THE PORTRAIT OF EFL TEACHER IN ONLINE LEARNING DURING PANDEMIC COVID-19: A CASE STUDY IN STATE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL NUMBER 8 JAMBI

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Abstract: Pandemic Covid-19 is still on going in all over the world right now. This influences many things, education system, one of examples. Therefore, teachers should deal with the distance learning because of the pandemic. So that this research addresses to explore the portrait of EFL teacher in online learning during pandemic Covid-19. The participant in this research is an English teacher and and the site of the research is in State Senior High School Number 8 Jambi. The researcher uses case study qualitative research method design. Researcher collects the data through in-depth interview and uses interview protocol to guide the interview. The form of the questions is semi-structured interview which meant that researcher can prolong the interview question during its process of doing the interview with the participant. Findings of the research are explained through some primary themes, they are 1) Teacher’s burnout in online learning, 2) Teachers’ challenges and difficulties in online learning, and 3) Teachers’ solutions to overcome the problems appeared in online learning. Also, there are both positive and negative portrait of online learning in terms of the systems, students’ motivations, and students’ learning objectives.

Keywords: EFL teacher; Pandemic Covid-19; Online learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2020), Nadim Makarim said that the major principle of education in Indonesia for this age of pandemic Covid-19 is to accentuate the student’s health and safety and to avoid all the doers in the school from the contagious of the virus and to stop its spread. Therefore, Mendikbud asked all the parties involved in this education field to work together. This aims to keep giving the service of education to students by implementing distance learning. This way is able to help students to keep learning and being safe by learning from home. Viner (2020) explains that government is still trying so hard to decrease the spread of the virus of Covid-19 in Indonesia particularly. Since this virus covid has been giving many impacts to social life and also education system, the government set a system of online learning to all schools in Indonesia started from Sabang to Merauke, rural areas to city, and many more. UNESCO (2020a) states that many countries conduct the same system of closing the schools as the way to respond the emergency of public health. There is at least 188 countries impacted by Covid-19 where...
all the students cannot study at school as long as the pandemic. Still, government in all
countries should get a solution for a sustainability of education.

This regulation is a must to be taken by government as a form to reduce the crowd
and to lessen the number of people who are contagious the virus. Therefore, distance learning
is already conducted from March 2020 to nowdays. The government obligate all schools and
institutions from kindergarten to university level to have an online learning. Moorhouse
(2020) states that teachers can keep giving the lesson through the use of digital platforms
like google classroom, zoom, google meeting, edmodo, whatsapp and many more. The
teaching and learning activities are all doing online from discussion, assessment and test,
exercise and task, and many more. The process of teaching and learning is at the same time
but in different sites. Hence, technology tools are very needed as a means of learning in the
age of this pandemic. Both teachers and students can use devices like laptop, computer, or
smartphone. They also need to have internet data and good internet connection to success
the process of learning. In line with this, many obstacles are owned and faced by both
teachers and students. First, the problems faced by students are not all students have devices
for online learning.

Due to the numbers of paupers in Indonesia, they just have money to eat. The parents
are not able to buy the laptop or even smartphone for their children. On the same hand, some
parents may be able to buy their children a smartphone but they cannot buy the internet data
too often because they have to fulfill their needs in daily life. Besides, some students who
live in rural areas will be difficult to have good internet connection, and many more,
(Nambiar, 2020). Those are the major problems faced by students. Meanwhile, teachers also
face the problem of having lack on the use of technology. The fact is many teachers in
Indonesia, especially senior teachers whose age in about forty to fifty, are not really good at
using technology. This, of course, challenges them during this online learning. English
teachers, for instance, cannot teach maximally. There are some skills (speaking, listening,
writing and reading) that need to be taught by all English teacher. Speaking skill, as in case,
is a bit difficult to be taught because the teachers cannot control and train their students’
performance directly. The practice of the teaching is also not easy. It can be done but not
optimal and efficient. According to the technology tools, EFL teachers can use zoom or
google meeting in teaching speaking but the barrier is the students sometime cannot learn
well because of connection and their internet data usage. Zoom takes a lot of data so teachers
need to consider the students’ obstacles too, (Dahwan, 2020).

Regarding to the explanation above, researcher need to find how the EFL teachers
struggle with all the problems and challenges faced by them and also their students. Since
teachers are the frontliners of education, they are of course knowing all the things happened
in that field especially for their own school for teaching. In short, researcher is interested on
conducting a research in a goal of exploring the exact portrait of EFL teacher in online

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ministry of Education and Culture No.15 2020 informs about the distance learning
guidelines where it states about study from home. There is no longer activity in school for
the unknown long period. As long as there is no information from the goverment to end the
distance learning, schools and all the doers will keep doing online learning. The process of
teaching and learning that change switch from offline to online learning. Online learning is
also known as e-learning. For some schools in Indonesia, e-learning is a new system that
switched immediately due to the needs of ending the spread of the virus Covid-19, (Dahwan,
2020). Teachers convince that e-learning and offline learning seem very different in the terms
of the effectiveness of classroom interaction, for example. In line with this, Johnson et al
(2017) states that inspirational figure is kind of students and teacher interactions as the
development growth of the success of learning. Discussing about e-learning and virtual
teaching, it is needed to know that the primary way to exist the school is that online learning.
Teachers teach virtually using applications like zoom, google classroom, whatsapp, and so
on. Teachers can do face-to-face teaching virtually, (Selwyn, 2013). Teacher’s role is
essentially impacted to the success of this virtual learning. Particularly explaining the lesson,
providing the material, giving exercise and task, assessing students, and many more.

Furthermore, some advantages of online learning are having the flexibility of place
and time, having possibility opportunities for teachers and students to build a good relations
as long as doing discussion, reducing the cost and motivating those less confidence students
to be more active during the e-learning, and many more, (Khalil, 2018). Anderson (2008)
then adds another benefit of online learning are assessing the material can be done at
anytime. On the other hand, some disadvantages of online learning are students become
tired and bored, interaction between teacher and students cannot go well, the process of
teaching and learning is not more effective than offline learning, the use of main devices
with its internet data need much cost, the network problem, adequate facilities, economic
factors and many more, (Nambiar, 2020).
III. RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research was aimed to explore the actual portrait of EFL teachers in online learning during the pandemic Covid-19. Therefore, researcher used exploratory case study. The method design was qualitative research which purposed to gain participant’s view, obstacle, challenge, and insight. Qualitative research method design is drawn descriptively and the data included is not in numbers but words. This research is based on the social and natural setting, (Creswell, 2007).

Data context and participant

This research was conducted in State Senior High School number 8 Jambi, Indonesia. The participant was a male English foreign language teacher who teach English in both eleven science and social graders. He was selected to participate in this research based on his availability and willingness.

Data collection and analysis

The data was gathered through interview. The interview was held online from the end of January to the middle of February, 2021. It was about two weeks. Researcher interviewed the participant through multiple devices like whatsapp chat, voice note, and zoom video. Researcher asked the participant’s time availability and willingness. So the interview was not conducted in a straight day. Researcher let the participant to note his voice if he wanted to give a long explanation. So participant was allowed to select the way he want to explain his views. Researcher was included in virtual teaching of the participant, that was through zoom on the first day of doing research. The participant allowed the researcher to look at the situation of his virtual teaching directly. After having that short observation, researcher did in-depth interview with the participant. Researcher used semi-structured interview. Researcher prolonged the interview to get the information to meet the research question, and until it saturated. Saturation was also the sign for researcher to end the interview, (Creswell, 2012).

After collecting all data information, researcher initiated the analysis by transcribing the data collected. Researcher was helped the supervisor to check the data transcripts. In the next process of analyzing, researcher showed the data transcript to participant. Participant was allowed to check the originality and reliability and to avoid the bias of the data written
by researcher. Furthermore, researcher gathered the data based on its similarities and difficulties, and eliminate the pointless data. Researcher then coded the data and categorized themes and sub-themes for the findings. Researcher named the themes and started to report it all, (Creswell, 2007).

IV. FINDINGS

The findings of the research were purposed to meet the research question. Based on the data interview, some major findings showed about 1) Teacher’s burnout in online learning, 2) Teachers’ challenges and difficulties in online learning, and 3) Teachers’ solutions to overcome the problems appeared in online learning.

Teacher’s burnout in teaching online

The EFL teacher in State Senior High School Number 8 Jambi explained that he sometimes got confused on what to do next in his virtual teaching especially for each skill of English.

Participant initiated his point of view by saying:

“First of all, you know, working in front of computer is one of the most tiring job. Since I need to keep my eyes looking at the computer screen. My eyes are of course being exhausted because of the radiation on computer screen”.

“During this online learning, all my activities are done at home. If I work at school, I can differ my whole time for working. There is a space for each kind of activities. My work time is at school, and my personal time is at home. On contrastly, I have no time differences between my work hours and my me-time. I feel like more than half of my time is spending to teach during this online learning. I almost have no time for having leisure time”.

“The most complicated yet exhausted job that I have to do during this online learning is that when I give them assignment, I ought to check their assignment submission one by one and if they are late to submit their assignment. I need to list their names and to give a comment to those whose assignment has not submitted yet. This takes a lot of my time’.

Participant explains it further;
“I feel like having no me-time. Even the English has been done, there are always some students or even parents text and call me personally. They will ask about the material, the task, or something else. They may think that I am their 24 per seven teacher”.

Participant handles more than 30 students in one class and he teaches more than one class. During this online learning, he finds the same thing happened in each class he teach, that is;

“I check students’ attendances for every meeting by sending them a google form in google classroom. But some of them still list their attendance in whatsapp group. Even though, I already explain them very clear. This thing makes me really tired because I should check and report their attendance twice. It also wastes my time so the material that should be finished in that meeting cannot be handled well, it happens almost in every meeting”.

Participant then adds;

“My teaching schedule start from 8 to eleven but I work till 4 pm, and I sometime do many things at night like preparing the power point, checking students’ task and exercises. This takes a lot of my time and I always sleep late night during this online learning. I feel so exhausted”.

Participant then strengthened his statement;

“There are so many workloads and I can not manage them well. During this virtual teaching, everything is not well-organized. I cannot be disciplined”.

Teachers’ challenges and difficulties in teaching online

Teachers’ problems will always be there as long as it is online learning. In short, there are a lot of problems when teachers teach students face to face in the class as well as it is teaching online where teachers cannot meet the students directly.

“I find many obstacles in online learning. The obstacles come from me myself, my students, and also the activities done during the class”.

“My own difficulty was that having lack ability in using technology, I am not really
Participant provides the example of his obstacle:

“I am confused on using the applications for teaching and learning and also for creating attractive lesson video that can take students’ interest to my material”.

“Sometimes, the feedback is difficult to be given to students in this online learning, and I cannot respond them fastly. I find it very complicated to deal with the devices and to manage all the chats in the group where the chats go and move so quick and I cannot find it even I already scroll up and down”.

Participant then explained;

“Another main problem is to control the student’s progress and development in learning. I cannot know my students’ understandings exactly unless they are active to ask the material that they still do not relate with, to respond anytime I ask them to explain their understanding of the material. If they just keep silent, then I will not know at all. I can seem that the students do not really pay attention to the learning, it can be known through their activities during the class. I ever find some of them just come to the class for listing their attendance in the beginning of the class, they then do whatever they wanted, and I of course do not know what they do behind me, they maybe continue to sleep. One way to know my students’ understanding is by assessing or testing”.

“I ask one of my inactive students personally. He tells me that he has no body to learn with. His parents are busy in their working. So that he has nobody who control his learning. Feeling nobody care, he ignores the lesson in online learning because he thinks that even he pays attention to the teacher’s explanation, he will never be able to understand. He do not like English too much”.

Participant continues his explanation;

“My students have no device adequately. They sometimes have problem with the connection and the cost of the internet. Besides, they also have no enough internet data to join zoom class. Basically, zoom takes a lot of internet data. They leave the
zoom not because they want to but the internet data run out. Therefore, they miss the lesson and they will not understand the lesson”.

“My students’ smartphones are not all good. Some of them just have no sophisticated gadget which is able to give large storage space for such a big application”.

Participant then adds that;

“At the first time of having online learning, all students seem so enthusiastic. Since this online learning has been continually doing till nowadays, some students have less interest and motivation. They are not as enthusiastic as the first time. They tell me that they are bored and lazy already of this online learning. They miss to meet their friends and to learn at class, and to interact with teachers directly”.

Participant explains about the difficulty of online learning;

“In some topics, I will have been thinking of the appropriate topic for my English class. In the coursebook, each topic should be taught for each skill. For example, I teach a listening skill. I provide the audio and listening worksheet for my students. I explain them more than one time, but still they do not get what they suppose to do. Another example is that when I have speaking class session, I give the directions of what my students should do for their speaking practice, and I also provide them a video of mine that show them what the speaking activity will look like. They misinterpret the direction and many of them text me personally to clarify what they point out from the explanation and video. It seems that they were not really comprehensible. I feel like I am not teaching optimally”.

“I should select the topics that can be taught online because not all topic of the materials can be taught online. There will be some topics taught directly. Due to the pandemic, teachers obligate teach in distance no matter what. Hence, I feel like sometime the lesson is not taught effectively”.

Participant then gives example;

“When I teach pronunciation, I cannot control their pronunciation very well because it sometimes sounds not really clear through online video or something. I can explain the material but it is limited. Pronunciation and speaking, as in case,
need a practice and clear direction”.

Teachers’ solutions to overcome the obstacles on online learning

Based on the obstacles above, teachers need to decrease them all because there is no exact time when this online learning will be ended due to the case of Covid-19. Teacher is one of the primary key to success the learning of teaching and learning. In his interview, participant mentioned some of solutions to overcome the obstacles that teacher and student faced in online learning.

“All I need to overcome at first is that my ICT skill. To support the success of online learning during this pandemic Covid-19, as teacher, I need to improve my ability and learn really hard on how to utilize main devices and online learning platforms”.

He then adds that;

“I also need to watch in youtube many examples about making interesting material such as teaching video, attractive power point, and so on. I should provide them with a good power point material and video to attract their interest on learning so my students will be more motivated and active in the process of teaching and learning. I behave to be better teacher, I should accomplish the learning goals”.

Due to the lack of using the online teaching platforms, the participant said that;

“I consider many problems occured If I use the applications like zoom and google meeting because they are in a form of video. If I use those application in more than thirty minutes, my students will cost a lot of data. They all are not coming from privilege family, so I think I will be better to use the so-called small data usage platform like whatsapp to minimize the cost of internet data. In whatsapp, I can explain through voice note. All students, of course, have whatsapp application in their smartphone and not all of them had zoom application due to the big storage space of zoom application”.

Participant further stated;

“I keep trying to find appropriate platform to teach certain skills that need practice or exercise and clear direction in doing that exercise like kahoot and quizzes, etc”.
Moreover, to overcome the problems of students during online learning, participant mentioned some solutions he did in his class so far;

“To minimize the students who have less motivation in the class, I tell them to be active in the class by rewarding them a plus point for their active participation during the class. As result, some of my students are being more enthusiastic now. They know that their involvement in the class is appreciated”.

He also adds that;

“To those less motivation students, I approach them in person. I text them personally to ask their why they do not join the class actively and I listen their reason wholeheartedly. Personal approach is believed as an effective way to touch the students’ heart”.

“I will contact the students’ parents if it is needed. It depends on the situation if the students do not want to listen what i said. I will ask their parents about what their children do at home so they were not active in the class. The existance of the students’ parents is also a vital role in helping students to success in learning”.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The findings indicate that having online learning is as a way of government to keep the education done during this pandemic. Online learning sets a learning from home, so both students and teachers keep learning at its time and it is done in different places. Teachers and students will meet in online class through the use of online learning platforms like google classroom, google meeting, zooms, whatsapp and many more. As the frontliner of doing this online learning, teachers (especially English foreign language teachers) should be ready with all the pros and cons of implementing online learning.

In line with this, the obstacles that mostly faced by EFL teachers as long as online learning, they are struggling with the difficulties of utilizing online learning platforms, being more discipline and well-organized to avoid the burnout of online learning, using a simple language in explaining the material, giving a clear directions to students, providing attractive power point and interesting teaching aids like video, applying appropriate teaching method, finding a suitable learning platform for a particular topic and skill like pronunciation, listening sessions and so on, controlling student’s learning progress and development,
managing classroom interaction during the online class, handling all the activities of learning online like checking students’ exercises, tasks or assignment, encouraging less motivation students, approaching students who are bored, ignorant and lazy during the online learning, building a good cooperation with students’ parents to monitor the students’ learning progress at home, and dealing with all the technical problems such as bad internet connection, internet data costs, economy issues, and many more.

To sum up, all the difficulties and challenges EFL teachers and students faced during the online learning are able to solved and managed well by some solutions. EFL teacher who participate in this research overcome the problems by improving his ability to work with the technology tools as the means of implementing online learning. In some topics that EFL teacher faced during online learning, the participant seek to find the best online platforms to handle the problem on teaching some skills like pronounciation, listening, reading and speaking. This age, there are a lot of learning websites that provide many kinds of teaching and learning activities that EFL teacher can do in their class. The main point is that EFL teachers should make the learning simple. EFL teachers attempt to not give a lot of homework to students. Besides, the cause of less interests and less motivation students are the same teaching method and learning activities they have in the class, thus teachers ought to have a mix of teaching strategies and fun learning to make the class keep alive. Teacher’s role, in a nutshell, is never ever be replaced by technology. Technology helps only. It facilitates the teachers to ease the teaching and learning. Then, last but not least, teachers and students should work together to success the online learning because one of governments’ priorities right now is that to keep the students and teachers’ health and to make them safe through studying from home and staying at home.

**REFERENCE**


