

Learning English in Covid-19 Pandemic: A Case Study

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Abstract

This case study aims to know how English learning during Covid-19 pandemic. It is conducted in a private Junior High School in Surabaya. The data were obtained from students' questionnaire, learning outcomes, and attendance. The result of students' questionnaire is analyzed and categorized. If the result belongs to good or very good category, it can be considered as positive result. The result of students' learning outcomes can be considered to be successful if it reaches classical completeness $\geq 80\%$, while the students' activity can be seen from their attendance in learning. The findings show that most students give positive result towards online learning. The learning outcomes does not meet the standard – less than 80% of students who reached minimum completeness criteria. The attendance of students is less than 80%. It is suggested to conduct blended learning and use various games to make students excited in learning.

Keywords: case study, covid-19 pandemic, learning English

INTRODUCTION

A virus called Coronavirus or Covid-19 had been found firstly in Wuhan, China. Besides it is contagious, it can spread fast from droplets. Keni, et al. (2020) stated that droplets can result from coughing, talking, or sneezing. Some infected individuals may experience its symptoms while some may not.

The pandemic caused by this virus is such an outbreak in the last ten years. Many countries are affected by this virus. According to World Health Organization or WHO (2020, p. 1), “from 30 December through 11 October, over 37 million COVID-19 cases and 1 million deaths have been reported globally.” Since the first case found in Indonesia on 2nd of March 2020 (Nugraha, et al., 2020), many activities have been restricted to be conducted in face to face meeting. People must do physical distancing, wear masks, and wash hands frequently (Fikri, et al., 2021). The pandemic of Covid-19 in Indonesia gives impact to many things including in educational field.

As a result of preventing the transmission, school closure must be done. According to Nadiem Anwar Makarim as cited in Ministry of Education and Culture's website (2020), in-class system learning is not allowed in yellow, orange, and red zones. The students are not allowed to come and study at school until further information. Meanwhile teachers can work from home or office (school) depending on regulation in each region.

During the pandemic the materials in basic competence are simplified but the learning objectives are expected to be achieved. It follows the regulation from Nadiem Anwar Makarim as Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and

Technology. In taking the decisions in learning schools need to consider policies from local government and foundation or organization that owns the schools.

One solution to conduct teaching and learning activities in the pandemic situation is by online. According to Suhery, et al. (2020), online learning is an electronic-based learning. Teachers have to try maximizing the use of media for online learning such as computers and smartphones. Some platforms that can be used are Google classroom, Microsoft 365, Zoom, and so on. Some of them are free to use while others need to pay to subscribe. These allow teachers and students to interact virtually due to these circumstances.

Online learning media can be interpreted as media equipped with controller to be operated by user, so that user can access what he or she needs (Arnesi & Hamid, 2015). The reality happening pushes teachers to use online learning media. In fact, however most teachers and students are used to teaching and learning in face-to-face meeting or in-class system all this time. Therefore, online learning without meeting directly must be a new thing and challenging for both sides.

Although the Covid-19 vaccine has been found in early 2021, the vaccination is in progress. The health workers are the priority to get vaccinated, followed by the elderly and educators. Other people are waiting for their turn to get vaccinated including the students in Junior and Senior High School. Therefore, not all schools are allowed to do face-to-face learning yet especially in red zones until further information. It means online learning is still an option in some education units.

Based on the aforementioned explanation, this study aims to know how learning English is going on during the pandemic of Covid-19. The material in this study focuses on qualities of people, animals, and things. The materials are taken from Basic Competence of English for Junior High School. The findings of this study may contribute to teachers with the same situation and condition as the researcher experienced.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was a case study and conducted in a private junior high school in Surabaya in 2020-2021 academic year. In the odd semester, the instructional process and assignment were conducted online via zoom and Google classroom. The Minister of Education and Culture via Ministry's Youtube account said that schools can be opened starting from January 2021. To determine whether the schools can do face-to-face learning or not, it needs consideration from three parties – local government, principal, and school committee. Moreover, school must meet some checklist such as the availability of sanitation and hygiene facilities, the readiness to apply mandatory masks, and the availability of thermogun to carry out learning activity in education units. Therefore, in the even semester some students started to study offline. It means they met their teachers in-class system with health protocol. The parents needed to sign as a proof for their permit.

There are 3 classes for seventh grade. However, in this pandemic during that semester the students were divided by gender to study offline. The first day was for male students while the second day was for female students. The teachers still

needed to give materials and assignment via online to accommodate students who studied at home.

To know students' responses towards learning, the questionnaire in the form of Google form was given. The number of respondents were 46 consisting of seventh graders. The questionnaire was in the form of Likert Scale. Besides, students were allowed to write their suggestions for the upcoming learning. The result was analyzed by using the following formula.

$$\text{Classical completeness} = \frac{\Sigma \text{students complete}}{\Sigma \text{total students}} \times 100\%$$

The percentage then was categorized. The category is presented in Table 1 (Riduwan, 2015). If the result belongs to good or very good category, it can be considered as positive result.

Table 1. The Criteria of Questionnaire Response

| No | Percentage | Category |
|----|------------|------------|
| 1 | 81%-100% | Very Good |
| 2 | 61%-80% | Good |
| 3 | 41%-60% | Sufficient |
| 4 | 21%-40% | Bad |
| 5 | 0%-20% | Very Bad |

Another data was obtained from the result of students' learning outcomes and students' activity. The students were given assignment in multiple choice questions in Google form. The result can be considered to be successful if it reaches classical completeness $\geq 80\%$. The students' activity during online learning can be seen from their attendance in learning.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Result of Students' Questionnaire

Table 2. The Result of Questionnaire

| No | Statement | Disagree | Agree |
|----|--|----------|-------|
| 1 | I come on time in every online learning | 15% | 85% |
| 2 | I am excited when online learning. | 9% | 91% |
| 3 | I agree to learn English online. | 26% | 74% |
| 4 | I easily understand when online learning. | 28% | 72% |
| 5 | Online learning on the qualities of people, animals, and things material help me to understand English vocabulary items. | 22% | 78% |

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|---|---|-----|-----|
| 6 | I feel I understand English assignments when learning online. | 35% | 65% |
| 7 | I want to continue learning English online. | 44% | 56% |
| 8 | In studying the qualities of people, animals, and things, I feel comfortable with the online way. | 32% | 68% |
| 9 | I get bored when learning English is done online. | 43% | 57% |

The number of respondents were 46. The questionnaire given to the students consists of nine statements. From statement one, 85% of students agree that they come on time in every online learning. In statement two, 91% of students are excited when online learning. In statement three, 74% of students agree to learn English online. It is supported by statements from some students that they can relax at home while learning English online. It shows that students feel pleased in learning English online.

Regarding the students' comprehension towards the material taught, 72% of students easily understand when online learning. Moreover, 78% of students state that online learning on the qualities of people, animals, and things help them to understand English vocabulary items. Besides, 65% of students feel that they understand English assignments when learning online. This result shows that students comprehend the materials when learning English online.

In knowing the students' response towards online learning, 68% of students feel comfortable with the online way in studying the qualities of people, animals, and things. Besides the aforementioned results, however, only 56% of students want to continue learning English online. The percentage is categorized as sufficient. It means 44% of students disagree if learning English online is conducted continuously. This is supported by statement nine showing 57% students get bored when learning English is done online. It is in accordance with the study result of Kurnia (2021) which shows that students have high emotional exhaustion in online learning process. Another study conducted by Yuzulia (2021) also shows that students are more stressed and lack of motivation during online learning.

The students' answer towards their unwillingness to continue learning English online could be caused by some reasons. Some students state that they do not like online learning because of unstable connection. When the network of connection is unstable, the explanation from the teacher cannot be heard clearly. Some suggested to use video or power point to overcome this obstacle. This could be a solution knowing that the online learning is limited in one-hour-meeting only. Another reason why they do not want to continue learning English online is because they need to buy for data cap. In a nutshell, most students hope they could study at school like before the pandemic.

2. The Result of Students' Learning Outcomes and Students' Attendance

The result of students' learning outcome is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The Result of Learning Outcomes

| No | Source | Number | Description |
|----|------------------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| 1 | Number of students | 55 | M = 29; F = 26 |
| 2 | Above the average score | 36 (65%) | Average score = 78 |
| 3 | Minimum completeness criteria (75) | 40 (73%) | Standard 80% |
| 4 | Highest score | 100 | Maximum score = 100 |
| 5 | Lowest score | 15 | Maximum score = 100 |

Besides the students' questionnaire, the data were got from the students' learning outcomes. The students consisted of 29 boys and 26 girls. It is almost the same number of male and female students. It means gender does not affect the findings of the study.

From the results of students' learning outcomes, the average score is 78. There are 36 students (65%) who got scores above the average score. It means that the students' ability is quite good. The average score is above the minimum completeness criteria which is 75.

The finding also shows that most students (73%) in 7th grade reached the minimum completeness criteria (75). From 55 students, 40 (73%) students got scores above the minimum completeness criteria while only 15 (27%) students whose scores were below. It means that most students already reached the minimum completeness criteria, however, it does not meet the standards (80%) yet.

The minimum completeness criteria or well known as KKM is determined by education unit based on the discussion result of subject teachers. It needs to consider three things namely complexity, capacity, and intake. Complexity is related to the difficulty level of basic competence. Capacity covers school facility available. Sumartono (2021) stated that capacity also covers the competence of educators, number of students in one class, and school accreditation predicate. Intake is the students' ability in absorbing the materials. In real condition so far, however, the minimum completeness criteria are determined by policy that do not pay attention to these aspects. The possible minimum completeness criteria for English subject in the school where the study was conducted if calculated from these three aspects is 72.

Noticing the result of learning outcomes, it can be seen that 5 students got the highest score that was 100. The lowest score was 15 from 1 student. It shows that the range is far enough, even though in the learning process the score is expected to be about 75 (minimum completeness criteria).

The number of respondents of questionnaire (46) is different from the number of students in learning outcomes (55). Even though the homeroom teachers also helped to remind the students, not all of them filled in the questionnaire. It is

probably because they think their answers in questionnaire will affect their English score.

Regarding the number of students' attendance, the data obtained show that 50%-60% of students attended the online meeting. Some students only have one mobile phone and they need to take turns with their younger sisters or brothers to study. Another reason why the students did not attend the online meeting was because of bad signal. Besides, some students are moody in which they join the online meeting only when they are in good mood. This result could be caused by the condition in online learning in which students cannot meet their friends directly (face-to-face), therefore, they are not encouraged to join online meeting. It is supported by the homeroom teachers who was being told about the constraints from the students. Pawicara and Conilie (2020) also stated that boredom in online learning can be felt because it is monotonous, less varied intonation, and not be able to provide direct interaction with friends and teachers. The relation between teachers and students become less familiar during the pandemic because most teachers do not memorize their students' faces – not all students turn their cameras on although the teachers frequently remind them to do so.

From the findings of the study, we know that students' responses, learning outcomes, and attendance are related to each other. Most students give positive (good and very good category) result towards online learning. However, they do not want to do online learning forever. The continued boredom can lead to demotivation and affect the learning outcomes. Like what Suroso (2019) stated, learning motivation plays an important role in students' achievement. It shows that students' motivation in learning online needs to be taken into account. From scores of learning outcomes, it shows that most students (73%) reached the minimum completeness criteria yet it does not meet the standard which is 80%. It could happen because some students did not join online meeting so they could not get the explanation well. Besides, the time of online learning is limited only one hour during the pandemic. The low score can result from decreased motivation. It is supported by the result of questionnaire stating that the students get bored when learning English is conducted online and they do not want to continue learning English online. According to Wangge, et al. (2021), the decreased motivation is shown by, one of which, high absence. Even though the results of questionnaire mostly show positive result but the attendance of students is less than 80%. Therefore, it needs further research.

CONCLUSION

The aforementioned explanation leads to conclusion. Despite of positive result of students' questionnaire, online learning can result in boredom or demotivation. Moreover, the result of learning outcomes shows that online learning is not completely successful to make 80% of students reach the minimum completeness criteria determined by the policy. Therefore, it is suggested to conduct blended learning. It means online and offline learning are done alternately. To make the teaching and learning activity more fun and easier to understand, a student suggested to use an application called *duolingo*. This application offers the users to learn languages for free. The students can access from laptop or mobile phone

because it is available in web version and Android version. Besides, another website called *gathertown* can be used as an alternative as well. The students can learn while playing. The teacher may use this to provide different atmosphere to make students excited in online learning.

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