

STUDENTS' BARRIERS IN LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH ONLINE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify student barriers in learning English through online learning in class X SMKN 3 Payakumbuh. This research method is descriptive qualitative. Participants were selected using purposive sampling. The questionnaire used as a data source consists of 32 items. The results showed that the barriers faced by students included understanding language, language anxiety, adaptation struggle, diverting attention to the other side, technical issues, cost of online education implementation, technological competence and computer literacy. In conclusion, there are 8 barriers faced by students in learning English through online learning. Understanding language is the most common barriers faced by students, while the least barriers faced by students is computer literacy.

Keywords: Online Learning, Student Barriers

INTRODUCTION

Due to the COVID-19 as a worldwide crisis, activities in teaching learning turn into online learning. The Indonesian President has released decree number 12 the year 2020 about the pandemic as the national disaster and online learning become a must in every school. In Indonesia, schools have adapted to this education mode where instructing and learning process has been kept up instantly utilizing Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Online learning is a part of distance education that specifically combines electronic technology and internet based technology or ICT in learning (Efriana, 2021).

Distance learning occurs when learner are separated from the educator. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this learning system can be a solution so that the teaching learning process can continue. Using technology as the teaching medium in this COVID-19 pandemic has many positive impacts in the field of education

(Baber, 2021; Ali & Maksum, 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). Thus, even though teacher and students do not meet directly at school, teacher can still deliver the teaching materials and students can still receive the lesson without leaving their home. The use of technology as a medium in teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic helps teachers and students to run education safely and effectively.

However, facts show that most students face several barriers in learning English through online method. Several studies have been conducted to investigate the barriers in learning English through online method. Mahyoob (2020) found that most EFL students were not satisfied with the use of online learning method as they did not fulfill the expected progress of doing language learning performance in that way. Then, the technical barriers and individual barriers were the most encountered barriers found during online learning (Ambarita, 2021; Sadikin & Hamidah, 2020).

Fauzi & Asri (2020) found several obstacles in the online learning system, ranging from large quotas, many tasks, limited IT mastery, unstable networks and so on. This is in line with what Atmojo & Nugroho (2020) found in their research that unstable internet connections, financial problems and low digital literacy are obstacles faced by students in online learning.

According to Mulyawan (2021) there are several obstacles or barriers in learning English through online methods such as academic ability, internet access and technological problems. These obstacles have also been faced by Indonesian students even before the COVID-19 pandemic. This phenomenon shows that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, which has many practical applications, also faces obstacles when the online learning system is implemented (Efriana, 2021). Therefore, this research is aimed to identify the barriers faced by the students in learning English through online learning. This research focuses on the factual problems that arise during the online learning process especially in EFL students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Online learning is a part of distance education that specifically combines electronic technology and internet based technology or ICT in learning (Efriana, 2021). Mishra et al., (2020) defines that online learning mode is providing the feeling of psychological safety to learning community in COVID-19 afflicting period. Online learning is available in website and application, the teaching learning activities occur through chat or text, audio, video conferencing and also online assessment. Technologies are used as tools in online learning such as handphone, computer, internet, camera and website which those can support teaching learning process through online.

According to Dhawan (2020) online learning can be called a tool that can make the teaching-learning process more student-centered, more innovative, and even more flexible. Online learning is defined as a learning experience in a synchronous or asynchronous environment using different devices (mobile phones, laptops, etc.) with internet access. Synchronous learning environments are structured in the sense that students attend live lectures, there is real-time interaction between educators and learners, and there is the possibility of instant feedback, whereas asynchronous learning environments are not well structured. In such a learning environment, learning content is not available in the form of lectures or hands-on classes, but is available in various learning systems and forums.

Despite the advantages of using online method in learning, there are some problems need to be considered. These problems are called learning barrier (Octaberlina & Muslimin, 2020) . Learning barriers are as crucial as the case of learning itself in general. The decrease of live, face to face interaction between teacher and students has an effect on the quality of online learning. There are some barriers occurs in online learning.

Olugbenga & Qiu (2020) mentions several obstacles in online learning, namely: 1) adaptation struggle, moving from traditional classrooms or face-to-face learning methods can be very different; 2) computer literacy, in some schools where electric gadgets are available but the ability to use them may not exist; 3) technical issues. many students are not provided with the high bandwidth or strong internet connection that online learning requires, in rural areas where cellular networks have not been upgraded to 4g; 4) diversion to other sites. students who have access to the internet may not actually stay online to study if not properly monitored; 5) cost of providing online education, in some parts of the world, the cost of running an online education is high unlike developed countries where Wifi is free and people can access internet almost any time for free.

In addition, Wiramarta (2021) states the barrier in learning a language through online class that is Language Proficiency. Most studies measuring language learning in online environments focus on achievement, not proficiency. Teacher can not supervise students maximally in EFL class when teaching learning occurs in distance or online learning.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was descriptive qualitative research. The participant in this research were selected from the tenth grade students of SMKN 3 Payakumbuh. They were taken by purposive sampling. The total number of students were 30 students who had been chosen from each departments of the school that representing other students. Questionnaire was used to collect the data. The questionnaire consisted 32 items which were divided into eight indicators.

Table 1. Indicator Questionnaire

No.	Indicator	Number of Item	Total Items
1	Adaptability Struggle	1-4	4
2	Computer Literacy	5-8	4
3	Technical Issues	9-12	4
4	Diversion of attention of other side	13-16	4
5	Cost of Running online education	17-20	4
6	The Technological Competencies	21-24	4
7	Understanding the Language	25-28	4
8	Language Anxiety	29-32	4

The data of this study were participants' answer of questionnaire. Then to analyze the data, the researcher used the data managing, reading/memoing, classifying, interpreting and writing report. The questionnaire used Likert scale with 5 options, always (score 5), often (score 4), sometimes (score 3), rarely (score 2) and never (score 1).

FINDING

After the participants answered the questionnaire by choosing the option, the data of the score from each indicators can be seen in the following figure.



Figure 1. The Result of Barriers In Learning English Through Online Learning

The data in this figure show that the first largest score of students choice is on indicator 7 (411). Understanding the language is chosen mostly as the barrier faced in learning English through online learning. The students think that it was difficult to understand English while learning through online. Then, they are not

able to use English in chatting through whatsapp, or asking giving questions in English in google classroom.

The second largest score was Language Anxiety (393). Because there is no direct classroom interaction in learning, students tends to have the anxiety to communicate virtually. They felt panic were asked to speak in English and this anxiety also made them unconfident in learning English through online. Then, based on data in the figure above, adaptability struggle was the third barrier found mostly by the students in learning English through online. The move from conventional teaching learning process to online learning needs an adaptation. Students who learn from home were not accustom to the process conducted in online learning. The students' adaptation depends on the level of awareness, familiarity of technological information and willingness to get involved in online learning approach.

Diversion of attention to other sites is the fourth barrier faced mostly .by students. They were not supervised or monitored properly by their teacher or parents when learning through online learning. During online learning , the students are easily to divert attention to other things such as playing games, checking social media, watching youtube or listening to music. Some students did other activities such as working or helping their parents to work while the process. Then, it could not be denied that many students slept during online learning. It might be caused by the absence of teachers and peers in a position to offer regular reminders about assignments, projects and tests. Students must pace themselves and set aside ample time to complete class activities and out-of-class assignments.

The data in the figure indicate that technical issues is the fifth barrier faced mostly. The students' house or villages can not support to learn in online learning such as in the rural areas where cellular network has not been upgraded to the 4G that may experience slow network connection. Then, students who have poor family background also cause the lack of smart handphone. Students were also not able to buy the expensive internet quota.

Futhermore, the data provided showed that cost of running online education is the sixth barrier faced by students. Students were not provided free internet access for online learning. Students face challenges in access to materials for online learning due to socio economic barriers and not being able to have cutting-edge technology or enough bandwidth to, for example sustain high-quality video streaming.

Technological competencies is the seventh barrier faced by students. Not every adult students has the same degree of technical experience or operating the technology. Thus, they are not able to operate the technology used in online learning well. Some students said that they were helped by other people in using technology to learn in online learning. The lack of familiarity with technology can

hinder e-learning and have a negative effect on the learner's confidence and technical problems can frustrate learners and can hamper the progress of learners.

Lastly, the data showed in the graph indicate that computer literacy is the least barrier faced by the students. This is acceptable because the students in this digital era are familiar with technology such as computer, handphone. Eventhough the students are familiar but there are still some students considered computer literacy as their barriers in learning English through online learning. Limited access to quality technology, poor computer literacy, social isolation and the need for self-discipline are all barriers to online learning environments.

DISCUSSION

Senior vocational students who are struggle with online learning have various barriers in learning English during COVID- 19. The result showed that the highest score was understanding the language. It indicates that learning English without the existence of teacher makes them become difficult to understand the language. Although teacher can still teach, and students can still study in their homes, the content of material delivered online may not be understood by all students.

Efriana (2021) found that students are not able to understand the material comprehensively. Students understand the material based on their own interpretation or their point of view. In addition, it is may also caused by the status of Indonesian students who have low ability in understanding English. Students might have some communicative goal, but the performance in delivering and learning English are different. They need extra explanation and guidance in learning English, but it is hard to give them a such due to the time limits in online learning (Widayanti & Suarnajaya, 2021).

Surprisingly, the result of the study shows that computer literacy got the lowest score. It indicates that senior vocational school students almost got no barriers in computer literacy. As stated by Fauzi & Asri (2020) that limited mastery of computers or computer literacy is not the main obstacle faced by students in online learning. When online learning system is implemented, the students have known how to operate the computer. Almost all students are familiar with gadgets because, it can not be denied, that in this era parents have provided their children with gadgets. So, it is not so difficult for them how to use it in online learning.

CONCLUSION

There are eight barriers to learning English through online learning faced by class X students of SMKN 3 Payakumbuh. Understanding Language is the most common barrier faced by students, followed by language anxiety, adaptation struggle, diversion of attention to the other side, technical issues, cost of online education implementation, technological competence and the least barrier faced is computer literacy.

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