

TEACHERS' CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 18 JAMBI

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to determine the difficulties that English instructors face when working with pupils in the seventh grade at Junior High School 18 in Jambi. A qualitative descriptive method was utilized throughout the course of this research. For the purpose of gathering data for this investigation, the researchers utilized observation sheets as well as interview sheets. Based on the findings of the data collection, the researchers discovered that there are various obstacles for teachers to overcome when teaching English to students in the seventh grade at Junior High School 18 Jambi. Dealing with kids, the amenities in schools, and even other teachers can provide a number of difficulties. The challenges include a lack of student interest in learning English, a lack of basic knowledge of students about English lessons, the use of a student's mother tongue when learning English, facilities at school, teacher unfamiliarity in technology, and insufficient time lesson hours due to the Covid-19 pandemic that is happening right now.

Keywords: Teacher, Teacher's Challenges, Teaching English

A. INTRODUCTION

Teaching English plays an important role since it is taught in Junior High School. Students generally only find a small amount of English outside and inside the classroom because English is used in English lesson only. English is not used as their language class or communication tool during the social interaction with their relatives. This weakness places a great responsibility for teacher to create a supportive environment and encourage the students to learn English. Of course to handling the problem, teacher must use the variety of method for teaching English (Fatiloro, 2015). English becomes of one compulsory subject in Junior High School and mainly taught only in classes. In Seventh grade students, when the new students still adapt from Elementary school become Junior High school, they easily get bored when the teaching-learning English is monotonous. Also, the English lesson recently introduced while in Junior high school. Thus, the teacher should attract students' attention first to make the

learning become interesting and fun for them. Methods, teachers' role, students' performance and environment affects in learning English as foreign language (Mohammed, 2018).

Teaching English as a foreign language in Indonesia has experienced in limited success. It can be seen in the previous research by Abrar (2016) he stated that, when teaching English the students sometimes shy to ask, not interested to study, and afraid of making mistakes. It makes the students lack of motivation. He also stated the times and resources of material are crucial in order to create the effective teaching-learning process. Over- crowded English classes also led to the problem in teaching English because teaching-learning process should be in a good environment.

Based on the preliminary observation and interview at Junior High School 18 Jambi, most of the seventh grade students have a little basic of learning English, they lack of English ability, such as speaking, reading, listening, and writing. English teacher stated that those things become the factor that caused the challenges while teaching English. The teacher also said while teaching in seventh grade students, they need extra patience to engage the students in learning English. Teachers also have to select good strategies while teaching to build students' interest in learning English. That is why the researcher wants to know what are the challenges faced by them.

Yulia (2013) stated, teachers in their key roles must be able to make interesting way to motivating the students in learning English. Mohammed (2018, p. 1398) suggested that, if the teachers want to their students enable to use the language, the teachers should use the proper methods and strategies. Therefore, the teachers have to select good strategies to teaching the foreign language learners so that the output of the students is expected to have better quality in the future. From the explanation above, the researchers interested to observe what are the challenges faced by the teacher while teaching seventh grade students.

1. Teaching and Learning English's Considerations

There are many things that must be considered in teaching and learning process to create an effective learning situation. The teacher might face several problems in teaching English which

can hold up the teaching and learning process itself. Below are the problems or challenges while teaching English.

Teacher's ability and method. Teachers will struggle to create teaching methods become effectively for them since they may get only basic preparation in the supportive theory and practical applications (Bulter, 2005; Littlewood, 2007). Applying inappropriate teaching methods and techniques is hard because teacher is not only thinking of how they transferred four language skill such as, listening, reading, speaking and writing. But teachers also have to think how to increase the students' motivation and their enthusiasm when learning English. Ansari (2012) said that the efficiency and the competency of teacher is a vital in learning EFL. When teaching, teachers sometimes do something monotonous like start the lesson without asking students' mood, explain in whole lesson hours, and giving students task. This thing should be avoided by the teacher. That is why the knowledge of method is very important for teachers because teacher's knowledge is their basis in teaching (Ukessay, 2018). According to Pande (2013), when matching the teaching method and topic will help the teachers build an effective teaching learning process.

Mother tongue interference. According to Fatiloro (2015), the cause of the incorrect in English performance unconsciously is when the student and teacher talk with their own mother tongue fluently. The problems in mother tongue interference can be grammatical error, miss pronunciation, semantic or morphological (Fatiloro, 2015, p. 27). This also supported by Malana (2018, p. 33) who said, a major factor that affecting English language proficiency and competence is the first language interference Students' motivation and interest. The learning achievement can be good if the student's motivation is good (Yulia, 2013, p. 4). Most students think English language is the most difficult lesson after math. Students sometimes do not listen to the teacher. It makes they do not get anything after the lesson end. Even though they understand the lesson, they will forget it quickly. Students only think about how they pass the course and not get remedial. It can be seen in Journal by Abrar (2016, p. 97) he said that, when teaching-learning English, some students preferred to do other activities, like playing, chatting with friends, and also making some noise. It is become the indication lack of students' motivation and interest in learning English. However, the indication of students' lack

motivation is when the students have no desire or feel reluctant to get involved in learning the language comfortably (Abrar, 2016, p. 96).

Lack of vocabulary. When teacher is talking to the class using full English and with difficult words, sometimes students do not understand what are the teacher saying because they are not familiar with the words. Also, there are many same words but different meaning that makes the students confused. For example, the words of “express” can be something done fast or to show your thoughts by using words. Chung (2016) as cited in Songbatumis (2017, p. 57) said that, “Students in English as foreign language context are limited by their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary of the target language and have to struggle to comprehend the context.”.

Facilities in learning. The facilities will influence the success of English teaching-learning process. Songbatumis 2017, p. 58) said that, Teaching English process will not achieve the goals if the tools in teaching cannot support it. While teachers want to teach about song or film, of course they need projector to show the visual, and the speaker to display the audio. If the projector and speaker are not available how can the teacher teach the students about that. Roinah (2019) also argued that the teaching learning process cannot run optimally and maximally without any learning facilities available in the school.

Not enough resources and materials. Abrar (2016, p. 98) mention about the limited resources and materials can influence the English teaching affectivity. Book, worksheet, and module are included in main resources in teaching English because it will help the students to cultivate what they already have learned and it is become the teacher sources in teaching.

Overcrowded class. Overcrowded classes is the one of the most often mentioned problems encountered by English teachers and the effect of such condition can have on teaching and learning (Emery, 2012, p. 4). A good environment to teaching English is on the conductive class. If the class have many students, it will difficult to make the teaching-learning become effective. Baker and Westrup (2000) cited in Songbatumis (2017, p. 2) state several problems of teaching large classes, such as “desks and chairs are fixed or difficult to move; students sit

close together in rows; little space for the teacher and students to move in the classroom; walls between classrooms are thin, and noise will disturb other classes.”.

B. METHOD

This research focused on teachers’ challenges in teaching English at seventh grade students. This research was conducted in Junior High School 18 Jambi, located at Kota Baru district, Kota Jambi, Jambi province. The researcher chose this school because the researcher knows that this school have “A” accreditation and some of the English teacher in here have more than ten years of teaching experience, but they still have challenges in teaching English at seventh grade students knowing from preliminary interview and observation. The subject of this research was the English teachers of the seventh grade students of Junior High School 18 Jambi city and the situation on while teaching on seventh grade students. There are 5 English teachers in Junior High School 18 Jambi, but the researcher takes 2 English teachers

which teaching at seventh grade students of Junior High School 18 Jambi because this research focuses on challenges in teaching seventh grade students. The researcher also takes 2 students to support the data from the teacher to avoid the subjective viewpoint for this research. Moleong (2000) said that, people and their observed behavior can be collected into qualitative descriptive data in both written or verbal words. The only treatment given is the research itself, which include through the observation and interview. Semi structured interview was used to collected the data so that the researcher can dig deeper the information about challenges faced by them. The researcher also observed the condition in the class to see the activities while teaching. The researcher used non- participant observation in this research. Non-participant observation is the observation which the researcher as an observer, not directly involved in the process (Sugiyono, 2013, p. 145).

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this research aimed to find out what teachers’ challenges in teaching English at seventh grade students of Junior High School 18 Jambi. Below are the challenges that researcher found. Students’ interest and motivation in learning English. The learning achievement can be good if the student’s motivation is good (Yulia, 2013, p. 4). When the

students do not follow the activity during the learning process, doing other activities on the class besides listen to their teacher it can be indicated that they not interested to the lesson. It is also stated by Abrar (2016, p. 96), he said that the indication of students' lack motivation is when the students have no desire or feel reluctant to get involved in learning the language comfortably. The researcher found that the students look lazy to follow the lesson. Some students played their phone instead of listen to their teacher's explanation about the lesson. Some students also did not follow the teachers' instructions and only silent on their seat. Teacher A argued that most of the seventh grade students' interest in learning English is low because they never meet English as their subject in elementary school. Students B justifying it by saying that she not quite interested in English subject because she never learnt it before. Lack of students basic of English lesson. One of cause the foreign language students did not understand English language is when the students lack of English background knowledge (Souriyavongsa et al., 2013).

From the interview, Teacher A and teacher B argued that the when in elementary school, mostly students did not learn English, it makes the teacher difficult to explain material, the teacher must explain the material from beginning to introduce them in English lesson. The teachers need to explain the material again to the students, which is needed much time to handle. Those problem is similar with the research by Susiyanti (2019), she found that the students did not have basic English lesson, it made the learning become unfold. The English lesson should be introduced from the lowest level of school such as kindergarten and elementary school so that the students have knowledge about English language. Facilities in Learning. Good facilities can support the goal of teaching learning process. Songbatumis (2017, p. 58) said that, Teaching English process will not achieve the goals if the tools in teaching cannot support it. The availability of projector at this school did not enough yet. It is supported on the observation that the teacher A and teacher B did not use the projector in teaching learning process. The students A and B agreed that their teacher never used projector or speaker during teaching learning process. The existence of adequate facilities and infrastructure is one of the factors in learning English so that they do not face problems in the learning process (Roinah, 2019). It is become the school responsibility to fullfil the teaching needs to create effective teaching learning process.

Mother tongue interference. Since English is not used in everyday communication in Junior High School 18 Jambi, this problem is commonly happen when teaching English as a foreign language. According to Fatiloro (2015), the cause of the incorrect in English performance unconsciously is when the student and teacher talk with their own mother tongue fluently. The problems in mother tongue interference can be grammatical error, miss pronunciation, semantic or morphological (Fatiloro, 2015, p. 27). Those have similarity with the research by Malana (2018) about the mother tongue interference that happen Cultural Groups towards English language, the researcher found that the students did not do well in oral test, specifically on intonation and pronunciation.

Insufficient times. Insufficient times become the crucial problem in this year. Lynch (2008) stated that Teaching English need more time to make the students enable speak the language, especially if English is not the first language. Two hours in a week is a brief time to teach English lesson considering there are many aspects in English lesson. From interview and observation, both teacher A and teacher B agreed that the lesson hour this year is not enough for English lesson. In 2021, Due the pandemic covid-19 the education government has shortened the lesson hours from the 100 minutes in each meeting become 50 minutes each meeting. It becomes the teachers' challenges to adjust what they will teach in the least amount of time in order to create an ideal teaching learning process with shortage times.

Unfamiliar IT. Teacher should be able to operate electronic tools to support teaching learning process. Virgiyanti et al. (2016) said that the teacher should have more emphasize on pedagogical skills and personal skill, one of the pedagogical skill is using IT to support teaching learning process. Thus, the teacher should be able made their own learning media in order to avoid the monotonous learning process.

Based on the interview, the teacher can only operate some of electronic devices and do basic things such as recording, and make lesson slides using power point. The teacher cannot make animation by them self.

D. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings of the research conducted through observation and interview, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the difficulties that arise when teaching English to students in the seventh grade at junior high school 18 Jambi do not solely stem from the teachers themselves. It involves the pupils as well as the circumstances that arise during the teaching and learning process. Dealing with kids, the amenities in schools, and even other teachers can provide a number of difficulties. There are a number of obstacles, including a lack of enthusiasm on the part of students in learning English, a lack of fundamental information on the part of students about English classes, the utilization of students' first languages while learning English, inadequate facilities at schools, and a lack of familiarity on the part of teachers with technology. In addition, because of the pandemic caused by COVID-19 in the year 2021, the teaching and learning process was finally implemented in face to face after being conducted in online learning for one year in 2020. However, the thing that distinguishes this year from the year before the pandemic is that the lesson hours have been shortened from 100 minutes to 50 minutes in every meeting, and there is no rest time.

Even though there was a lack of time, the teacher still needed to employ effective teaching tactics to ensure that the students understood the material. In light of the current state of affairs on Pandemic, it is imperative that the instructors improve their English pedagogical abilities. Knowing the qualities of their students who are learning the language and having a positive attitude to motivate those students would help the teachers compensate for their students' gaps in knowledge. The teachers should change their method to accommodate this circumstance in order to make learning successful and enjoyable. Before beginning the learning process, a good instructor should remind the pupils to always comply with the current health regulations, such as washing their hands, keeping their distance, and wearing masks. These guidelines for health should be followed religiously by the teachers, who should serve as a model for their students.

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