* is the minimum score achieved by the students. Functions as a reference for teachers in assessing student competencies according to subject competences. KBM is also used as an evaluation of student learning achievements

c. Teaching Materials

The material for teaching can be in the form of video, power point or handout. Teacher will show the materials on the screen during teaching and learning process.

d. Synchronous Learning

For synchronous learning, teacher uses Zoom application or Google meet to create the online class meeting. Each application has its advantages and weaknesses, so choosing which application will be used to create an online class meeting depends on the material requirements. The teaching and learning process is carried out regularly according to the lesson plans that have been made by the teacher as a teaching guide. The steps will be elaborated as follows:

1. Pre-activity

Teacher gives the link for online class via WhatsApp group 15 minutes before starting the class and asks student to prepare the book. When the meeting starts, teacher greets students and asks students to pray together. Teacher also starts, teacher greets students and motivates students to always do a healthy lifestyle and keep the spirit of learning from home.

2. Learning delivery process

To deliver learning material, teacher usually begins with the question related to the new material. Teacher explores the students knowledge about the material that will be taught in order to gain the students interest and curiosity. Teacher also do the apperception to link the student's prior knowledge with the new knowledge. Then, teacher inform to the students about the material that they will learn and discuss in the meeting. The teacher explains directly to

students because this learning is carried out synchronously or face to face mediated by online services. Teacher also uses some features that is provided by the application such as share screen and whiteboard features. Teacher can display pictures, power points or videos about the material to be taught. Moreover, the teacher can also write notes on the whiteboard feature, so that providing material in a synchronous way is easier.

3. Post-Activity and Evaluation

To end the class, Teacher and students do Question and Answer (Q and A) about the materials. This aims to find out whether students have understood the material that has been taught or not. The teacher gives the question to one-by-one students. In the last session, students concluded the material that had been taught with the help of the teacher. Teacher also motivates students to keep their enthusiasm for learning from home.

4. Assignment

After conducting online class meeting, teacher also gives the assignment to the students for their activity at home. Teacher sends the assignment through WhatsApp Group application. The assignment can be in the form of worksheet document, link that connected to the application or project. If the assignment in the form of worksheet or project, teacher asks students to send the result privately in the form of picture through teacher WhatsApp. However, if teacher uses an application to give the assignment, asks students to click the link provided by the teacher to be able to do their assignment.

e. Asynchronous Learning

The researcher also observes how the teacher conduct the distance learning asynchronously through the Whatsapp group. To start the learning, the teacher greets the member of Whatsapp group which is contains of grade 1 parents. Then, teacher gives short explanation about the materials and the activity that must be done by the students. The steps to do asynchronous learning will be elaborated as follows:

1. Pre-Activity

To start learning, the teacher greets students via the WhatsApp group application and asks students' health. the teacher also motivates students to always do a healthy lifestyle and keep the spirit of learning from home.

2. Learning delivery process

In the learning process, the teacher uses several ways to convey the material. Teacher uses video, audio, power points and handouts to construct students' understanding of the material. Then, the teacher gives instructions on the activities that must be carried out by students.

3. Post-Activity

Before closing the class, teacher informs the due date for submitting their assignments in order to make students submit their assignments on time. Teacher also motivates students to keep their enthusiasm for learning from home.

4. Assignment

For assignment is almost the same as synchronous learning. Teacher sent the worksheet or provides a link to the assignments that must be done by students. Teacher uses applications such as Nearpod, quizzes or google form to make student activities more interesting and fun.

f. **Application Used**

To create more fun and innovative learning, the teaching and learning process in MISS National Plus Elementary School uses some applications or web tools. For synchronous learning, teacher uses two kind of applications, those are Zoom Application and Google Meet. While for asynchronous learning, teacher uses Whatsapp, Quizizz, Nearpod and Google Form. In each of those applications have some different advantages and weaknesses.

Supporting Factors

There are some factors that support the teacher to conduct distance teaching and learning. The factors will be elaborated as follows:

1. Media

For distance learning, the media is very necessary to implement it. It is certainly needs the adequate media such as handphone, laptop or computer. Fortunately, almost all students in MISS National Plus Elementary School are coming from upper income family. Therefore, their parents are able to provide the adequate facilities for their children to learn from home.

2. Internet Connection

Internet is an important thing for the implementation of distance learning. Internet connection must be stable for distance learning to run smoothly. Students of MISS National Plus Elementary school live in the Malang City area. Internet connection in the city are is good. So that, students rarely have a problem of internet connection. Consequently, the distance learning can be carried out well.

3. English Teacher in MISS National Plus Elementary School

Although the role of technology can support the learning process, teachers will still be the main key in improving quality and competence in order to create an effective learning atmosphere for students. With various limitations in the Covid-19 pandemic situation, it is a challenge for a teacher to continue learning and practicing online learning. In addition, teachers must be able to present fun and innovative learning to overcome learning difficulties faced and do the collaboration of learning media in order to make an interactive learning atmosphere between teachers

and students. Based on the interview and observation, Teacher in MISS National Plus Elementary School have high learning enthusiasm. They always upgrade their knowledge and abilities. Especially in 4.0 era where technology is increasingly advanced, it makes teacher must be creative in utilizing technology. All teacher in MISS National Plus Elementary school use various kinds of technology-based learning media in implementing distance learning. So that, students can still learn with fun activities while at home.

4. Parents Support

Through distance learning, the implementation of teaching and learning process which is part of teacher's duty cannot be carried out effectively. Thus, the cooperation between teaches and parent is needed. An understanding of the implementation pattern of learning from home must be owned by each parents of students. Especially for students who are in the elementary school level, they desperately need an intense guidance for learning from home. Fortunately, almost all parents at Miss Elementary School are very supportive of the implementation of distance learning that is currently being carried out. They facilitate their child with an adequate media and always accompany their children in learning. They also support children in every activity organized by the school. So that, children can follow every lesson well.

The Obstacles

However, there are several factors that become obstacles to the implementation of distance learning. Those obstacles will be elaborated as follows:

1. Time Agreement

In the implementation of distance learning, an agreement between teachers and parents is needed, one of which is an agreement on a synchronous online schedule. Synchronously or online face to face learning via zoom or google meet, teachers and parents should have time agreement that when students have online class via zoom or google meet, parents can accompany them. But, so far, each class has had a time

agreement between the teacher and parents. So that, online classes can be carried out well.

2. Limited Time

Online class meetings using a free application have a time limit. so that the teacher must really maximize learning during online class meetings. besides, it is also not good for children to stare at the screen of a cellphone or laptop for too long because it can affect the health of their eyes.

3. The lack of parental knowledge about technology

The rapid development of technology requires teacher and parents to always learn. But, unfortunately not all parents are able to understand all the technologies used for distance learning. So, when the teacher gives assignments using technology-based media, the teacher must give very clear instructions along with the steps in doing them.

4. Busyness of Parents

Although the cooperation between teachers and parents is quite good during distance learning, not all parents can support their children optimally. especially when doing assignment at home. Parents are required to understand the assignments and materials provided by the teacher, so that they can guide their children to learn from home. However, busy parents often forget to remind their children to do and collect assignments. So, this can affect student assessment.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of English distance learning at MISS national Plus Elementary School is very good. The teacher uses several kinds of interesting applications to create fun learning activities for their students. Distance learning is carried out in 2 ways, namely synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous learning is carried out by conducting online class meetings. This

opportunity is used by the teacher to provide an explanation of the new material being taught. Therefore students understand more easily if they listen to face-to-face online explanations with their teacher. They also do a discussions and ask and answer questions during online class meetings. While asynchronous is done by the teacher by giving an assignment in the form of a worksheet file, a link that is connected to the assignment that is shared via the WhatsApp group. By utilizing several applications to provide assignments, the task display becomes more colorful and fun in order to make the students become more enthusiastic in doing their tasks.

Several factors support the course of distance learning, such as learning media, internet connection, teachers and support from parents. Learning media and internet connection are needed because this learning is done remotely, so we need help from technology. Creative teachers are able to create an atmosphere and fun learning activities. Therefore students are still excited to learn from home. Support from the parents is also a very important factor. This is because some students still need their parents' help in doing their assignments.

However, there are also some obstacles in the implementation of distance learning, such as the time agreement between parents and teachers in conducting online class meetings. Because some students still need parental assistance, teachers and parents need to make a time agreement when they conduct online class meeting.

Next, time is limited in the zoom application in conducting meetings. In zoom application, users must pay to get unlimited time in conducting online class meetings. This can be overcome by using other applications such as Google Meet which has unlimited time. The last is the lack of knowledge of parents in the use of technology. The teacher must clearly explain the steps and instructions so that parents can understand what activities students should do. This will also resolve itself over time so parents will get used to it and be able to use the applications that are used for learning.

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