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TEACHING ENGLISH DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: REFLECTIONS AT ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN GUNTUR DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH, INDIA

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Abstract

This research explains the narrative of the experience of teaching English during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency. Teachers experience of teaching English to students as one of the real work programs was recruited into this narrative research. The research results show that teachers must be creative in teaching English to students so that they do not feel bored while learning. Creative teachers will be able to make the teaching and learning process fun during the Covid-19 pandemic so that students enjoy learning

Key words: pandemic time, English teaching, Teacher experience

1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has an impact on India's educational system. The first four months of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis saw the implementation of online learning for students at every educational level. However, in this era of the "new normal," other educational establishments continue to follow health requirements and offer in-person instruction, although for a mere three days a week. Because they are used to the convenience of online learning, students' excitement for face-to-face instruction seems to decrease when they go from online to in-person instruction. Students can participate in learning activities outside of the classroom in the online learning environment without fear of reprimands from their instructors. On the other hand, in the in-person educational system, teachers closely supervise the students, and learning cannot be neglected. Even in the middle of the ongoing pandemic, students showed that they

were committed to studying by carefully following health standards. There are still students, according to empirical data, who choose out of going to school while being aware that instruction is frequently given in a physical classroom. Furthermore, it appears from this transition phase that students aren't ready to take in a lot of knowledge. This has a big impact on students who don't seem to be interested in their lessons. In this case, teachers must develop a feeling of closeness with students in order to determine their unique characteristics. Instructors who comprehend the characteristics of their students can create teaching strategies that work for them.

Implementing innovative and adaptive teaching strategies is the responsibility of educators (Puspitasari, Rahayu & Rohmatunnazilah, 2020). To adjust to students, teachers need to change the way they think. Nonetheless, in order to foster students' passion for learning, instructors must also exercise

creativity. Creating creative teaching strategies with the goal of reviving students' passion for learning is one example of pedagogical innovation in action. In English classes, there is a clear lack of interest in learning. Permendikbud 81A (2013) states that the 2013 curriculum includes one weekly meeting for English as a foreign language in local issue courses. Teachers should make an effort to maximise the learning process in order to successfully meet learning objectives, considering the limited amount of time available. The main goal of elementary school English studies is to develop oral communication skills within the framework of regular classroom activities. However, the reality of English instruction in elementary schools is that vocabulary memorization is the exclusive priority. Conventional methods are still used by English teachers to teach the language (Sartika, 2017).

Young students or learners, typically between the ages of seven and nine (Pinter, 2011). Young students have special qualities. Among these qualities are the following (Harmer, J., 2007):

- Young students pick up knowledge from their surroundings both directly and indirectly.
- They learn more deeply when they see, hear, and touch the information rather than just being told about it. They are not good candidates for abstract learning. They would rather take classes where the focus is on them and how to address their concerns.
- They enjoy locating objects, creating or sketching objects, envisioning objects, travelling between locations, and solving riddles.
- They are easily bored.
- They are eager to learn English - They pay little attention to the teachings that are taught

Teachers need to be able to develop innovative learning models in order to comprehend their properties and optimise the learning process. The capacity of the instructor to address issues, build strong bonds with students, and employ

certain teaching strategies is all included in the learning model (Putra, 2012).

English language instruction for young people is expanding quickly in a number of locations in various locations in India. It is still possible to study English in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, though, the proficiency of trained educators does not support this. This school still uses conventional teaching methods with its teachers. Students in grade three need to commit some words to memory. However, youngsters lack focus and have short memories at this age (Ersoz A, 2007). If students are still learning words by heart, they won't be able to recognize the actual words or images that they have committed to memory. If there is an issue, more research is required to solve it.

Drawing from the previously described concerns, the writer carried out a work plan called a "home visit." Home Visit is one of the Real Lecture programmes that assists MI students in learning English. This academic assistance is delivered from one student's home to another's. During this house visit, researchers gain a deeper knowledge of the students' personalities and get to know them better, which facilitates the development of teaching strategies. This home visit is increasing the interest of students in learning English.

Numerous scholars have conducted studies on learning support throughout the 19-emergency period. The goal of learning assistance is to support students while they learn (Dwi, 2018). According to Tri, Hariyani, and Roslida's (2020) research, "Learning assistance at home for elementary school students affected by COVID-19," providing support to students and parents to help them overcome learning barriers has a good effect.

Comparable studies were conducted by Eka, Ainur, and Laura (2002) in their investigation of English language guidance support. Students in junior high school are the study's subject. Their enthusiasm for taking part in English coaching was evident from the research findings. This demonstrates their drive to get better at English.

In addition, study by Kevin, Kartika, and Nuryunita (2020) highlights the use of storytelling as

a tool to support learning. The findings of the study demonstrated that using storytelling as a teaching tool has been shown to raise students' critical thinking skills.

In his study Fun Home Study Assignment Models for Students, Slamet Basuki (2020) The COVID-19 Pandemic demonstrated the amusement value of 92.33 assignment models. The purpose of this study is to offer descriptions and suggestions for imaginative and enjoyable assignment models.

Agus Santoso and Yuni Rusmawati (2019) looked into how tutoring activities in Guci Karanggeneng village, Lamongan, could support pupils' studying at home. The purpose of this study is to give a general overview of the mentoring and tutoring process. Students' motivation and achievement see positive growth as a result of this instruction.

In his paper titled "Educational assistance for elementary school students at SD N 24 Rambutan, Durian Girls Village," Muhammad Ichsan Siregar (2018) provides an overview of the learning support programmes implemented in Durian Girls Village. Students' education improves as a result of this mentoring, and society as a whole gains an appreciation for education.

According to N.W.S. Damayanti, I. Nengah Suecca, and Linda Sekar Utami (2020), the purpose of learning assistance is to support parents in educating and training their students as well as to encourage students' willingness to learn. For thirty days, Achmad Hidayatullah (2017) supported the education of youngsters in the Genteng sub-district of Surabaya. Parents benefit from this since it gives them more free time and gives them more control over their students' education.

Wasilatul Munawarah (2020) studied the use of shape media in home learning support for elementary school students to increase their vocabulary in English. The purpose of learning can be accomplished by employing Shapor media, specifically the quick expansion of students' vocabulary.

At Gowa Presidential School, Sujarwo and Akhiruddin (2020) assisted with English language development beyond the curriculum. The goal of this support is to foster a positive English learning environment. With this helpful guidance, pupils' speaking and listening scores rose to 82.3% and 81.6%, respectively.

Using guessing games, Sri Endang Kusmaryati, Slamet Utomo, and Titis Sulistyowati (2019) helped students at SD 2 Panjang Kudus acquire English vocabulary. The goal of this support is to deliver engaging English language instruction. Guessing games help students learn more vocabulary in English.

The purpose of this study is to describe the experience of teaching English to Engineering students in the selected colleges in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh, India during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the Real Work from Home teaching work programmes managed by researcher is an English teaching programme. It is intended that this programme will assist students who struggle with learning English so they won't become bored while they're studying.

Using a narrative research design, the aim of this study is to investigate the researcher's own experiences as an English teacher during the COVID-19 epidemic (Clandinin & Huber, 2010). This study shares firsthand experiences of teaching English during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this story assists educators in developing efficient teaching methods (best practices) for English instruction. These methods can be applied as a reference for English instruction in the future. One English faculty at ANU College of Engg & Technology was willing to participate in the study. Direct interviews with participants were used to collect data. The interview questions focused on the content of the third-grade English learning materials at ANU Engg & Technology as well as the approaches used to teach the language.

2. METHODS

Teaching English to students is enjoyable but tough. This is enjoyable since their behaviour at this age is quite entertaining, but it is also tough to

control. English is a local content topic that students only take once a week. Overall, third-grade English content emphasises vocabulary mastery. Vocabulary is essential for teaching and learning English. Vocabulary is vital for developing four language abilities: speaking, listening, writing, and grammar, and it helps pupils exhibit or practise their skills. Words are the fundamental building blocks of sentences, which are crucial to both verbal and nonverbal communication. A person's ability to communicate effectively with others is dependent on their language mastery. This is consistent with linguist David Wilkins' statement that "without grammar, little can be conveyed, and without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (Thornury 2002).

Students believe that English is a difficult subject. They typically do not understand the tangible form of the vocabulary they memorise. If they are familiar with the concrete form, they will find it easier to remember. This scenario is encountered by ANU students, as evidenced by observations that when requested to hold one part of their body, they sometimes hold it incorrectly. This is because they are just required to memorise without understanding the physical form. The manual used is Speed Up English 3 New Edition, published by Oxford Press. This book contains six chapters. Every chapter introduces new language relating to the content. The amount of vocabulary used depends on the content being taught. The level of difficulty varies, ranging from terminology that pupils already know to concepts that they are unfamiliar with. If students are unable to memorise one chapter, the amount of vocabulary memorised at the next meeting will increase.

Given this, researchers propose a way to ensure that studying English vocabulary at ANU Engg College is not dull and that students understand tangible objects from the terminology they have memorised. In such situations, teachers must be creative. From here, researchers aim to use their ingenuity to assist students learn English more effortlessly. Creative English learning will be more enjoyable for students, especially amid the current COVID-19 pandemic. Several ways are used to learn

this language. The goal is that students do not become bored.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Home visits are one of the real-world college job programmes that allows students to learn English. This programme operates three days a week and is completely voluntary. Moving locations involves going from one student's house to another. This continually rotating setting allows pupils to learn about their surroundings. Researchers, in particular, become closer to the parents of their students and learn about their living conditions. During the Covid-19 pandemic, educators should not only hold meetings in and out of the classroom, but also pay visits to students' homes as a sign of concern for their education.

This was my first experience teaching English to ANU students in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Previous researchers utilised monotonous approaches such as lecturing, writing, and memorising. Using this boring strategy, researchers found it impossible to control the students. They appear preoccupied and do not pay attention to the lecture at all. Perhaps they are bored taking lessons during the Covid-19 pandemic. After learning about the kids' condition, the researchers devised a number of options for implementation. This is changed based on the child's traits. Some of these learning mechanisms are listed below:

1. Drawing

The general benefits of drawing for students are: 1). Drawing as a storytelling tool (visual language/form), 2) Drawing as a medium for expressing feelings, 3). Drawing as a playing tool, 4). Drawing trains memory, 5). Drawing trains comprehensive thinking, 6). Drawing as a medium for sublimation of feelings, 7). Drawing trains balance, 8). Drawing develops emotional skills, 9). Drawing trains students's creativity, 10). Students are an age with high imagination.

So, at this age, let students express their ideas. One means of expressing it is by drawing. Drawing is visualizing what is in your mind in the form of an image. The connection with learning

vocabulary is that students draw vocabulary that they have memorized. By drawing objects according to memorized vocabulary, it makes it easier for students to remember and know the real objects. Through drawing, students can be trained to increase their imagination, creativity, cooperation, caring and self-confidence.

When drawing, students appear enthusiastic. They sketch while picturing objects in their brains, which they then visualise into drawings. They trade ideas and share while drawing if one of them does not have drawing supplies. Their photos produce very distinct effects, but they do not ridicule each other.

After they had done drawing, the researcher queried the kids about the picture and their English vocabulary. The students' answers were pretty satisfactory. They understand terminology and objects.

2. Sticking

Sticking is a vocabulary acquisition approach that involves attaching vocabulary based on the item. The stages of sticking are as follows.

- The students line up to take turns taking the paper containing the vocabulary
- Students who have received vocabulary paper then attach it to their friends as a model
- After everything is pasted, the teacher then corrects it together

3. Song

Listening to music has a number of advantages, one of which is that it can improve our brain function when used to learn English. The singing method is intended to pique students' interest in English learning activities, particularly vocabulary mastery, in a fun and carefree manner. By making students like the learning methods used, it is hoped that the learning process will run smoothly, preventing students from becoming bored and finding it difficult to master vocabulary. When students are interested in learning through singing, it is easier for them to follow each stage of

the learning process, allowing them to master and memories English vocabulary.

The advantages of teaching English using singing:

- Through songs it will motivate students to enjoy learning English more.
- By singing students become happy and find it easier to understand the teaching material presented. The teacher's ability to choose songs and create movements that are appropriate to the child's developmental age will also have an impact on the success of the English language learning process for early childhood.
- Through singing and varied learning activities, educators can foster students's interest in learning more happily and actively, and can even make it easier for students to understand the teaching material presented.
- Students are made happy, not bored, and interested in participating in the learning process

The songs used are tailored to the lesson content. The body parts are currently being taught, and the song used is the English version of "head-shoulders-knees-toes." The students thoroughly enjoyed this song because they had heard it in kindergarten. The steps in learning English vocabulary through songs are:

- Students listen to songs
- While listening they pay attention to the parts they hold according to the song
- After that, turn off the song and practice together
- By using this song, students seem to master the vocabulary better and they remember it faster.

4. Flashcards

Flash cards are small cards with images, text, or symbols that can be used to practice spelling and vocabulary (Arsyad, 2011). Flash cards have two sides: the front contains pictures and words, and the back contains the meaning of the words.

Using flashcards involves the following stages:

- Students listen to the teacher's explanation. • The teacher shuffles the pictures and their meanings.
- Students look for matching pairs of vocabulary and pictures.

CONCLUSION

According to the study's findings, students are interested in learning English through home visits. Instead of having to memorise vocabulary, students find it easier to remember what they've learned through fun methods.

However, English teachers must also be able to create an engaging learning experience. This is intended to make students feel more engaged, enthusiastic, and interested in participating in the learning process. English teachers must be capable of creating engaging activities that meet the needs of their students.

5. Suggestion

Students learn English together very much, especially using fun methods so that students don't get bored. There is a need for new methods to increase students' interest in learning English.

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