

NON-TENURED EFL TEACHERS' TEACHING STRATEGIES IN A LIMITED FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING MODE

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Abstract: EFL teachers' teaching strategies in teaching during pandemic time are crucial to explore. This study aims to provide explanation on how the EFL high school teachers in a rural area chose and implemented their teaching strategies in a limited face-to-face learning mode. In this case study design, data were collected by interviewing, observing, and documenting two non-tenured EFL teachers' instructional activities in North Morowali regency, Central Sulawesi. The results showed that teachers' strategies are direct and indirect instruction, individual, and collaborative or interactive strategies. These results can be useful as a reference in the subject of teachers' teaching strategies implementation, its effectiveness, and the influencing factors of the strategies preferences

Keywords: *teaching strategies, limited face-to-face learning, non-tenured EFL teachers*

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of English instructional activities in Indonesia has now been shifting from brick-and-mortar activities to blended learning activities, which is caused by, among others, the Covid-19 pandemic. This blended learning has been encouraged too by the circular letter of the Minister of Education and Culture in 2020, who firmly instructed that teaching and learning activities had to be shifted to blended learning activities or other similar activities to anticipate the Covid-19 pandemic. However, not all regions in Indonesia are ready to shift their learning model to blended learning model due to some cause factors, such as lack of internet and facilities. One of the schools that finds this instruction implementing this official instruction challenging is SMAN X, a public school located in a rural area in North Morowali regency, Central Sulawesi. Based on the researcher's preliminary observation, the teaching and learning activities in that school during pandemic time have been challenging enough for both teachers and students. Most of the students live in an area with poor internet connection, so they are reluctant to participate actively in the classroom. Thus, the implementation of strategies by the teachers in this school is interesting to explore, since it can provide explanation to what has really happened at school, what are the challenges experienced by the teachers and students, and how do the teachers deal with those challenges.

Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategies are the ways teachers maximize their techniques and methods in their instructional activities. The "Big Five Strategies" are

five most commonly used strategies of teaching English in the classroom, according to Lang and Evans in 2006. These strategies are direct, indirect, experimental, collaborative, and individual study. *Direct instruction* is associated with lecturing technique with learning media such as chalk, overhead projector, PowerPoint presentation, and smart board presentations.

Indirect instruction is a strategy that the teacher can implement under various activities, such as debate, field study, and group work. This strategy enables students to learn from their environment and to overcome challenges they may face during learning process, using the resources they already have (Lang & Evans, 2006). In implementing this strategy, the teachers can provide inquiries to the students to lead them in developing their knowledge, learning skills, as well as problem solving skills.

Experiential is a strategy that, when being implemented by the teachers, will allow students to make their learning process more meaningful. To implement this strategy, a teacher must be able to provide a connection or to link students' learning activities with their life experience (Lang & Evans, 2006). Such efforts can be in form of inquiries or authentic assignment.

Collaborative or interactive strategy is not a new strategy; however, its implementation in classroom is often limited to group work only. Collaborative is more than just a group work situation, but a situation where students can discover their own viewpoints, voices, regarding their learning experiences and their discovery to different ways of thinking, feeling, and making meaning (Hattie, 2009; Lang & Evans, 2006). Collaborative is

not only between students and their peers, but also between teacher and students, and teacher and teacher as well. To make sure that this strategy is implemented effectively, there are five aspects that must be considered (Lang & Evans, 2006):

- a. Group characteristics: teachers must really recognize their students' cognitive development, their levels of social and emotional maturity, and the skills of all group members.
- b. Goal setting: teachers must be aware of students' social skills and affective processes that are age-appropriate for the group, and be able to set realistic goals based on this information.
- c. Getting there: teachers must be able to design group tasks in accordance with students' characteristics. Not only the tasks but also the instructions, learning resources, and rewards as well.
- d. Guiding the process: during collaboration, teachers must move around the room, check for students' understanding, and check the quality and quantity of interactions among group members through questioning or other relevant techniques.
- e. Gazing backward: this is the last aspect, where teachers' reflection skill plays important role since teachers must invite students to reflect back on what went well and what was not, problems that occurred, and so on. This aspect also requires direction to the students to reflect back on their learning experience, their participation, time allocation, and resources available.

Individual strategy has many synonyms: independent learning, self-regulated learning, self-directed study (or learning), self-teaching, and individualized study. According to Lang and Evans (2006), individual strategy is a term chosen to refer to a strategy that teachers implement to encourage students in learning on their own and not be dependent on other students or teachers anymore. This strategy must be implemented if teachers want to create independent learners, through sharpening students' learning skills and self-confidence. Some learning skills that can be encouraged by teachers in implementing this strategy are assigning the students to read articles in selected journals, play games, and read books intensively and extensively.

Review of Related Studies on Teachers' Strategies in Teaching English

EFL teachers' strategies in teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic has become the research topic for scholars in Indonesia. Utami in her study conducted in 2020 explained that the teachers in MTs X (SMP-equivalent Islamic schooling) in Salatiga, Central Java, combined some strategies

(planning, composing, and editing) in teaching English to their students. As for teaching listening skills to the students, the teachers implemented several strategies such as listening to songs, writing song lyrics, matching lyrics, and singing a song. For the teaching mode, they used video-based learning and WhatsApp to make sure that the instructional activities continued. Based on the interview results, the teachers claimed that they combined several strategies to anticipate the Covid-19 pandemic time in order to keep achieving learning goals. From the findings of this study, it can be seen that the teachers' strategies appeared in combining several teaching techniques and maximizing the use of social messaging app in teaching interactively (Utami, 2020).

Widarini, Putra, and Marsakawati (2021) in their study explained how junior high EFL teachers in Tabanan Regency, Bali, dealt with the Covid-19 pandemic that influenced their teaching strategies. The teachers used full distance learning mode by combining digital applications and tools, which are Google Form, Google Meet, Quizzes, and learning videos). Strategies that they implemented were mostly interactive and direct instruction (Widarini, Putra, & Marsakawati, 2021).

Shafira' study, conducted in 2021, explained how the teachers at SMP X in Palu, Central Sulawesi, implemented various strategies in teaching English Writing to their students. Similar to Widarini, Putra, and Marsakawati's study, Shafira' study also found out that the teachers used the combination of digital application and tools in teaching writing, such as Google Meet and WhatsApp. The teaching mode used in this setting was online teaching mode, and the teaching strategies that the teachers used mostly were self-directed and direct instruction strategies (Shafira, 2021).

EFL teachers in Bengkulu (Haryana, Hardiyanti, & Yudaningrum, 2021) and in Jember (Damayanti, Sudarsono, & Ariyanto, 2022) have implemented various teaching strategies in teaching their students. They relied on collaborative or interactive strategy in form of online collaborative projects, independent study through computer-based learning exercises, and online discussion and lectures using social networking applications and platforms such as WhatsApp and Google Classroom (Damayanti, Sudarsono, & Ariyanto, 2022; Haryana, Hardiyanti, & Yudaningrum, 2021). For the learning materials, they combined the government's created materials and other relevant materials available on the internet (Haryana, Hardiyanti, & Yudaningrum, 2021).

Although the topic in the related studies is similar with the topic of this current study, some differences can be discussed. Firstly, the theoretical framework used in each related study is different

from the theoretical framework used in this study, yet some of the strategies are similar. Secondly, although the characteristics of the respondents are the same, which are junior EFL high school teachers in Indonesia, the teaching model in each research setting is different. These three studies explore the teachers' strategies in teaching English in an online learning mode, while this study explores teachers' strategies in teaching English in a limited face-to-face learning mode. EFL teachers who teach in a face-to-face learning mode surely have their strategies to make sure that the instructional activities run optimally amidst the pandemic, and their experiences in implementing those strategies are worth exploring.

METHOD

This study is qualitative research with the case study as the design. A case study was chosen as the research design since it can provide sufficient data on a certain phenomenon under study through in-depth interviews and observation (Leba, Butarbutar, & Lerang, 2021; Yin, 2018).

The study site is at SMAN X, a state high school in a rural area in North Morowali regency. The researchers choose this school due to its location in rural area, already accredited by the government with C a category, and the researchers have no personal relationships with the principal and the teachers as participants in this study, so the researchers can avoid the possibility of bias in analyzing the data.

Two EFL high school teachers consented to participate in this study. They are Mrs. SR and Mrs. D. These teachers have been teaching English to Grade XI and XI students for four years by the time this study took place. They are also honorary teachers and have not been certified. This means that the participants' profile is non-tenured teachers who have not obtained a teaching certificate.

The researchers employed in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation to collect the data. The data collection procedure took time from March to July 2021. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's analysis procedure (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014) and the results were interpreted using the theory of teachers' strategies (Lang & Evans, 2006).

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to explore the strategies that the non-tenured EFL teachers implemented in teaching English during the pandemic. Based on the data gained from conducting in-depth interviews, observing teachers' instructional activities, and documenting teachers' teaching materials and media, the instructional activities in SMAN X were in a limited face-to-face model. This model is at the principal's discretion

since this model fits the characteristics of the environment, availability of school facilities, and the students' economic background.

Since the study site was located in a rural area, students had limited even no access to stable internet network. The school had no internet facility so teachers must be able to adapt their teaching strategies to make sure that the instructional activities run optimally. The media used in teaching activities were mostly laptops, blackboards, and printed materials. The curriculum implemented was 2013 curriculum with some adjustment on the lesson plans to the current situation.

Direct Instruction Strategy

The observation shows that the direct instruction strategy was visible when the teachers printed materials as learning media. During this activity, both teachers gave short and clear instruction for their students: pay attention to the materials and do the assignment based on the content in the materials. No time was allotted for question and answer session since the teachers had to end the teaching process very quick due to the time limit regulated by the officials, as Mrs. SR recalled as follows,

"The explanation time must be no longer than 15 minutes. It is instructed by the principal, and already written in the SOP."

Mrs. D also added as follows,

"I ask the students to read the materials, answer the questions, and do the quiz. We have no time to waste so everything must be done as quickly as possible."

Indirect instruction strategy

This strategy is used to compensate the time limit in the classroom. The students refused to learn at home and in small groups, so the teachers had to adjust their instructions in such a limited time. During 15-minute instructional activities, both teachers asked several questions to check whether the students understood their explanation and the assignment given or not. Mrs. D states as follows,

"I check for students' understanding by asking questions to them. If they can answer my questions, I am certain that they understand my explanation and they can continue to the next activity. If not, then I know that my explanation does not help them and I have to change my question or provide more examples for them."

The questioning technique was used by Mrs. D in this strategy to make sure that students did not experience misunderstanding during this short

activity, and to make sure that if such problem occurred, Mrs. D would know what to do immediately. This means that only through this question-and-answer session can the teacher confirm that students already understand the materials given.

Individual study

During the observation, the teachers were seen using printed reading materials as students' homework.

"They (students) read a reading material I already gave to them at school, plus a set of questions. For their homework, they must answer the questions based on the text and the answers will be discussed the next week."

Mrs. SR's account explained that to promote independent learning, she used her students to do intensive reading by providing them with printed reading materials and questions to lead them to comprehend the materials. Mrs. D also used a similar strategy to encourage her students to learn independently.

"I ask them questions to see if they read the reading text or not. Those who can answer my questions will be given an extra point. But the time is very limited, so students who have no chance to answer my questions this week can try to answer next week."

Collaborative or Interactive

Both teachers have different explanations on how they implement the interactively. Mrs. D admitted that her students refused to meet in-group outside school.

"The learning process is still face-to-face and meetings are still held but with a limited time. To be honest, if they study at home, instead of studying and completing the assignment, they must help their parents in doing farming work and house chores. Therefore, they prefer to study at school to at home."

Mrs. SR encouraged her students to form a study group outside school and guided them during group study.

"I take initiative to form a study group at home, because learning at school is very time-limited, while I have to make sure that the students have a full understanding of the materials. So, I group them first, and I come to their gathering place to continue the unfinished materials and to make them understand, even though I have to explain the materials repeatedly."

Moreover, Mrs. SR added some more explanations on how she implemented collaborative strategy in her activities.

"I do a role-play to train their pronunciation. I provide simple dialogues and ask them to perform before the class. Then, I score them based on their efforts and performance. I believe this can build their confidence and collaboration skill even though this is still in a pandemic time, also to engage them in learning activities."

DISCUSSIONS

From the teachers' accounts explained in the findings section, also from the interviews and observations results, the researchers found out that the teachers' strategies in teaching English to the students in a limited face-to-face mode are categorized into four strategies; direct instruction, indirect instruction, individual, and collaborative strategies.

Direct instruction, indirect instruction, and individual strategies are three strategies that were mostly implemented by the two non-tenured high school EFL teachers in SMAN Xin in their instructional activities. Both direct and indirect instructions were implemented to guide the students during learning, checking students' understanding, and assessing their learning progress. The implementation of direct instruction in this recent study is consistent with the strategy implemented by the relevant studies discussed in the previous section (Shafira, 2021; Widarini, Putra, & Marsakawati, 2021). This finding proves that direct instruction is a strategy that can be implemented in either limited face-to-face learning or online learning.

Individual strategy is the second strategy that can be implemented in any mode of learning. As shown in this recent study, individual strategy can take the form in assigning an intensive reading task with a complete set of questions to the students in order to build their comprehension skills and independent learning skills. The finding is supported by the related studies (Haryana, Hardiyanti, & Yudanigrum, 2021; Shafira, 2021) which also revealed the same thing.

The collaborative or interactive strategy is the strategy that was implemented by one of the teachers in this study. This strategy was implemented to help students build their confidence in using English and collaborate with their peers in a role-play activity. This finding is consistent with the previous findings (Haryana, Hardiyanti, & Yudanigrum, 2021; Damayanti, Sudarsono, & Ariyanto, 2022; Utami, 2020; Widarini, Putra, & Marsakawati, 2021) which revealed that such a strategy is still used in an online learning setting, although those experiences digital tools and applications to facilitate the learning activity.

The findings indicated that the strategies implemented by EFL teachers in a limited face-to-face learning mode, which are the direct and indirect instruction, individual, and collaborative strategies, were chosen to adapt to the health protocol regulations instructed by the officials during the pandemic time. There is also a high possibility that the teachers' profile also contribute in selecting their teaching strategies.

Furthermore, the experiential strategy did not appear in the instructional activities of teachers in a limited face-to-face learning mode. This is possibly due to the teachers' lack of professional experience in creating an authentic assignment for the students, or no extra time available anymore due to their added responsibility to teach students after school in-group.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed that the direct instruction, indirect instruction, individual, and collaborative strategies were used by non-tenured high school EFL teachers in teaching English to high

school students in SMAN X, North Morowali regency.

There are three limitations of this study. Firstly, this study was a case study and could not include all EFL non-tenured teachers in the rural areas in Morowali regency who would have provided valuable information to portray a more accurate picture of strategies implementation in their classrooms. Secondly, the students' absence in providing data to whether the strategies implemented are effective for their learning experience or not. Thirdly, the instruction to follow the health protocol issued by the officials, EFL teachers' professional development, and the limited face-to-face learning model at school were three factors that may or may not contribute to the selection and implementation of these strategies. Therefore, the researchers suggest that these three limitations can be covered in the future studies.

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