

Improving Communication and Collaboration Skills via e-Learning Contents

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Abstract

Developing e-learning contents at a boarding university needs the communication and collaboration skills. This study aims to discuss the strategy of improve the communication and collaboration skills via e-learning contents. This study uses the descriptive qualitative method. Data was collected through observation and interviews with stakeholders and lecturers. This study found that the strategy of improving the communication and collaboration skills via e-learning contents at the boarding university is conducted through four stages. The four stages are access, analysis, evaluation and content creation: (1) The access is made by lecturers and students at the University of Darussalam Gontor in the form of the ability to use and utilize e-learning models. (2) Analysis phase is in the form of the ability of lecturers to find, change and select information relevant to the learning process. The analysis phase also deals with the verification step (*tabayyun*) of the accuracy of the information. (3) Evaluation is in the form of preparation of learning contents adjusted to the real conditions occurring in the community or referred to as contextual learning. (4) Development of learning content is applied to five basic courses in the Communication Studies Program.

Keywords: communication; collaboration skill; e-learning

Pengembangan konten e-learning di pesantren membutuhkan kemampuan komunikasi dan kolaborasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membahas strategi peningkatan keterampilan komunikasi dan kolaborasi melalui konten e-learning. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi dan wawancara dengan stakeholders dan dosen. Studi ini menemukan bahwa strategi peningkatan keterampilan komunikasi dan kolaborasi melalui konten e-learning di pesantren dilakukan melalui empat tahap. Keempat tahapan tersebut yaitu akses, analisis, evaluasi dan pembuatan konten: (1) Akses yang dilakukan oleh dosen dan mahasiswa Universitas Darussalam Gontor berupa kemampuan menggunakan dan memanfaatkan model e-learning. (2) Tahap analisis berupa kemampuan dosen menemukan, mengubah dan memilih informasi yang relevan dengan proses pembelajaran. Tahap analisis juga berkaitan dengan langkah verifikasi (*tabayyun*) keakuratan informasi. (3) Evaluasi berupa penyusunan isi pembelajaran disesuaikan dengan kondisi nyata yang terjadi di masyarakat atau disebut pembelajaran kontekstual. (4) Pengembangan konten pembelajaran diterapkan pada lima mata kuliah dasar di Program Studi Ilmu Komunikasi.

Kata Kunci: komunikasi; kemampuan berkolaborasi; *e-learning*

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Introduction

Society 5.0 is a human-centered technological concept of society and is in collaboration with technology (Artificial intelligent and the Internet of Things) to solve social problems that are integrated in cyberspace and real space. In other words, Society 5.0 is a human-centered and technology-based community. This concept was born as the development of the 4.0 industrial revolution which was considered to potentially degrade the role of humans. Society 5.0 is an information society built upon Society 4.0, aiming for a prosperous human-centered society (Fukuyama, 2018). Through Society 5.0, artificial intelligence will transform big data collected through the internet in all areas of life (the Internet of Things) into a new wisdom, which will be dedicated to increasing human ability to open opportunities for humanity. Innovation in Society 5.0 will reach forward-looking communities to create dynamism: communities whose members respect each other, and where everyone can lead an active and pleasant life.

The era of society 5.0 affects various aspects of life, including the world of education. Higher education as part of the education system in Indonesia is required to make adjustments in the era of society 5.0. Higher education must begin to make adjustment in dealing with the era of society 5.0. Such adjustment must inevitably be made, otherwise the higher education will be left behind. Changes occurring in the era of 5.0 must be addressed wisely to allow universities adapt to the demands of the era. National education needs to consider the developing information in order to make the system which has been

formed relevant to the current development (Atiah, 2020).

Boarding universities as Islamic educational institutions are also required to adjust to the emergence of society 5.0. The adjustment of Islamic boarding university is important to avoid the degradation of the role of human beings in the management of education and learning processes. Islamic education graduates are faced with the unprecedented new challenges that force them to innovate, especially in the curriculum, facilities and infrastructure, competency of resources, and so on (Priatmoko, 2018). Innovation in e-learning contents is also important as an effort by Islamic boarding universities to adjust to the era of society 5.0 which has a combined concept of artificial intelligent and the Internet of Things. Islamic boarding universities in the era of 5.0 are required to be able to adjust to people's demands and needs and strengthen communication and collaboration skills if they want to strengthen their existence. This is important because pesantrens are the "fathers" of Islamic education in Indonesia which were established because of the demands and needs of the era (Mar'ati, 2014).

UNIDA Gontor (Darussalam University of Gontor) as a modern Islamic boarding university should also make adjustments because basically the era of society 5.0 aims to create a new wisdom so as to create opportunities for humanity. This step needs to be taken by UNIDA Gontor to keep competitive in order to preserve and strengthen its existence. Strengthening communication and collaboration skills should also begin, especially in developing e-learning

contents of the weaknesses of the traditional pesantren education is its curriculum which only teaches religious knowledge, so that its graduates are not qualified to take any jobs which require non-religious knowledge, technology and skills. It is the background for renewal in modern pesantren educational institutions (Nurhakim, 2011). Communication and collaboration skills in education at the modern Islamic boarding universities cannot be underestimated because they are themselves the designers of the changes and renewal.

UNIDA Gontor, a university with the boarding system, requires all its students to stay on campus for 24 hours, including the rector and lecturers. Class activities and boarding life are integrated into one. This makes it easier for lecturers to control, coordinate and evaluate student activities related to lectures and boarding life. On the other hand, the lack of knowledge and skills in compiling and documenting learning content raises several obstacles. One of them is that the compiled learning contents are unsuitable with the standard and the subject's learning contents are not well documented. Strengthening communication and collaboration skills is an urgent step to take at UNIDA Gontor. It aims to improve the quality of learning contents and more structured documentation. In addition, e-learning contents can encourage online learning processes to increase active participation in digital networks.

Communication and collaboration skills are a form of active participation in learning and research through digital networks (JISC, 2017). In the context of this research, it is the development

of e-learning contents as learning innovations in the basic subjects of communication science. Learning contents developed through e-learning are the contextual ones that are adapted to real-world social conditions and the learning process is done through cyberspace. This is in line with the concept of society 5.0 which is an integration between artificial intelligent and the internet of things. By engaging in communication and collaboration in the era of society 5.0, Islamic boarding universities will be more competitive. This is because pesantren educational institutions are able to produce graduates who not only master religious knowledge but are also skilled in technology and being able to control it. Pesantren can transform education from old tradition patterns to modern ones by adopting and adapting to the demands of the times without compromising its principles and goals (Rizal, 2011). Adjustment to the era of society 5.0 is one step in adopting and adapting the demands of the times with the aim to strengthen communication and collaboration skills in learning, which in the context of UNIDA Gontor is to make learning more quality and meaningful.

Communication and collaboration skills are important in facing society era 5.0. The data show that Strengthening new literacy is conducted through formal learning in schools where students have been accustomed to sharpening their 4C skills (communication, collaboration, critical and creative) and boarding through data literacy, technology literacy and human resource literacy (Rohman, 2019). Research on strategy of strengthening communication and collaboration skills via e-learning content at boarding

universities is important as an effort to bring forth progress in the world of pesantren especially in the era of society 5.0. Furthermore, this research was conducted to support the ideals of UNIDA Gontor to become a quality and meaningful university and also as the fountain of wisdom. The contribution of this research is in the form of strategies to strengthen communications and collaboration skills in developing e-learning content at the boarding universities.

Method

This study uses descriptive qualitative methods to analyze the strategy of improving communication and collaboration skills via e-learning content in the era of society 5.0. The data in this study were obtained through direct observation and in-depth interviews. Observation was carried out by directly observing the activities of developing e-learning contents in basic subjects of communication science and testing their implementation to students through out the even semester of 2019. Interviews were conducted with policy makers at UNIDA Gontor and lecturers at communication studies, the number of informants are 5 people. Interviews were conducted in-depth about the strategy of improving communication and collaboration skills that affects the development of e-learning contents, which consists of 4 stages including access, analysis, evaluation and content creation. These four strategies are adopted from the concept of digital literacy which consists of access to, manage, integrate, analyze and evaluate information. The ability to manage and integrate in digital literacy is adopted into one capability,

i.e., analysis. Analysis deals with the ability to search, change, and select information adjusted to individual needs. To select information requires the ability to manage and integrate information.

After conducting observations and in-depth interviews, researchers constructed messages obtained from informants and mapped out the strategy of improving communication and collaboration skills via e-learning content by UNIDA Gontor. Data analysis techniques are based on Miles and Huberman's theory, which consists of stages of data reduction, data display, and data conclusion according to the interpretation of researchers (Tamin, 2011). Reduction is done by summarizing, choosing the main points, and focusing on the important items. Presentation of data is in the form of brief descriptions, charts and the like. Conclusion/verification is the third stage in the data analysis technique following the data reduction and data presentation. The validity of the research data is assessed by triangulation. Triangulation is a way to obtain truly valid data using a dual method (Bachri, 2010). Data triangulation in this study is implemented by combining observation and interview techniques, and combining data sources from several research subjects.

Finding and Discussion

This study map out the strategy of improving communication and collaboration skills via e-learning contents used by an Islamic Boarding University, i.e., the University of Darussalam Gontor. To map the strategy of improving communication and collaboration

skills, a media literacy study approach was used. The strategy consists of four stages, i.e., access, analysis, evaluation and content creation.

The first stage is access, which is determined by a dynamic social process, not a single action. After the initial access is done, the development of understanding (literacy) brings the user to develop significantly and continuously in various access conditions (updates, upgrades, hardware development and software applications). The problem is the gaps in social demographic material, social and symbolic resources, gaps in accessing knowledge, communication and online participation will continue. The Access used in this research is the ability to search, obtain, and gather information.

Based on the findings, the study notes that the access made by lecturers and students at the University of Darussalam Gontor is in the form of the ability to use and utilize e-learning models. Electronic learning or e-learning is a new method of teaching and learning by using information and communication technology as a learning system (Khamidah & Triyono, 2013). The e-learning technology developed at UNIDA Gontor uses the moodle platform. E-learning with the moodle platform can accommodate the concept of virtual learning more fully, consisting of materials, pre-test and post-test questions, as well as discussion forums that make it easy for students and lecturers to interact without having to be face-to-face. The concept of e-learning has an influence on the process of transformation of conventional education into digital form both in content and system . The e-learning technology developed can greatly assist lecturers in

conducting distance learning with the help of information and communication technology.

The existence of the University of Darussalam Gontor campuses in several locations creates various obstacles, including distance. Since the distance between the central campus and the branch campuses is relatively long, the travelling is time consuming for the lecturers. To make learning activities more efficient and effective, especially the learning activities on the campuses of the University of Darussalam Gontor, with its dispersed locations, they can be done virtually through e-learning. Lecturers can upload materials in the forms of audio, video, animation, and images to the e-learning website so that students can access and download the materials whenever and wherever. Pre-test and post-test questions can be completed by students through the e-learning website and assessment by lecturers can directly be done through the e-learning website as well. The ability to access e-learning is very helpful and facilitates the teaching and learning process at UNIDA Gontor. The use of e-learning technology does not simply replace the face-to-face learning model, that has been used for a long time at UNIDA Gontor. This is because the e-learning function at UNIDA Gontor is as a supplementary option (optional) and also as a supplement. Basically e-learning has three functions, i.e., as a supplement, complement and substitution (Khamidah & Triyono, 2013).

The second stage in improving communication and collaboration skills is analysis. Analysis is the ability that can help someone in explaining the form, structure, segments, and impacts of messages, and so forth. Analysis deals

with the ability to search, change, and select information adjusted to individual needs. Uses and Gratification Theory states that people actively look for certain media and certain content to produce certain satisfaction (or results). In developing this theory, it is said that people are active because they are able to study and evaluate various types of media to achieve certain goals.

In this study, improving communication and collaboration skills in the analysis phase is in the form of the ability of lecturers to find, change and select information relevant to the learning process. The analysis phase also deals with the verification step (*tabayyun*) of the accuracy of the information and carefully checks the credibility of the informants. The method of "take clear, dispose of the muddy" must be a guide in sorting and selecting information used as material in learning, given the current reality in which information in the new media era varies greatly in type and nature. Lecturers use reliable and accurate references in materials that will be uploaded in the e-learning portal, including relevant bibliography sources to avoid mistakes. In addition, many credible comparisons of information sources are made to obtain in-depth and complete information.

In terms of students, communication and collaboration skills strengthening in the analysis phase is in the form of critical abilities in subject discussions. This is also related to the ability of students to find, change and select information that is relevant for the completion of assignments, creating a variety of considerations in expressing ideas based on credible and accountable reference sources. This is in line with

the research on the critical study of the concept of the book of *najh al-balaghah* as an effort to build a *tabayyun* culture in Islamic scholarship. In their research Bashori and Syafri stated that *tabayyun* or *tatsabbut* or *tahaqquq* (verification) and *taakkud* (confirmation) in the news are important to prevent us from making mistakes, being wrongdoers and regret (Bashori, 2016). One of the recommendations of their research is that scientific *tabayyun* activities are promoted to be common and to be a characteristic of *Ahlus-sunnah wa al-Jamaah*.

The third stage is in the form of evaluation, which is the ability to connect media messages received with the experience, evaluating information based on parameters, such as truth, honesty, and the interests of message producers. By evaluating, thus, people are aware that they still have the right to interpret media messages for themselves. In this context, the preparation of learning contents at Darussalam Gontor University is adjusted to the real conditions occurring in the community or referred to as contextual learning. Contextual learning is important to do, this is because through contextual learning students will have better reasoning because they have the opportunity to construct their ideas in accordance with their abilities (Sulianto, 2009). E-learning is one form of digital learning media. Digital media can present learning material contextually, audio and visual in an interesting and interactive manner (Umam, Kaiful; Zaini, 2013). This is in line with the needs and demands of the era of society 5.0, i.e., integration between cyberspace and the real world or what is called contextual.

The fourth step to improve communication and collaboration skills is content creation. Producing messages as part of message creativities is the ability of someone to arrange messages or ideas with words, sounds, or images effectively in accordance with the rules of communication science. Creating media is related to the production and distribution of media content, and also related to communicative competence. Development of learning contents is applied to five basic courses in the Communication Studies Program. In the adoption stage, it begins with the implementation of e-learning to lecturers. Starting in early 2018, policy makers in the Communication Studies Program at UNIDA Gontor have prepared the lecturers to implement the concept of e-learning in the learning process. Lecturers are trained in uploading learning contents consisting of materials, pre-test and post-test questions, online assessments, and discussion forums through an e-learning website. Transformation of knowledge that occurs in lecturers has not occurred optimally. The issues raised are caused by internal and external circles, making it difficult for lecturers to apply the

concept of e-learning. The implementation of e-learning in the Communication Studies Program at UNIDA Gontor is seen less optimal because it has not been fully tested and implemented to students.

In general, improvement and development of courses aims at the reconstruction of these courses. This is based on the consideration that a course has a high relevance to the progress and development of information, so it is necessary to pay attention and capture trends or changes occurring. In addition to these objectives or reasons, courses need to be reconstructed due to consideration of the less optimal learning outcomes and the development of science and technology. These considerations are reasons for lecturers that the reconstruction of the courses is needed.

Course improvement is based on decision about course materials and methods that are considered satisfactory, but still need change. Broadly speaking, the course reconstruction procedure can be seen in Figure 1.

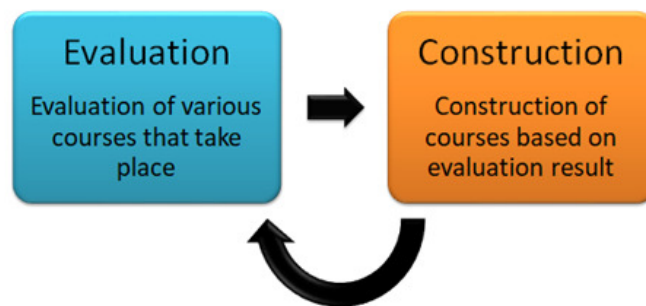


Figure 1. Course Reconstruction Outline

The process of course reconstruction includes: a) Determining and formulating the Subject's Learning Outcomes (General Attitudes and Skills). Based on evaluation inputs, Learning Achievements in all subjects, especially in general attitudes and skills, especially basic/core courses, should be reviewed, or perhaps simplified. The consideration is more complete competence and shows the whole development of students while still being guided by the taxonomy of instructional goals, specifically the cognitive goals taxonomy which is oriented towards thinking ability. b) Determining and formulating Course Learning Outputs (Special Knowledge and Skills). Course Learning Achievements (Specific Knowledge and Skills) are determined by the results of analysis of Course Learning Achievement (General Attitudes and Skills). Instructional analysis will produce competencies that are more specific to achieving general competencies in the course. Competencies can be hierarchical (prerequisite), procedural (procedure or sequential) or cluster (groups by type or section). c) Developing Lecturing Materials. Based on the specific objectives, a set of lecturing materials developed. This strategy is important to make all lecture materials relevant to the objectives to be achieved. d) Developing Instructional Strategies. Based on the issues found in the evaluation of lectures, instructional strategies are arranged to make them more appropriate and able to overcome the issues. In this case, the use of instructional media or practicum in the laboratory will further assist in clarifying the lecturing materials. e) Strategies for Assessing Learning Outcomes. Assessment of learning

outcomes needs to be adjusted to the objectives of the course. At the beginning of the semester, students will be provided with the indicators of good learning outcomes, so students can better prepare themselves by knowing what should be given more attention in the lecturing process.

Conclusion

This study has mapped out the strategy to improve communication and collaboration skills via e-learning contents used by University of Darussalam Gontor. The strategy to improve communication and collaboration skills involves four stages, namely access, analysis, evaluation, and content creation. (1) The access is made by lecturers and students at the University of Darussalam Gontor in the form of the ability to use and utilize e-learning models. (2) analysis phase is in the form of the ability of lecturers to find, change and select information relevant to their teaching process. The analysis phase also deals with the step of verifying (tabayyun) the accuracy of information and carefully checking the credibility of the informants. (3) evaluation is in the form of the preparation of learning contents at Darussalam Gontor University adjusted to the real conditions that occur in the community or referred to as contextual learning. (4) Development of learning content is applied to five basic courses in the Communication Studies Program. The adoption stage begins with the implementation of e-learning by lecturers. The contribution of this research is the strategy of improving communication and collaboration skills via learning contents in the era of society 5.0, especially in boarding universities. Research on the effectiveness of strategy of improving commu-

nication and collaborations skills via e-learning content at Darussalam Gontor University needs to be organized to measure whether the strategy implemented can run effectively. Research recommendations are also intended for policy makers at UNIDA Gontor to continue to make efforts to improve communication and collaboration skills in developing e-learning contents.[k]

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