

Received : 29-06-2021
Revised : 13-07-2021
Published : 29-08-2021

Online Teachers Training: Increasing Elementary School Teachers' Ability in Daily Speaking English for Bilingual Teaching Purposes at Islamic School

Redjeki Agoestyowati
Institut Ilmu Sosial STIAMI, Jakarta, Indonesia
redjeki.agoestyowati@gmail.com

Abstract:

Bilingual class (Indonesian and English) for some lessons must be done in Islamic Elementary School of Al Azhar 17 Bintaro. Therefore, English Training for teacher was conducted. This program was a challenge for all teachers of SD Al Azhar 17 Bintaro to improve their competence in teaching by using two languages and to improve the ability of using English for daily communication with students. The aims of the training was to prepare the implementation of bilingual classes that was done 10 meetings and each meeting was done 4 hours. English Teacher Training Program include: games and icebreaking, group and class discussions, role-play, sharing session, microteaching (presentation), and feedback evaluation. Participants were always enthusiastic in doing all activities. Feedback from other participants was very good. At the end of the training, there was an increase in the competence of all participants in using English expressions for teaching purposes. They seem more confident and communicate more fluently in English. The school hopes that the bilingual training program in schools will continue to be a success.

Keywords: *teacher's training; online training; english skills*



INTRODUCTION

There are many Elementary Schools in Indonesia and the Islamic Elementary School of Al Azhar 17 Bintaro or it is also known as Albin is one of the leading schools in Indonesia that is located in Jalan Bonjol No. 9, RT. 6 / RW. 2, Pondok Karya, Pondok Aren, Pd. Karya, Kec. Pd. Aren, Kota Tangerang Selatan, Banten 15221. Islamic Elementary School of Al Azhar 17 is growing fast. SD Islam Al-Azhar 17 Bintaro or Albin is an Islamic school that combines Islamic and General curriculum. The school builds a well-educated, intelligent and creative generation.

Al Azhar 17 Bintaro Islamic Elementary School is under the management of the Al Azhar Islamic Boarding School Foundation, which was established in 1952, with its head office in the Al Azhar Grand Mosque complex, Jl. Sisingamangaraja, Kebayoran Baru, South Jakarta. The laying of the first stone for the construction of the Al Azhar 17 Bintaro Islamic Elementary School in 1995, while the first batch began in 1997.

Nowadays, many activities are conducted for both students and teachers, because of that several achievements have been achieved by both teachers and students of SD Al Azhar 17 Bintaro. One of the programs that were done for all teachers to increase their bilingual teaching skills is "English Training for All Teachers".

By doing this training, it is hoped that Teachers' teaching skills in bilingual language will be improved. All teachers participated in the program and a trainer trained and shared teaching skills and experience in bilingual language. The trainer was also accompanied by a foreign teacher who helped participants to practice their English.

Based on Sri Wuli Fitriati's Research (2016) about Increasing Teacher Competence in Speaking English for Instructional Purposes for Bilingual Teaching at Al Azhar Islamic SD 29 Semarang it was mentioned that training is needed to improve the ability of English teachers, especially Speaking English for Instructional Purposes. The training's aims was to prepare teachers in this bilingual class and participants were always enthusiastic in every activity. Feedback from other participants of teachers who do microteaching is very supportive and constructive. At the end of the training, there is an increased competence of trainee teachers in using English phrases for teaching purposes. They seem more confident and more fluent in English. The school expects ongoing English training to succeed bilingual teaching programs in schools.

Having this activities routine, most of the teachers have a good time for sharing about teaching and learning activities. They can share, because this English training is an activity for teachers, from teachers and by the teachers. Through sharing, good communication good sharing among teachers can be well maintained. When teachers can share and able communicate well with other teachers, they will also have good communication with their students, teachers can implement their sharing program when they teach their students. This English Training program was managed and supported well by the Headmaster and Vice Headmasters. They gave attention to the English abilities of all teachers.

Several kinds of achievements have been achieved by the students. One of them is because of their students' English abilities. All teachers realized the importance of English in this era for all students, so English is used by all teachers for teaching, especially for opening the class and closing their teaching and learning activities. Most of the teachers have applied some fun activities before and after the class and most of the students are motivated to be involved in some activities made by the teacher. This is a challenge for SD Al Azhar 17 Bintaro's teachers to use bilingual language in teaching.

The vision of this school is to Creating Students Who Have Good Morals, Excellence in Achievement, and Mastery of Science and Technology. The missions are performing a holistic education system that integrates religion and the general knowledge (IMTAQ, science, and technology), to build an Islamic culture in a school environment that is implemented in everyday life, also applying active, innovative, creative, effective, and fun learning, then applying information and communication technology-based learning (Information & Communication Technology).

Bilingual language in teaching has been done for non-English lessons, such as math, Bahasa Indonesia, etc. Therefore English training was conducted to improve teachers' skills in speaking and presenting some material in English. Also to build their confidence to teach non-English Lessons in English and to develop teachers' idea to have some fun activities with their students.

All teachers who are teaching in bilingual language must be able to speak both Indonesian and English fluently and confidently. Therefore, it is necessary to examine how long it takes a teacher to be ready to teach using two languages and what level of bilingual skills is needed or by a teacher to be able to teach bilingual classes.

The main purpose of English Training for Teachers is to increase the competence of teachers in using English for managing all classroom activities, especially before and after the class or opening and closing the session plus interesting icebreaking. Bilingual classroom teachers must have sufficient ability to manage all class activities in English, such as checking students' attendance, praying before the class, giving motivation in English, doing some icebreaking, delivering or presenting the lesson well, finishing the class with some fun ways, etc. and all is done in bilingual.

To be able to do those activities mentioned above, teachers need to have special speaking skills, because some words or sentences used by the teachers are often heard by the students during the session. Teachers can be role models in using simple English either inside or outside the classroom. Students usually follow what the teachers say because teachers are the first person or even the closest person after parents. Some words or sentences that are often used by the teachers, will also be used by the students. For this reason, English Training is needed because it is very important to prepare for the bilingual class. All teachers realized the importance of training, so they always attended the training session.

METHODE OF THE TRAINING

The English Training was conducted twice a month on Saturdays from 8 a.m. until 11.45. The program was done in one year, both offline and online, from February 2021 – June 2021, and attended by 30 teachers and vice headmaster.

The program was done online because of Covid-19 Pandemic, it was then done by zoom. All teachers attended the meeting, and chat before the class, continued by a speech from one of the teachers or giving motivational words or wise words, and then the class is always started by an icebreaking to cheer them up. Icebreaking is done by the teachers for the teachers and from the teachers. Therefore all teachers must be creative to think about the idea of any icebreaking.

All icebreaking that has been presented at the beginning of the class, can be then used by all teachers when they teach in their class. All teachers were very enthusiastic to show their class games and icebreaking that is presented for all participants. This teachers' training is a good activity because all teachers can get more ideas to have fun classes, better idea how to

handle a class happily and nicely. On the day of the training, a teacher shared their teaching activities, experience, problem, and solution, etc. So, this weekly training is also a place to build better communication among teachers of SD Al Azhar 17 Bintaro.

Here is some sample of training activities, such as writing, speaking, grammar, preparing a lesson plan, teaching experience sharing, some expressions used for teaching, important sentences for teachers, group and class discussions, making some class games and icebreakers with or without kit or equipment, modeling, preparation of teaching scenarios, and microteaching, role-play, dialogue, presentation, etc.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As it was mentioned earlier that this training was done online, so we did not use a wide classroom or LCD Projector but all participants must use a laptop. Even though it was zoom training, but it was also fun with some fun and interesting activities. The program was fun because all participants were seriously involved in the training.

Here are some activities that had been done:

1. Introduction

All teachers have to practice giving a simple introduction. We did role-play and considered other participants are students who have different characters such as shy students, naughty, discipline, stubborn, clever, lazy students, etc.

2. Games for opening and closing classes

To create enthusiasm in following class lessons, teachers must have several kinds of online classroom games and activities based on the lesson they teach. Teachers must have some fun ways to start the class. Again we did role-play for this session and all teachers have to present their fun opening and those fun ways from all teachers can be implemented in their classes. They shared not only how to start the class, but also shared about fun ways to finish the class.

3. English Expression used in class

Trainer shared some important sentences, expressions, or questions used in class for example:

a. Sentences: "open the door, please open the door, open your book page 10, please open your book page 10, clean the whiteboard, write your name here, listen carefully, come forward please, don't be late, please don't be late, don't read loudly, don't be lazy, etc.

b. Expression: you look so beautiful today, you look handsome today, your bag is good, your shoes are new, you have new shoes, your English is excellent, great, clever, two thumbs up, etc.

c. Questions: "how are you? Is there any homework? Who is absent today? Why do you come late? How did you come here this morning? Did you sleep well last night?"

4. Homework and Assignment

At the end of each session, the trainer always gave some homework or assignment to all participants, and that homework or assignment must be presented in the next session, either individual or group assignment. Most of all teachers' presentations can be implemented by some teachers, they can be modified based on the lesson they teach. Presenting their homework and assignment is part of the happy sharing session because the presenter considered all participants as Elementary Students of Al-Azhar 17 Bintaro.

5. Online Icebreakers based on the topic of the lesson

In order not to get bored following the lesson, especially in the middle of the session, all teachers must be able to share and perform some creative activities for students, and they had several ideas to create some fun activities based on the lesson they teach, such as:

- a. Find Something
- b. Two Thumbs up if yes
- c. Instruction Games
- d. Hidden Object
- e. Object Pictionary
- f. Odd One Out
- g. Word Chain
- h. Etc. and this is one of the pictures:

Here is the link when we did some activities by zoom:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXx7mTm4FKE&t=21s>



On Line Icebreaking for a Zoom
Class with Teachers of SD Al Azha...

Picture 1: Online Icebreaking and Games

6. Teaching Sharing Session

Teacher Sharing is a space to come forth and share experiences that one believes other teachers and participants would learn from and develop their thoughts in the process. Teachers are change agents and one of the ways for this change to gain momentum is when there are free spaces for teachers to connect, share ideas and challenges faced, have discussions, brainstorm, and more. All training participants were allowed to present their teaching experience, share some interesting classroom activities, etc. Feedback of participants' sharing will be given by the trainer and some participants who are willing to give feedback. Trainer and participants may comment about presenter's English grammar, vocabularies, fluency, performance, teaching and learning media/teaching equipment, etc. This feedback aims to make their teaching skills and abilities better than before. All training participants were very happy when they listened to some comments from other participants.

7. Questions & Answers and Discussion Session

Participants were also allowed to ask many things related to teaching and learning activities or to discuss some important points in teaching, for example how to handle difficult students, how to be a fair teacher, discuss the most difficult part in teaching, teaching equipment, etc. Of course, the language used for discussion is English.

8. Feedback Evaluation

On the last day of the training, the trainer asked all participants about the importance of English Training for Teachers. Most of them gave the opinion that English Training for Teachers is very important especially to improve their teaching skills by using bilingual language. Some feedback was also asked by WhatsApp, for example:



Picture 2: Sample of Feed Back Evaluation

Obstacle and Solution

There are not many obstacles during the program, and here are some of the little problem, such as:

1. Some teachers who had to join training sometimes had some other meeting with other teachers, students' parents or meeting with management, etc. So there were some participants who were not able to join the program.
2. Not all participants open their camera during the class. Sometimes there are two or three who did not use camera
3. Signal sometimes up and down, voice is not very clear, sometimes there is strange sound, such as children noise. Baby crying, seller offers their food, etc
4. The level of participants' English is different. Some participants had excellent English and some of them had a little English.

Here are some solution, when there were some obstacles:

1. Participants who did not join the class, they can listen the zoom recording of the missing session or ask other participants about the material of that day, so they did not miss any lesson.
2. When participants, did not open their zoom camera, trainer asked the reason. If it was reasonable, that would be okay.
3. When signal is up and down, ask the participants to move the room to have better connection, even though sometimes moving to another room did not have any effect to the internet connection.
4. When the level of English is different, trainer asked better students to guide some participants who still had difficulties in using English for daily conversation.

COCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In order to be able to teach in bilingual language for the new academic year, most teachers had join English Teachers Training program for 5 months and the program ran well. It was good because the vice Headmaster could also join the program. There is a high commitment from the School of SD Al Azhar 17 Bintaro for the success of the bilingual teaching program in facing the academic year.

By joining this training, most participants (teachers) looks more confident in using English for daily communication or for teaching. Their speaking and teaching skill using bilingual language is improved. Teachers' sharing experience also add their knowledge and other teachers' experience can be implemented in the next class.

The training was good but there is only one suggestion about the level of English of participants. As it was mentioned in the discussion above that they have different level of English, it is better if the program is divided by two classes, level A and Level B or Elementary Level and Intermediate Level. Elementary Level is a class for participants (teachers) who have standard Basic English and Intermediate Level is class for participants (teachers) who have better standard of English, able to use English for daily communication, understand about English for daily life.

Training can be continued by visiting other classes. Teachers visit other teachers' classes or Trainer sometimes visit some participants and then feedback is given after teaching. By visiting real classes, trainer will know whether teachers can implement all the training material in their real class or not.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agoestyowati, R. (2020). DAMPAK POSITIF DAN NEGATIF TENTANG PEMBELAJARAN ONLINE SAAT PANDEMI COVID-19 MELANDA (APRIL, MEI, JUNI 2020) DI INSTITUT STIAMI JAKARTA. *Aksara Public*, 4(3), 112-118. Retrieved from <https://aksarapublic.com/index.php/home/article/view/436>
- Sri Wuli Fitriati, Alief Noor Farida (2016) PENINGKATAN KOMPETENSI GURU DALAM SPEAKING ENGLISH FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PURPOSES UNTUK PENGAJARAN BILINGUAL DI SD ISLAM AL AZHAR 29 BSB SEMARANG