

## PRESERVING ENGLISH LEARNING FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL AND VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ONLINE LEARNING: TEACHING STRATEGY

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**Abstract:** the education sector has been severely affected during the covid-19 pandemic. Many schools are closed to prevent the vast spread of the virus. All learning activities are changed into e-learning and distance learning. On one learning from home concerns the teachers for they have to ensure the continuity of the learning activities. This was done so that they can maintain the students' english language proficiency. Learning from home means that the students do not only receive a lot of assignments but the teachers also have to explain the materials. During the pandemic, between early july to early september 2020, elt students from universitas negeri malang were doing a teaching internship which has been adjusted to online internship. Many challenges surfaced during the implementation of e-learning and distance learning even for the well-experienced teachers who have already known the learners' characteristics and classroom management. For the internship teachers who have not sufficient teaching experience, they struggled even more although they were more technology savvy than the in-service teachers. The internship students are expected to have more creative ways of designing the learning contents and activities. This study reviews how well experienced english teachers at the investigated schools and student teachers of department of english from universitas negeri malang conduct their english online meetings which aim to maintain the english exposure for the high school students and the students' proficiency in reading, writing, listening and speaking english.

**Keywords:** *Teaching Strategy, English Online Learning, Pre-Service Teacher*

### INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus outbreak is affecting so many living aspects, not to mention the education sector. Many schools are closed due to the vast spread of viruses and learning is conducted in fully online learning. In a normal situation, online learning is usually implemented in blended learning, but the pandemic has generated learning activity into full online learning as students and teachers are not given access to have a face-to-face meeting. According to Tanveer (2011), online learning has several advantages that is 1) allow students to be autonomous, 2) offer various activities, 3) promote intrinsic motivation to learn, 4) facilitate introvert students to interact better, 5) permit gaining meaningful study experience and time management skill, and 6) allow teachers to have more student-centered form of learning.

However, despite the advantages, the disadvantages also exist such as the frequent disruption to the internet connection, slow loading, and incompatibility of software and hardware (Ku and Lohr, 2003). Also teaching by e-learning may not as effective as the traditional method of learning because the offer of explanation and interpretation is delivered without face to face interaction which is the easier way (Klein and Ware, 2003). However, since the pandemic broke without any warning, some teachers are having a hard time. The incapability of not being able to use ICT rises the possibility of ineffective lessons given which might be resulted in the low learning outcome. Additionally, there was no intensive workshop about online learning as preparation for an unfortunate event such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The disruption also happens at higher education that for pre-service teachers who are supposed to have a field teaching practice should do the practice online. It is a chance for them to construct new knowledge and theory by practicing not merely implementing teaching theory they got on university and apply it in a real classroom (Burn & Richards, 2009). In comparison with in-service teachers, the bold difference from pre-service teachers lays on the lack of experiences in teaching.

Research highlighting attitude toward online learning between pre-service and in-service teachers is rarely found. Most researches investigating online learning pinpoint on its stand-alone online learning tools, instructional methodologies or techniques, unique environments within a blended learning program, and

comparison between classroom-based and fully online learning (Atmojo and Nugroho, 2020). They also stated that especially for English teaching, it is rare to have research investigating fully online language learning. Therefore, during this pandemic, when field teaching practice should be carried online is likely to bring new insight from both parties. One has the experiences and one is more technology savvy and part of the digital native. Despite the gap generation, both have the same responsibility that is preserving students' proficiency.

Since the fundamental of language learning is students able to master four language skills to achieve the main purpose of language for communication, this study investigates teaching strategies applied in online learning to teach listening, speaking, reading, and writing. By in-service and pre-service English teachers in senior and vocational high schools to preserve students' language proficiency. Different from senior high school students, vocational high school students study English for specific for English lessons as the materials, activities, and topics are matched with their academic major and needs. The practice of ESP is pointed out in this study.

## **METHOD**

This study was a phenomenological study by adapting the qualitative approach. The participants were six English teachers and six pre-service who were participating in online field teaching practice at vocational and senior high school. Six participants from each party are enough for the initial sample in the interview study as what has been suggested by Donyei (2007). Qualitative data in form of verbal answers were collected through a structured in-depth interview in which the results were transcribed verbatim.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Teaching Listening**

Listening is a receptive skill that is essential to be acquired by language learners as its role in communication can be left aside. Moreover, practicing listening gives learners a real-world context because they will be able to identify words in acoustic or normal conversational speech (Brown, 2010:157). As suggested by Rost (2002), pre, whilst, and post-listening activities should be applied to have a good listening activity. From the interview results, none of the six in-service teachers gave pre and post-listening. They directly went to whilst-listening by giving the audio and the following tasks. On the other hand, three pre-service teachers gave a complete stage because they were conscious of what their lecturers usually did in the listening classroom. It is in line with a statement by Johnson (1994) that pre-service teachers' instructional decisions during a class were based on images of teachers, materials, activities, and classroom organization generated by their own L2 learning experience. Most in-service teachers recorded their voices as learning materials because students found it difficult to deal with native speakers' accents, but they sometimes adopted materials from an online website. Different from in-service teachers, pre-service teachers take all materials from a website that provides audio for listening activities. Some of them even do not give listening because they have not enough confidence, and they think that listening activity might give a burden to students. In terms of ICT applied, both pre and in-service teachers used Google Classroom, WhatsApp, and YouTube to conduct listening activity because it is the most convenient platform for students.

### **Teaching Speaking**

Teaching speaking is one complex process as several aspects such as 1) pronunciation, 2) fluency, 3) grammar, 4) vocabulary and 5) comprehension, should be highlighted (Wipf, 1998). Teaching speaking in online learning or conventional learning is the same as teachers should trigger students to use language to communicate. According to Hamer (2007), students tend to be reluctant to speak with their classmates. This statement is supported by the findings in which in-service teachers, who have known students' characteristics, mentioned that students felt more confident to speak in online learning. Speaking activities given by pre and in-service teachers were similar, which is in the form of making and practicing dialogue or monologue. However, teachers did not put attention to teaching fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension. Five of six in-service teachers did not give any feedback to correct aspects of speaking. They mentioned that students' participation in online learning is enough. The same thing also applied to pre-service teachers. Moreover, one in-service teacher explained that his priority was not to give a burdensome lesson, so he applied the integrated learning of speaking and writing.

*I asked students to write dialogue and practice it with their partner which later submitted in the form of a video. Here, I can save time cause I can teach writing and speaking simultaneously.*

### Teaching Reading

Teaching reading as a receptive skill should be done intensively to train students with written language and understand the meaning implied. Yukselir (2014) considers reading as one of the most beneficial, fundamental, and central skills to master to learn new information, to gain access to alternative explanations and interpretations and to start the synthesis of critical evaluation skills. Teaching reading for EFL students is completely different as they are not familiar with the linguistic and non-linguistic elements. Having pre-reading activities such as a discussion about the text given and point out the topic, unfamiliar vocabulary, and social background improves students' reading comprehension.

The data found that reading was the most taught skill. In-service and pre-service teachers stated that reading was more emphasized as it is low internet data consuming and it did not require teachers to conduct structured teaching steps. Students are simply given reading materials and questions to check their comprehension. Most teachers explained that they only gave students reading passages through WhatsApp group chat or Google Classroom and ask them to read on their own. This is, indeed, learner-led learning. Some in-service teachers believe that this strategy can encourage students to be autonomous learners.

*Honestly, this pandemic brings good things as well. It can improve the quality of education in Indonesia. One of which is the opportunity that the students get to be autonomous learners. This needs a structural system, of course. Thus, all parties should work together to achieve this goal.*

Different from others, one in-service teacher managed to teach reading in the real-time situation by giving students short passages and they had to explain in a short comment by responding in WhatsApp group chat during the given time, but only a small number of students gave their responses. For teaching reading series, none of the teachers hold any pre-reading activity, students were directed to do self-learning, yet they admitted that it's not effective to train students' reading comprehension because teachers did not supervise the process and see whether students cheated or not.

### Teaching Writing

Writing as a productive skill is considered as the most challenging skill in learning English and it's proven by teachers' testimony. To create good writing, students need to develop not only their writing skills but also critical thinking skill as they have to develop their ideas in writing. Moreover, the process of writing requires an entirely different set of competencies (Brown, 2015). In other words, students have to learn about punctuation, diction, coherence, spelling, paraphrasing, and other skills required in writing. These statements support the findings of this study in which most pre-service teachers said that teaching writing was not easy to implement in online learning.

*I focused on the students' participation because it is quite hard to engage the students in the online teaching and learning process. It is also hard to guarantee that the students do their writing by their efforts.*

The same case goes for in-service teachers. They rarely gave students writing tasks and preferred reading more. They emphasized that the students' participation in the learning and teaching process is more important. Related to the findings, both pre and in-service teachers faced difficulties to check the originality of students' writings. Most students tend to copy their peers' works and the material they found on the Internet.

### ESP Practice

In-service and pre-service teachers' testimony showed that ESP was not applied for teaching speaking, listening, and writing. Only one in-service vocational high school teacher who assigned students with academic major-related materials. The rest teachers apply GE (General English) materials. VHS students need to be exposed in academic major materials or else there will be a mismatch between academic competence and workforce requirement because there are no materials related to practical pragmatics available for the students' academic major (Amin et al., 2017).

### CONCLUSION

Challenges risen among students have brought teachers to apply comfort-zone and convenience teaching strategies in online learning during the pandemic. Pre-services teachers as a digital native generation do not bring

technology in learning maximally. It is supported on a statement by Conway et al. (2005) that new teachers are often afraid to deviate from the norm they find in the school and are afraid to try new things such as using technology. In this study, the norm conveyed is the implication to not give the burdensome task to students. However, according to Gorder (2008), in-service teachers with more experience are more likely to use technology because they are more comfortable with the teaching process and more acclimatized to the school culture. Contradict the preceding statement, in-service English teachers do not explore various ICT for teaching because of the same reasons experienced by pre-service teachers and they are not familiar with using technology in learning.

All in all, teaching strategies applied for teaching four language skills by in-service and pre-service English teachers to preserve students' proficiency are designed based on the notion of students' convenience and less-burdensome learning. Teachers' ICT exploration is regulated by students' condition that is limited to internet data, learning motivation and proficiency. Also, ESP is not well-implemented for teaching vocational students that teachers apply GE instead. Furthermore, lessons and exercises are given by means to give steady English exposure for students with less attention to their learning process, but products.

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