

Perceptions on Online Language Teaching Pedagogy

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ABSTRACT

The following research is intended to find out how lecturers deal with English teaching during the full-online learning program. However based on the online teaching pedagogy, teachers who are expert in the field are those who can make use of ICT tools and equipment to make the learning progress is accessible and also interactive. Based on Compton (2009). Additionally, he also mentions does not mean that a good teacher in face-to-face interaction can also be a good one in virtual classroom. To meet the criteria, the research will ask the questions on what are the perceptions and activities used by the English lecturers once they adopted the online teaching method. Participants were gathered from 15 lecturers who are currently teaching Business English for the first semester students. The LMS used is provided by Bunda Mulia University where the lecturers and students interacting through forum discussion. Hopefully the result could evaluate how far the teachers make use the online teaching platform and whether they also used other sources to support their online classroom.

Keywords: *online language teaching, ICT, teaching pedagogy*

1. INTRODUCTION

Since few decades ago there are numerous studies that have questioned on the use of technology in English classrooms (Dudeny, 1985; Hartoyo, 2008; Wright, 2008). Online teaching has been recognized in the past as an alternative from the traditional teaching, where face-to-face interactions between teachers and students developed various kinds on teaching approaches and methods. However, there some challenges occurred in the classroom during the interactive or communicative teaching. For example based on some experiences, students are easily get nervous every time they have to speak to their teachers. Due to the gap between teachers and students, the condition might affect the students learning progress. Other factors rely during the face-to-face teaching might be seen from

the students' motivations which reflected through their active involvement in the classroom. Teachers in this case might set their focus more to these type of students especially during the classroom interactions. Passive learners, on the other hand, would probably show lesser performance and affected to their grades as well. Based on the previous experiences, online teaching in this case may offer opportunities for learners who might reflect lesser performance in the classroom due to the uncomfortable direct interactions among learners and teachers. Since few decades ago there are numerous studies that have questioned on the use of technology in English classrooms (Dudeney, 1985; Hartoyo, 2008; Wright, 2008). These scholars have shown that the application of technologies can significantly increase the effectiveness of active learning methods to all forms of organizations of educational process in the study of a foreign language, namely: "practical, individual lessons, during independent work. Other studies revealed the use of ICT in increasing the students' motivation, commitment to the systematic study of a foreign language and successfully increase their language learning progress (Wheeler, 2001). Furthermore, the use of ICT also help students in their communicative competence moreover it equips them with "the digital age literacy, inventive thinking, creative thinking, higher-order thinking, effective communication, and high productivity" (Tinio, 2002)

From CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) to ICT (Information and Communication Technology), teachers and researchers have long been interested in uses of new technologies in foreign/second language teaching and learning and ICT is often argued to increase motivation (Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011) moreover it can promote autonomous learning, where learners are able to take their own decisions dealing with targets, contents and materials also selecting methods and techniques. It can contribute to lifelong learning by enriching learners with various ways of learning experiences.

Furthermore it is often stated that online systems may provide many activities for language learning and teaching. Before the Internet period, authentic materials were already available through television, radio, and newspapers. Some materials were also practiced with CD-ROMS's or mail posts. Then once the Internet introduced, technology-based classroom teachings approaches have been varied introduced throughout language learning. The first term introduced was "blended-learning" where it was defined as the mixing-methods between face-to-face learning and online learning used in the classroom.

As face-to-face learning refers to the traditional teaching interaction in the classroom, online teaching in this case apply various ways of web-based and self-directed learning materials either synchronously or asynchronously at computers. The techniques mostly used the various of virtual resources and tools such as online learning materials, chat, message boards, net meetings (Huang 2016)

As the teaching through technology emerged, the questions raised such as, What should teachers know about new technologies? Which tasks should they be able to carry out with new technologies? In order words, do teachers need a specific online pedagogy? Moreover due the several conditions and phenomena, teachers should at least get adapted with internet-based learning environments like MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) that introduced various learning or teaching activities which can be considered as early pedagogical online teaching. Colpaert (2013) elaborates four pedagogical online language and teaching approaches, those are:

1. The *technology-driven approach* (Decoo, 2001) that has the intention to focus on the use of technology which often as a regeneration of an existing method.
2. The *attributes-based approach* (Kozma, 1991; Salomon, 1979) called as the medium that uses the term “cognitively relevant capabilities” which relates the three aspects, namely the technology, its symbol systems, and processing capabilities.
3. The *affordances-based approach* identifies the support given by the new technology to develop the language learning and teaching process. (Gibson 1979; Leloup & Ponterio, 1998)

Due to recent global situation, education challenges teachers and learners to be adapted with the new environment of teaching and learning. Virtual classrooms are urgently made to meet the learners needs and following the progress as well. On the other hand, educators are also forced to improvise the teaching methods due to technology demand. In line with the phenomena, education institutions provide online platforms to accommodate the online-learning activities. Bunda Mulia University, on the hand, has its own LMS (learning management system) to facilitate the online classroom or learning. Both lecturers and undergraduate students have been equipped with several online workshops seminars to keep up with the online materials and lessons.

Full-online learning has been implemented for almost 7 months due to Covid-19 pandemy that has been beginning since the early of year 2020. As part of the government

regulations that instructed to study from home both for lecturers and students, the protocol is followed until recently.

There have been strategies applied by specifically by the lecturers, where in this case is on Business English subject. Lecturers and students communicate through online discussion forum during the lesson and if necessary they interact through group-chats. Based on this type of online learning, the following research would like to know some specific teaching strategies applied by the lecturers and how effective the strategies throughout the semester. Results will be gathered at the end of odd semester and revealing the perceptions towards the questionnaires delivered.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The following research use descriptive methodology to collect and analyzed data obtained from all respondents. The questionnaire was designed specifically to address research objectives with regard to teachers' perception on use of ICT tools specifically the LMS provided by Bunda Mulia University. These are designed for 15 English lecturers who are currently teaching Business English for first semester. The survey is adopted from Ghavifekr, et al (Anon, 2016) where they used to evaluate the issues and challenges faced by school teachers in the state of Melaka, Malaysia. The questionnaire was based on 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 5=always to 1=never. The data collected from the respondents were gathered and analyzed statistically, and the result itself analyzed descriptively by looking at the frequency and percentages of the overall samples.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Based on the 15 respondents, it is found out that they are experienced English teachers with the range of years of teaching between 5 to 15 years or more, below is the demographic data looking from the gender and teaching experiences.

Teaching experience

15 responses

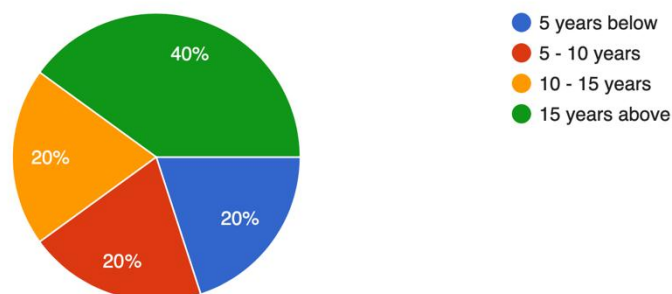


Figure 1. Teaching Experience

From 15 teachers, 6 of them can be seen as more experienced than other respondents. The teaching background come from various language institutions such as English course, schools, private teachers, to lecturers. On the hand there are few of them as teachers' assistants which just have begun enrolled in teaching for higher education learners. Furthermore, to answer the research questions, result of each of the question is elaborated and discussed below.

3.1. What are the lecturers' perceptions in implementing online teaching platform?

To answer the questions above, below are some result gathered.

. Students can improve their English skills by using the Internet in EFL classes

15 responses

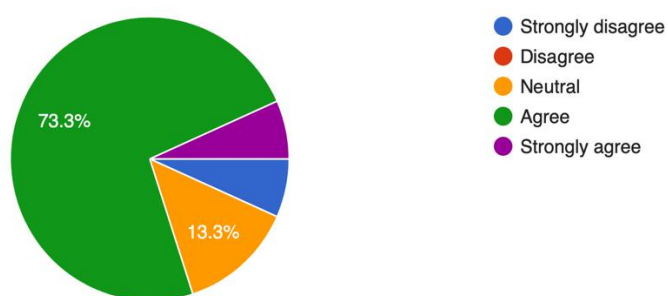


Figure 2

It can be seen that most of the teachers belief that the use of internet can help the learners in improving their language skills. What is meant by language skills in this case is expressed in different ways. Since the type of online class was using video conference and forum discussion, this might have different result. Forum discussion may help the students to increase their reading and writing skills as well, on the hand the video conference help

them to increase their listening and speaking skills including the vocabulary and grammar skills.

. Online teaching can be an alternative for students who have difficulty learning in conventional classes
15 responses

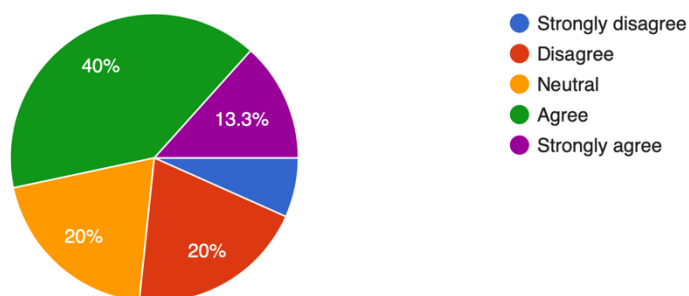


Figure 3

For this part, there are few teachers think that online teaching could motivate students who tend to be passive learners in the classroom. As it is believed that face-to-face interactions in the classroom for some learners feel more demanding and also make them unconfident. On the other hand, there are still few of the teachers belief differently. Since learners who are more active in the classroom might see learning in front of the monitor is lesser lively and also there are not many interactions during the lesson.

Online teaching wastes time that could be spent on conventional classes
15 responses

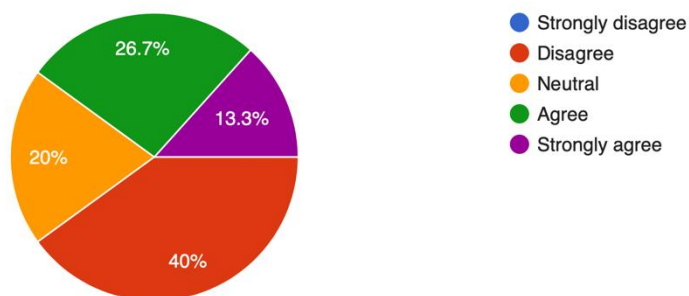


Figure 4

Around 10 respondents believe that online teaching might waste time, may probably think that there are some activities could not be applied during online. Such as in giving feedbacks through online, where in conventional classes teachers can directly correct the

students mistakes however due to the distances feedbacks are just limited in written form or maybe short comment during the conference.

Online learning work between students
15 responses

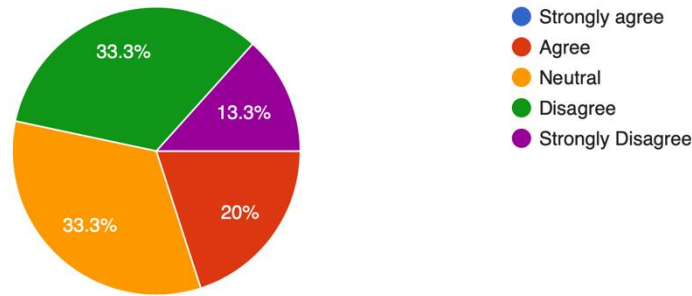


Figure 4

Based on the online activities given, there are kinds of either group or individual activities implemented during online class which will be explained at the second section. Furthermore it can be seen that around half of the respondents think that these activities help students to interact each other, where during online some interactions are very limited comparing when they are in the classroom. However teachers who answer “disagree” might think differently, learners seem have lower motivation to discuss and interact online each other maybe the online activities considered unfamiliar and difficult to apply.

Students feel more autonomous in their learning (they can repeat exercises if needed, explore in more detail topics that they are interested in, etc.)

15 responses

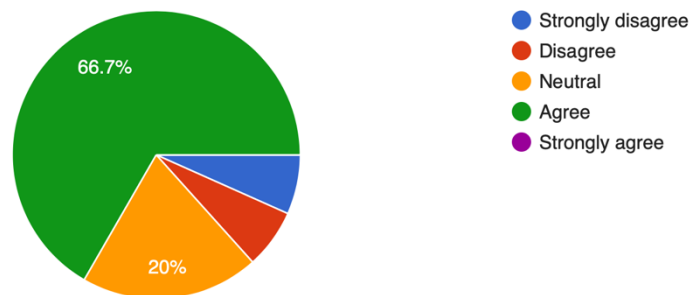


Figure 5

Based on this result, it shows that more than half of the teachers believe that the learners are more autonomous comparing to the conventional classes. For examples, when they have to work on projects and essays, these will push them to gathered the information required by themselves by browsing the internet and discuss with their peers. Limited time in online classes can also become one of the reasons why learners be more independent.

. The university authorities are in favour of me using online teaching

15 responses

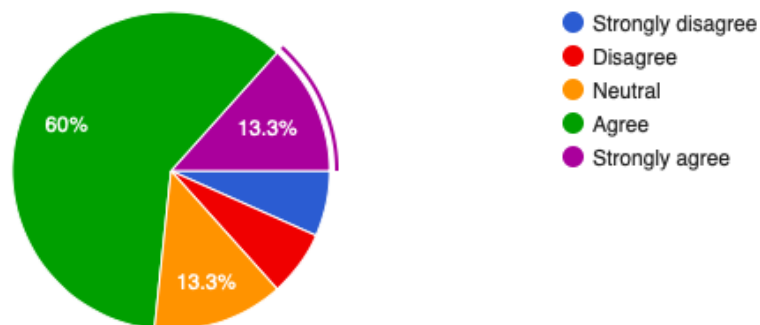
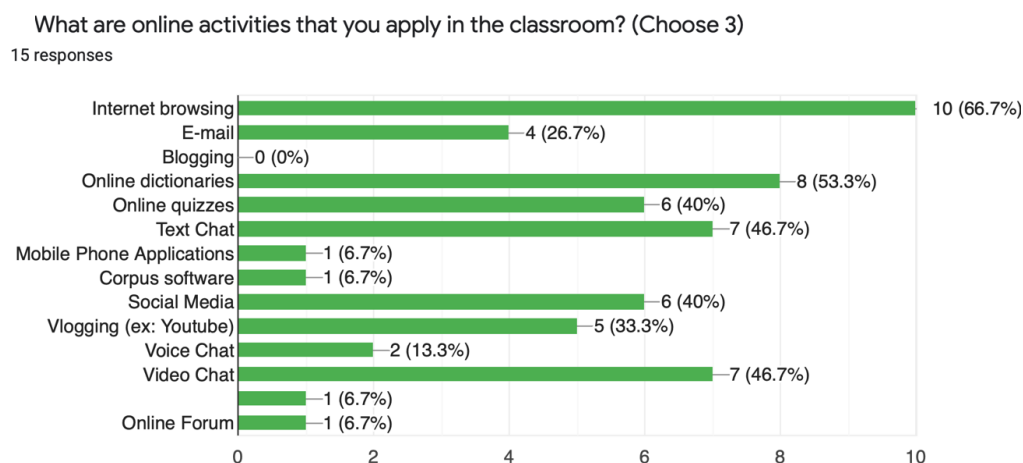


Figure 6

Regarding the learning-from-home policy issued by the government during the Covid-19 pandemic, the university provides an online platform that enables the lectures and students to stay communicating during the online class. The platform is divided into two types, namely the forum discussion and video conference where both are attached in the institution portal. It can be seen that teachers make used of the facilities provided and additionally used other ICT tools to support the learning process.

3.2. What are online activities used by the teachers?



Based on the results, it can be seen in Figure 7 that internet browsing is selected mostly by the teachers. The reason is probably because some activities ask them to dig into some further information such as using the search engine or Wikipedia online. Second activities selected are online dictionaries, and the third are text-chat and video-chat which has the main function as the tool in online class communication. Furthermore, the least online activities used by the teachers such as online forum, mobile phone applications, and corpus software. Online quizzes and social media are also selected by nearly half of the respondents. These responses are in line with the previous item which is asking about how learners become more autonomous when during online classes.

4. CONCLUSION

Traditionally, language teaching methodologies were simply transferring knowledge from books to students understanding. Teachers in this case have the main role in applying various teaching techniques effectively in the classroom. Teachers are also guide the learners to be skilled in selecting, accessing, evaluating, organizing, and storing information. Classroom motivation should be maintained during the learning process. Library research was one of the useful tools for both the teachers and students to facilitate additional sources besides the selected text-books in the classroom. This can be seen based on the result that more than half of the respondents use the internet browsing as one of their main activities in the classroom. On the other hand the “newer methodology” offer many effective ways to enrich both teachers and learners in accessing knowledge into more creative and lively. Teachers, in this case have to aware the impact of technology on education and adapting their teaching methods to the latest technology involvement.

Furthermore, Guichon (2009 as qtd in Sun 2011) hypothesizes three competencies which language tutors need to develop in order to manage synchronous online teaching, those are “competency of socio-affective regulation, pedagogical regulation, and also multimedia regulation”. He further defines competence of pedagogical regulation as : “first, the, capacity to design learning scenarios adapted to distance that truly engage learners emotionally and cognitively, and second, to manage learning experiences by providing feedback tailored to learners’ individual needs.

In conclusion, the use of internet sources specifically in language teaching gives the possibility of accessible various kinds of materials, increases the level of motivation and also more interactive.

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