Teacher's Strategy in Online Learning in English Courses at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang

Strategi guru dalam pembelajaran daring pada mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris di SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang

Gumarpi Rahis Pasaribu¹*, Usman Sidabutar²
¹STIT Al-Itthadiyah Labuhanbatu Utara, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia
²Universitas HKBP Nomensen, Medan, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia
¹Email: gumarpi19@gmail.com
²Email: usman.sidabutar@uhn.ac.id

Received 23 June 2023; Accepted 4 October 2023; Published 1 November 2023

Abstract
The aims of this research are to identify and describe the challenges faced by the English teachers in online teaching at SMP Al-Afkari Deliserdang. It is then to analyze and classify the strategies used by the English teachers in online teaching at SMP Al-Afkari Deliserdang. The type of this research was phenomenological research with a qualitative approach. This study uses theory of Wehrli & Nyquist (2003). In collecting the data, observation, interview, and documentation were applied. The results showed that: first, the challenges faced by the English teacher in online teaching, namely internet connection, media, limited internet package, students' learning interest and extra supervisions of students. Second, the strategies used by the English teachers in online teaching at SMP Al-Afkari Deliserdang namely: brainstorming, questions and answers, independent study, self-awareness exercise/test, lecture/presentation, and demonstration.

Kata kunci
strategi guru; pembelajaran daring; SMP Al-Afkari Deliserdang.

How to cite this article:

*Corresponding author: gumarpi19@gmail.com

eISSN 2987-6850 © 2023 The Authors. Published by HISKI Komisariat Kalimantan Timur.
This is an open access article under CC BY-SA 4.0 license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)
A. Introduction

Education means when people teach other people or groups about things like knowledge, skills, values, and beliefs. All countries have different ways of teaching and learning, and Indonesia is one of them. The way students learn in Indonesia sometimes changes, especially since COVID-19 started. During the time when the COVID-19 sickness was happening, Indonesia and all other places around the world made a way for students to learn using the internet, so that the sickness would not easily spread. So, teachers need to teach online. Cooperman (2017) says that teachers who teach online need to know how to use technology well. This will help them teach better and faster.

Online learning is something that some college or university students might be used to, but it's not the same for elementary, middle, and high school students. This is especially true for SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang students. The school SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang has not used online teaching before. Teaching online is a new and tough task for teachers, especially when it comes to teaching English. The teacher helps students learn how to read, talk, write, and listen better in English. These four abilities are connected, but speaking and listening are very similar while reading and writing are different in their own ways. This means that teachers who teach English need to choose effective ways to teach, especially when teaching online. The way teachers teach is really important because it helps them figure out how to help students learn best.

Tulung et al. (2019) believe that using strategies to learn a language is really helpful because it can make you better at the language. Learning methods are important to be successful in learning a language. Using different methods can give different outcomes. Also, according to Kindsvatter et al. (1996, p. 290). This means that teachers use strategies to use the best methods and resources to reach their goals. The teacher's way of teaching helps students understand better so they can reach the learning goals. Herrell & Jordan say that English teachers need to understand how to adjust their lessons and tests to help all their students. In past studies, not many people used online ways to teach.

Sutarto et al. (2020) found in their study that many researchers have looked at teaching strategies before, but they only looked at ones used when people are physically together in person. Tulung et al. (2019) studied how people learn languages before, but this time they looked at how teachers use the internet to teach.

Maulidar et al. (2019) did a study on how English teachers help cadets learn to speak better. This study used a theory by Anjaniputra (2013) and found that teachers at BP2IP Malahayati Aceh use five strategies to teach speaking to five students: acting out scenarios, repeating words or phrases, playing games, describing pictures, and talking in groups. Please provide the original text that you would like me to simplify.

Tukan (2020) did a study about the difficulties and ways to deal with using apps for online learning during a pandemic. This study is based on an idea presented by Lockman and Schirmer. The study found that teachers face difficulties with: (1) using computer programs for online teaching, (2) making lesson plans and tests, (3) finding new ways to teach, (4) using different teaching tools, and (5) keeping students and parents interested. Teachers can use different ideas to teach well, such as watching videos to learn, picking good apps to use, planning lessons at different times, being creative in making materials, and giving easy tasks for students to work on.

Rahma (2020) did a study on how English teachers can solve problems when doing online learning at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Al-Firdaus. This research examines ideas from a paper written by Rasmitadila and others in the year 2020. The study showed that English teachers have problems with online learning because they don't have enough time, sometimes the internet doesn't work well, and students find it hard to understand things online. To solve the problem of not having enough time, the teacher does two things: giving students more work and having separate meetings for boys and girls. The school is making the internet work better so that students can use it without any problems.

This research was conducted to find out the challenges faced by English teachers in teaching online and the appropriate strategies used in teaching at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang. In this case, teachers must think hard to find the right online teaching strategy so that the teaching and learning process can run well because they rarely or never do it before even though the material being taught is still the same. The objectives of this study based on the formulation of the problem are to identify and describe the challenges faced by English teachers in teaching online at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang, and to classify and analyze the strategies used by English teachers in teaching online at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang. Therefore, the title of this study is Teacher's Strategy in Online Learning in English Subjects at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang.

Based on this background, the formulation of the problem is as follows: (1) what are the challenges faced by English teachers in teaching online at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang? (2) what are the strategies used by English teachers in teaching online at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang?
B. Method

This study looks at examples to understand a topic and is done in a detailed way. Stake (1995, p. xi) said that case studies are part of qualitative research. This means looking at one or more cases closely, by collecting lots of information like watching, talking to people, reading documents and reports. Then, writing about what you find out about the case. This study examined the difficulties and methods used by English teachers at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang when teaching online. This study happened at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang. The things that were used to gather information for this study were watching, asking people questions, and looking at papers or files. We watched four groups of students in each of the teacher’s classes: VII 1, VII 2, VII 3, and VII 4. We did this to see what problems and methods T1 used to teach. Two English teachers (T1 and T2) were interviewed at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang for their opinions. T1 was interviewed in four different classrooms (VIII 1, VIII 2, VIII 3, VIII 4), while T2 was only interviewed in classrooms VIII 1—4.

C. Findings and Discussion

1. Challenges Faced by English Teachers at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang in Teaching Online

a. Observation

We studied how students learn English online at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang. The writer thinks that learning online happens on WhatsApp and messenger. Teachers make short videos or notes and save it on Google Drive. Then they share the Google Drive link on WhatsApp or messenger groups so that the students can study them. Teachers sometimes use Google Classroom and Google Forms for teaching online, but they don’t use them very often.

b. Interview

*Internet connection.* The online teaching and learning process requires a good internet connection so that the learning process runs well. However, some students and teachers at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang have unstable internet connections making it difficult to carry out online learning processes.

*Internet quota during the Covid-19 pandemic.* Many parents experienced an economic downturn, so they felt that internet quota prices were quite expensive, especially for the average income. Moreover, these expensive internet packages are often limited to a certain amount of quota, which is certainly not enough to meet the needs of students. In addition, the conditions where students live require students to use certain internet packages which are quite expensive. This is a challenge for teachers in teaching because teachers can only provide material through limited or certain applications that only require a small amount of internet quota.

c. Learning Media

Limited media or learning facilities are also one of the challenges in online teaching as experienced by T1. In this case, T1 is limited in presenting or making learning materials more interesting and varied because T1 only uses smart phones in teaching or making materials as a tool to help carry out learning. Below is the media used by teachers at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang in the learning process, but the second last media and the Google form are rarely used. The media used are WhatsApp, Messenger, Google Classroom, Google Drive and Google Form. In addition, T2 is also difficult to teach students who do not have smartphones.

d. Interest in Learning

Students based on the results of interviews it can be concluded that students’ interest in learning online is reduced. This can be seen from the participation of students in working on and entering assignments. Based on the results of the evaluation of student assignments, the teacher found that the student’s answers were not as expected even though the answers to the questions or assignments already existed in the material that had been given before. It’s just that they are lazy to study it and do more other activities such as playing so students tend to be passive and lazy students. This results in teachers having difficulties in cultivating student interest or motivation through presenting creative teaching materials or selecting appropriate teaching strategies so that learning objectives can be achieved. In addition, in presenting material the teacher must pay attention to or adapt to one of the applications as a learning medium that can be accessed by all students or support class learning.
e. Extra Supervision of Students

After talking to teachers, we found out that they have trouble making sure students behave in online classes. This is especially hard for students who miss classes or don't turn in their work. The teacher needs to talk to and maybe even go to the student's house to talk to their parents if the student is not participating in class. They need to find out why the student isn't participating and ask for the parent's help in getting the student to pay attention in class. This will make it easier for the student to learn. Great Another problem is that teachers (T1 and T2) require additional time to give feedback through spoken messages on student work that is not correct. The teacher needs to talk to 10 students who sent unclear assignment photos individually. The teacher watches online students more closely to help them learn just as well as they would in a real classroom.

2. English Teacher's Strategy in Teaching Online at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang

Based on the results of observations and interviews with the two English teachers at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang, the authors found several teaching strategies used by English teachers.

a. Brainstorming (St 1)

T1 uses a brainstorming strategy (St 1) "Idea Gathering" in giving assignments. In its application, students are given the task by T1 to compose or write a poem with a theme determined by the students themselves. Through this assignment students are trained to think actively at a higher or broader level of thinking in determining the theme of the poem to be written into a poem. In addition, in writing or composing the words in the poem, students are invited to provide a variety of creative ideas in choosing figurative words that are appropriate to the theme so that students can produce or write an interesting poem and convey the meaning of the poem. T2 applies a brainstorming strategy (St 1) "Idea Gathering" by training students in expressing opinions or ideas on the material topics provided by T2. The topic of the material is "FUTURE TENSE". After T2 gave the topic, students were asked to provide a definition of FUTURE TENSE according to the students' own opinion either via voice message on WhatsApp/messenger or students wrote it in notes then sent it via WhatsApp/messenger group depending on the student's condition.

b. Questions and Answers (St 3)

The two teachers at Al-Afkari Middle School Deli Serdang used a strategy called "Tanya & Answer" during their online teaching, according to observations and interviews. In order to see how well students understood what was taught, St 3 gave them homework and checked the results using T1 and T2. T1 can help teachers see how much their students understand or participate in what they're learning. T1 wants students to answer questions based on descriptions from Student Worksheets, textbooks, or other sources to get their opinion. T1 asks questions to help students learn and understand so they don't have to make new learning materials. By answering these questions, students can get a brief overview of the topic. Similarly, T2 uses a similar strategy to T1 by asking students to summarize and answer questions on worksheets as feedback on what was taught.

c. Independent Study (St 4)

Independent study (St 4) means that students learn by themselves using different resources, like a computer or the internet. At SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang, English teachers (T1 and T2) use the "Independent Learning" (St 4) method in teaching. T1 and T2 asked students to study independently from the internet or by using materials provided from textbooks or online learning links shared via WhatsApp or messenger groups. In addition, students learn on their own by reading and answering questions in student assignment books or questions given by the teacher.

d. Self-Awareness Exercise/Test (St 5)

Self-Awareness Exercise/Test (St 5) is carried out to determine the extent to which students' abilities or skills are related to a learning topic. In addition, providing a change of pace creates a high level of interest and can facilitate individual insight into the need for personal improvement (Wehrli and Nyquist, 2003:1–6). St 5 carried out T1 and T2 in the learning process at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang to find out the extent to which students' abilities on a particular topic. Students' abilities were measured through the tasks given by T1 and T2. Implementation of the Self-Awareness Exercise/Test (St 5) strategy “Self-Awareness Exercise/Test” at T1. T1 asked students to make a poem and make an example of a conditional sentence. The results of the student's
work, T1 can measure or see the ability or skills of students in writing examples of conditional sentences and poetry. As for the implementation of the St 5 strategy by T2, namely T2 asked students to make a summary of the material that had been taught. So, T2 can measure or see students' ability to write a summary of the material they have learned.

e. Lecture/Presentation (St 6)

This strategy is an effective means of providing new information and clarifying existing information, to large groups and can increase student interest in future studies and can also be recorded for future use. T2 as an English teacher at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang uses this strategy. In practice, T2 made a short learning video in which T2 presented or explained the material in as much detail as possible to make it easier for students to understand the material.

f. Demonstration (St 7)

Demonstration is a teaching strategy by demonstrating or demonstrating the workings or examples of a particular object related to learning material both in actual form and in imitation form so that students can easily understand. In online learning at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang (T1 and T2) apply this strategy. T1 and T2 show examples of each material provided, both pictorial material and material provided in the form of learning videos to make it easier for students to understand. Based on the results of observations and interviews, the authors conclude that the strategies used by English teachers in teaching online at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang are brainstorming (St1) "Idea Collection", Question and Answer (St3) "Tanya & Answer", Independent study (St 4) "Self-Awareness", Self-Awareness Exercise/Test (St 5), Lecture/presentation (St 6) "Presentation", Demonstration (St 7) "Demonstration". T2 uses these six strategies but T1 does not use Lecture/presentation (St6). In the learning process, T1 often uses the independent study strategy, but T2 applies more of the Lecture/presentation (St6) "Presentation" strategy through learning videos in which T2 presents learning material. All online learning at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang does not carry out face-to-face learning via video conferencing using zoom, google meet, and so on.

D. Conclusion

After conducting research, the authors conclude that: teachers at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang face challenges in online learning, namely the difficulty of getting good internet access, and some students do not even have smart phones, making it difficult for teachers to teach. In addition, the authors conclude that because the pandemic situation has caused an economic downturn which has had an impact on difficulties meeting students' needs, in this case purchasing quotas and smartphones, making it difficult for teachers to carry out the learning process. Another challenge, students' interest in learning is decreasing which requires teachers to pay more attention.

The strategies used by English teachers at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang in teaching online are brainstorming (St 1), Question and Answer (St 3), Independent study (St 4), Self-Awareness Exercise/Test (St 5), Lecture/presentation (St 6) and Demonstration (St 7) "Demonstration". T2 uses these six strategies but T1 does not use Lecture/presentation (St6). This strategy is implemented through WhatsApp, Messenger, Google Classroom, Google Form and Google Drive. The strategies implemented can help English teachers at SMP Al-Afkari Deli Serdang overcome challenges in teaching online.

References


