



The Implementation of Online Learning During Covid-19 Pandemic: English Teachers' Perceptions at Senior High Schools in South Aceh

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Abstrak

Artikel ini menggambarkan persepsi para guru dalam mengimplementasikan pembelajaran dalam jaringan (daring) selama krisis Covid-19. Berangkat dari pendekatan kualitatif penelitian ini menginterview delapan guru Bahasa Inggris dari beberapa Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) di Aceh Selatan dengan kriteria tertentu. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa WhatsApp menjadi media sosial yang paling dipilih untuk memulai pembelajaran daring dan perannya penting selama pembelajaran. Responden juga mengemukakan bahwa mereka memperoleh materi pembelajaran dari internet, selain juga tetap mendasarkan pada buku teks siswa, mereka bahkan membuat media pembelajaran menggunakan platform yang familier. Berikutnya, buruknya koneksi internet, kelangkaan kepemilikan telepon pintar, dan kurangnya interaksi dan komunikasi yang bagus antara siswa dan guru juga menjadi hambatan utama pembelajaran daring. Terakhir, semua responden mengemukakan bahwa mereka telah berupaya dan mengembangkan strategi untuk mengatasi masalah-masalah tersebut, antara lain mencetakkan lembar kerja siswa untuk siswa yang tidak memiliki telepon pintar, mengurangi pemberian tugas, dan memberikan tugas di awal waktu agar siswa memiliki waktu banyak untuk mengerjakannya dengan baik.

Abstract

This article illustrates the teachers' perception in the implementation of online learning during Covid-19 crisis. Draw from qualitative approach this research interviewed eight English teachers from several senior high schools in South Aceh purposely. The result shown that WhatsApp became the main preferred social media to initiate the online learning and it has crucial role during the courses. The respondents also admit that they collect the materials from the internet as well as from students' textbook, they even create such learning media by using familiar platform. Moreover, the poor internet connection, scarcity of smartphone ownership, and less good interaction and communication between students and teachers were also the main barriers amid the online learning. Finally, all respondents admit that they have several efforts and strategies to overcome these problems, e.g. print out the worksheet for students who do not have smartphone, gives less assignment for the students, and gives the assignment earlier so students will have much time to accomplish it properly.

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INTRODUCTION

There are numerous studies conducting about the perceptions of the learners toward the use of online learning in particular discipline. Yet, there might be limited studies which investigated the phenomena of online learning during the Covid-19 outbreak. The Covid-19 pandemic has become a global issue which impacts many sectors including the sector of education. This pandemic has compelled all the activities in schools, universities and other educational institutions to be terminated for uncertain period of time. UNESCO (2020) noted that on 9 April 2020, 188 countries decided to take action of national scale closures of education and learning institutions, including kindergartens, schools, vocational training colleges and universities. A very first time in history of education, an estimated 1.58 billion learners are inactive, representing 91.3% of total enrolled learners in the world.

In response to this, UNESCO (2020) recommended all schools and teachers to apply online and distance learning program, and other open educational applications and platform to maintain teaching and learning process remotely. Similarly, Aceh as one of provinces in Indonesia responsively took action toward this pandemic. According to the Instruction of Governor of Aceh, No. 04/INSTR/2020, based on Minister of Education and Culture Circular No. 4 of 2020 on the Implementation of Education during the Emergency Period due to Covid-19 outbreak, suggesting that the closure of formal and informal learning institutions (schools, Madrasah, Islamic boarding schools, universities and other private learning institutions) have been extended from 30 March 2020 until 30 May 2020.

It was followed by the Circular of the Director General of Islamic Education, Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affair No. B 686.1/DI.I/DT.I.I/PP.00/03/2020 on the Learning and Assessment Mechanism during the Emergency Period due to Covid-19 outbreak, stating that all learning activities should be instructed manually from the teachers, in which all the learning material and instruction were delivered using SMS, applications and online learning platform.

All the appeals mentioned above has nothing but increased the popularity of online learning all around the world. The teaching and learning activities which was previously done face-to-face, now completely done online. Teachers and students were demanded to be innovatively involved in distance learning using

several mobile and computer applications. For instance, lecturers at Universitas Kristen Toraja deployed the E-Campus application during the outbreak to input lecturers' learning material, provide assignment, maintain online discussion and review the learning process (Allo, 2020). In particular setting, some learners showed the preference of using certain application that they considered to be feasible and effective in managing classroom during the pandemic, like WhatsApp (Gunawan, Suranti & Fathoroni, 2020; Anhusadar, 2020).

Numerous literatures have been collected by the author by considering the topic of the study related to the perceptions of learners (teachers and students) toward the implementation of online learning in particular disciplines.

There were numerous updated studies investigating and analysing the implementation of several model media for online instructed learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. For instance, study from Allo (2020) revealed that students perceived the online learning system implemented in Universitas Kristen Indonesia Toraja was good and very helpful in mediating students with learning process in the midst of Covid-19 pandemic. However, this study implied that lecturer should consider several issues faced by students in terms of internet stability and financial condition spent in the implementation of online learning. In addition, Anhusadar's (2020) study also showed similar perception toward the implementation of online learning from university students of early childhood education at IAIN Kendari, in which most students fairly welcomed the online learning as the main way to hold learning process during pandemic, yet the students perceived that face-to-face meeting was way more effective.

Meanwhile a study from Darmalaksana, Hambali, Masrur and Muhlas (2020) analysed that online learning during the Working from Home (WFH) period due to Covid-19 outbreak seemed to be effective in achievement of learning objectives as the actualisation of leadership challenge of digital education in the 21st century. In line with this, Basilaia and Kavavadze (2020) discussed about the successful transition from traditional classroom to online classroom at one of the private schools in Georgia during the pandemic. Their study revealed that new systems, new format of lessons and assignments obtained through online learning could be a supportively new skill for teachers to be implemented in the

post-pandemic time. In other words, the massive implementation of online learning during the outbreak simultaneously urged learners' leadership and teachers' qualifications in preparing themselves in the higher digital education.

Firman and Rahman (2020) also indicated some positive effects from implementing online learning the midst of Covid-19 pandemic. Their study suggested that students were prepared by sufficient facility in doing learning online such as laptops and smartphones integrated with the internet connection. The students of Biology Education also experienced a quite flexible learning process through online learning that encouraged students to be more independent and active during the lectures. More importantly, the study indicated that students indirectly pushed down the spread of coronavirus by maintaining physical distancing through distance learning.

Some studies that the researcher limitedly collected mostly investigating about selected learning applications (media) used in online learning instruction during the Covid-19 pandemic. For instance, study from Anhusadar (2020) at IAIN Kendari revealed that the lecturers used three types of application for online learning, namely WhatsApp (Group), Zoom, and Email. Yet, students of Education for Early Childhood highly selected WhatsApp as their most liked apps used during online learning since it was easily connected to the internet and could maintain smooth interactions. On the other hand, for the students, Zoom was viewed inexpensive and complicated. A similar study from Gunawan, Suranti and Fathoroni (2020) also confirmed that WhatsApp became the number one application used by most lecturers at Teacher College in Mataram. The respondents of the survey admitted that WhatsApp was easy to use since it was familiar and already installed in their smartphones. WhatsApp is also featured with the WhatsApp Group in which lecturers could be in the same group with their students and allow them to interact and share the various types of files.

Interestingly, some universities in Indonesia also employed more than one application to support and complete the interaction between one another. Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana for instance integrates an online instructed learning provided by the Bureau of Technology and Information System and popularly known as F-Learning. Through F-Learning, the lecturers were informed and recommended to use Google Classroom, Schoology, Zoom and Edmodo as the

one package application for their effective online learning (Pratiwi, 2020). Similarly, an online survey conducted by Hikmat, Hermawan, Aldim and Irwandi (2020) at Faculty of Social and Political Science at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung revealed that most lecturers used the combination of Zoom and WhatsApp as their online learning media. Based on that study, most lecturers decided to use WhatsApp as media for material sharing, while Zoom was purposively used for interactive discussion. Furthermore, one study from Limbong and Simarmata (2020) attempted to provide a test to decide particular media (online Apps or soft wares) that fit particular type of course. By using Multi-Attribute Utility Theory (MAUT) method, Zoom was effectively suited as the interactive online discussion, while Edmodo effectively facilitated students for tutorial and mastering the lesson. In short, both Zoom and Edmodo fit to learn and master the theories.

According to the previous studies, this study is significant in highlighting the early attention that collecting supported studies related to the implementation of online learning in Indonesian educational context in Indonesia during the pandemic Covid-19 would still be limited. The researcher believed that this study might significantly imply several valuable results for several sectors.

First, most studies obtained by the researcher only encompassed the case taking place in higher education setting. The phenomena of online learning during the current pandemic were still very infrequently explored. Therefore, this study might be one of available references in the future of discussion.

Secondly, the emergence of online learning during the pandemic sustainably influenced policy makers' action in establishing certain regulation. The boon from this global pandemic would positively compel of new regulations, platforms and solutions and encourage the countries and population become more prepared in the future (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020). On other words, this study might also provide several information and description toward the behaviours of learners in particular educational setting dealing with online learning. By observing and interpreting the data and result of the study, it hopefully might affect the educational policy taken contextually in particular educational context.

Therefore, considering the current phen-

omena and the significances of the study, this study attempted to find out the perceptions of English teachers toward the implementation of online learning during the pandemic of Covid-19. This study focused on the several high schools located in the district of South Aceh, Aceh province.

METHOD

This study identified the perceptions of English teachers, so that, this study employed the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research methodology is used to explore the issues and develop detailed understanding of a particular phenomenon and it is involved in respondents' experience and perception (Merriam, 2009; Creswell, 2012).

The selected samples (English teacher) involved in this study came from seven schools located in the South Aceh district, namely SMAN 1 Tapaktuan, SMAN Unggul South Aceh, SMAS Insan Madani, SMAN 1 Meukek, SMAN 1 Labuhan Haji, MAN 1 South Aceh, SMAN Unggul Harapan Persada. Several schools are located in several sub-district in South Aceh regency, namely Tapaktuan, Meukek, and Labuhan Haji. The mentioned schools were purposively selected because the schools are categorised as well-recognised and superior schools which gained more popularity and attention in recruiting more students and experienced teaching staff. All schools had been experiencing the closure due to the circular letter from the provincial government ordering that teaching learning process must be conducted fully online. This became the reasonable factor for the researcher to conduct the study by drawing some current phenomena experienced by the English teachers during the online learning environment under the pandemic.

The informants of this study were English teachers in several high schools in district of South Aceh, Aceh province. The researcher purposively selected 8 English teachers implementing the online learning instruction during the Covid-19 pandemic. All the informants would later be interviewed. Gray (2004) stated that in purposive sampling technique, the researcher deliberately selects one or more participants who are considered representative and usually included in a balanced number between males and females.

Due to protocol of maintaining physical

and social distancing during the pandemic, the researcher could not personally meet all the informants to address the interview. Hence, the researcher designed and distributed online questionnaires using Google Form. The link of Google Form was sent directly through WhatsApp on informants' mobile phone and email. Then, informants could directly fill their responses using their mobile phones or laptops.

In collecting data in qualitative study, the researcher needed to consider the approach and form of questions (interview or questionnaire) that could assist the researcher in understanding the focused phenomena depending on the accessibility of individuals, cost and time (Creswell, 2012). The author realised that the questionnaires should be effectively delivered to a relatively large number of respondents, yet considering the emergent circumstances, the author decided to design open-ended questions through Internet (web-based) questionnaire. According to Denscombe (2020), there were advantages using web-based questionnaire; first, the web-based questionnaire allowed the respondents to take time to think and respond to predefined range of answers and simply submit the responses at one keystroke. Secondly, web page provided an attractive design and simple direction (button, typing space, and hypertext link) for respondents to response; and lastly, responses and data could be read and summarised automatically into a spreadsheet or database.

In order to collect nuance responses instead of rigid and limited answers, the researcher conducted several open-ended questions. Open-ended questions basically allowed the respondents to express their feelings answer the questions in relative long sentences and this might provide the richness and complexity of information (Denscombe, 2010).

This qualitative study was as descriptive analysis in which its objective was to provide the description of information obtained from the respondents' opinion and statement and later, they were categorised into several theme (content) in order to flow the discussion related to the current issues (Bryman, 2016; Lune & Berg, 2017; Merriam, 2009).

In this study, the data and information obtained from Google Form would be read and interpreted at the same time. This means that qualitative research functioned as "interpretive" research that transformed the personal assessment into a description and produced broad

themes or categories from detailed database (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, in presenting the data, the author later would categorise several themes that revealed the focused discussion toward English teachers' perceptions toward the use of online learning implemented during the pandemic of Covid-19.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The objective of this study is to investigate the perceptions of English teachers toward the implementation of online learning during Covid-19 outbreak. There are eight English teachers becoming the informants in this study representing eight different Senior High Schools located in subdistrict of South Aceh, they were: Teacher 1 (SK), Teacher 2 (MS), Teacher 3 (RZ), Teacher 4 (TA), Teacher 5 (LE), Teacher 6 (SN), Teacher 7 (TS) and Teacher 8 (FY). Below are the results collected from the data base which were later followed by the discussion categorised into several themes.

A. Initiating Steps, Techniques and Methods

In this theme, the informants were asked about their preparation encompassing the steps, technique and methods in initiating the online learning activity.

Teacher 1 (SK): I created WhatsApp Group as media to discuss with the students about informing upcoming lesson, then I asked them to log in to their Quipper account to read the learning material and do a comprehensive assignment there (quizzes).

Teacher 2 (MS): Learning material was sent directly to WhatsApp group with detailed and brief instructions so that students could understand what they would do. After that, I informed a clear date submission for helping me to arrange a clear timeframe in circulating a well-organised marking process.

Teacher 3 (RZ): Firstly, the learning material had been sent two days before the online class was conducted. So, students might have time to read and make preview to learning material. Secondly, before the class was started, I checked students' attendance in WhatsApp Group. Thirdly, I gave the opportunity for students to ask about previous learning material and after that I sent some questions (Word Document file) related to that learning source. After students answered the questions, we discussed them together.

Teacher 4 (TA): Firstly, students were grouped

based on their classes, then I as the teacher joined the existed WhatsApp Group. During the lesson time, I provided learning materials such as videos, reading text (pdf or word). Then, I asked them to discuss about the learning material and answered several questions. The process of answering the assignment was surveillance by the teachers and also home-room teacher who already joined in that group.

Teacher 5 (LE): By making sure all students had already been online or actively participating in WhatsApp Group of their own classes. Then, the teacher asked them to do the assignment with predetermined duration of time.

Teacher 6 (SN): Initially, learning materials were collected from SIAJAR (lms.seamolec.org) – one of Learning Management System – and students were asked to comprehend the materials and made some conclusions. One week later, the test was created in Quizizz. When there were few students who still could not understand the lesson, they could retake the lesson in the following week after they understand.

Teacher 7 (TS): Five minutes before the class started, teacher reminded the students at WhatsApp Group and teacher would check students' attendance.

Teacher 8 (FY): Firstly, making WhatsApp Group, then giving the learning material and assignment for students. And finally, students submitted the assignment online through WhatsApp Group.

It could be concluded that most teachers showed the dependency toward WhatsApp Group as main media in informing the students about the class, sharing files (learning materials), and submitting the assignment as a whole combined activity in preparing the class. An effective use of WhatsApp in the class positively affected the learning process covering knowledge sharing, learning preparation, attention and participation in class (Rahaded, Puspitasari & Hidayati, 2020). According to the data obtained from online survey, from overall eight English teachers, six of them used WhatsApp (Group) as the online learning apps, and for the rest two teachers respectively used Quipper and Quizizz as their online learning platform. WhatsApp could be an effective support when it was combined or blended with other methods or strategies in order to achieve the learning objective (Damanik, 2019; Mpungose, 2020).

According to the statements from RZ and TS, WhatsApp was used and activated by them to remind students and provide opportunity for

students to review the material before an official learning schedule began. WhatsApp represented academic benefit reflected in the availability of teachers, sustainable learning time and rapid access to study material which simultaneously enable students to review them before the class had started (Nitza & Roman, 2016).

B. Maintaining Interaction and Discussion

In this feature, most teachers agreed that the interactions and discussion were held directly in WhatsApp Group, written and orally (chat and voice notes).

TS: Before the discussion occurred, teachers firstly had shared the learning material representing the learning target. Teacher asked students to read and understand that learning material. Then, students were given the opportunity to ask or even complain for what they did not understand. Students also could respond for any opinion or argument from friends in that group.

The argument from TS was similarly mentioned in the report conducted by Moorhouse (2020) describing the current learning condition in Hong Kong university during the pandemic, in which the open discussion had been initially launched for students to ask questions and learning activities before the real-time live lesson was started. Overall, even though two teachers used different or additional online learning platform such as Quipper and Quizizz, they still used WhatsApp Group as the main media for interacting and discussing (giving opinion, asking and answering questions) with other students. WhatsApp had become a superior apps for students to obtain knowledge, to perceive an active learning, and most importantly to maintain easy and feasible discussion and interaction compared to traditional learning (Grover, Garg & Sood, 2020). WhatsApp Group also served as main instrument for communication in order to create learning-purposes dialogue and collaboration between teacher and students (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014).

C. Preparing Learning Material

In this feature, most teachers (RZ, TA, LE and FY) admitted that they mostly selected the learning materials from students' textbooks and from the internet. The learning materials should also be based on students' learning Standard Competency (Kompetensi Dasar). Then they

were filed into word or pdf document.

From all respondents, SK initiated to use Quipper as LMS to manage and organise the learning material. Quipper was one of many free open learning platforms that was very recommended by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in tertiary education in Indonesia due to transformative change in education sector during the pandemic (World Bank, 2020).

MS: The prepared learning materials were based on previous unaccomplished learning competency. Giving the lesson summary based on existed competency referring to the students' learning indicators and preparing for students' online worksheets, then asking students to do the literacy. However, students were not forcedly demanded to achieve all the curriculum target. Learning from home was focused on the life skills education due to the pandemic of Covid-19.

SN: The learning materials were completely prepared from home based on learning Standard Competency (Kompetensi Dasar) and continuing materials from school's lesson.

TS admitted that teaching materials were prepared in form of PowerPoint slides, in which the slides were presented containing the learning objectives, learning steps, learning materials that were in line with the learning targets and additional exercise and assignments. PowerPoint was added as the dissemination of learning materials on certain LMS (Moorhouse, 2020).

To conclude this feature, most teachers basically would still collect the learning materials from existed textbooks and internet as long as the selected learning materials represented students' learning Standard Competency (KD). Having decided the materials, teachers then needed to transform the format of materials in most common and popular files, such as word, pdf and power point slides.

D. Assessing Students' Work

Later, the teachers were asked about the way they assessed students' works. There were significant distinguished methods between one another in measuring students' work by online.

RZ and TA would pay attention for students who were actively engaged in chat group as consideration of giving the grades. This statement was supported by MS saying that the assignment done by students from home would be qualitatively graded. Most teachers somehow

also instructed students to do the assignment that would be graded in exact numbers (quantitatively), but the technique of doing so was not clearly and detailed explained.

Interestingly, TS maintained a learning task instructed directly in WhatsApp Group, then student could compare and give the comments to other students' work before later she confirmed through the feedback. One of the advantages from new format of lesson assisted in technology was the peer and group checking. Students in group could spend time to check friends' work followed by teachers' feedbacks (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020).

To wrap up this feature, students' learning engagement in online environment could somehow be challenging to measure. Teachers mostly paid attention to the students who actively participated in group chat and most assignments done from home (outside of school) were quantitatively measured. This might indicate that the tradition of open book and taking-home exam were no longer popular and well developed and might result to the possibility of doing plagiarism and cheating (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020).

E. Challenges Faced by Teachers and Students

It would be incomplete if teachers were not asked about the obstacles faced during operating the online learning.

MS pointed out three main challenges faced by her and her students. Beside the inability to own smartphone became the main problem for some students during online learning, another urged issue complained by students was maintaining communication with teacher intensely in understanding the materials and assignment because students were not familiar enough with the internet and techy stuff in doing their work. It was reasonable that students' engagement and satisfaction toward online learning using mobile devices would be very different from traditional classroom in order to gain a deeper understanding toward certain lesson (Andujar, Salaberri-Ramiro & Martinez, 2020).

Moreover, even students that had personally owned the smartphones still could not accomplish the assignment because many of them were distracted with other entertainment features on smartphones such as mobile games, videos and other social media. The availability of other apps on smartphones including social net-

work, mobile instant messaging service became the distractive nature that contributed to lose students' focus during learning process (Andujar, Salaberri-Ramiro & Martinez, 2020; Levine, Waite and Bowman, 2012).

It was common and normal thing that reliable internet connectivity could benefit students to participate in online learning. An effective connection would allow students to follow the learning instruction such as downloading the video and other learning materials during the pandemic (Andujar, Salaberri-Ramiro & Martinez, 2020; Morgan, 2020).

SN: Not all students could access the online learning, so many students did not attend when the assignment were informed and distributed and for us (teachers) bad network signal sometimes hindered us to share the assignment.

TS: Online learning required longer duration of time and it would exceed the regular scheduled time. This was because of network issue, so students could not receive online facility and sufficient data cellular. Eventually, teacher had no option in giving extra time to discuss and present the work result beyond the scheduled time.

It could be concluded that teachers mostly complained about unsatisfying internet connection caused by several technical issues such as the location of remote school in their subdistrict and power outages. Another factor was most students did not have smartphone supported by data cellular also hindered them to participate in online learning. These two factors resulted to another issue that might worsen learners' interaction during online learning.

F. Efforts and Strategies to Overcome Those Challenges

This feature asked about strategies implemented by both teachers and students when dealing with issues in the previous figure.

Previously, SK mentioned that students were overwhelmed tackling many assignments from other subjects in relative same due date. Later, SN pointed out her personal suggestion in which due to limited internet connection, teacher should extend due date submission, so teacher at least would provide quiz once in two weeks rather than each week. Morgan (2020) also suggested that teachers should avoid assigning complex assignments and many individual works under limited learning sources available at

home during the pandemic.

MS suggested that teacher should encourage the students to habituate to learn and do the assignment in earlier time when interacting within online learning. Responding to this, Morgan (2020) adopted the approach from reputable institution called International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) in which teachers were recommended to implement student-centred learning in which altering students from passively receiving the information to actively participating in the learning discovery. Such activity could be manifested in a group or peer mini project or presentation by maximising the use of digital tool (Chen, 2010). Besides, teacher and students had to maintain an intense communication through WhatsApp in order to resolve the issues in online learning. In this current new and transformative learning situation, the role of teacher was essential in achieving satisfying students' learning engagement and motivation (Andujar, Salaberri-Ramiro & Martinez, 2020). There is possibility that WhatsApp had become a reliable and popular app among learners and could lead to effective learning outcomes (Annamalai, 2019; Nitza & Roman, 2016; Timothy, 2018; Wijaya, 2018)

MS added that during learning integrated with the internet, there would be much distraction that might interrupt the learning process. The temptations such as watching video, accessing social media and reading irrelevant news impulsively frequently coming without being expected by students. Therefore, it was important for students to be focused and consistent during learning time, and teacher should provide a clear regulation during learning process.

RZ offered a method to overcome the issue by preparing students' Worksheet (Lembar Kerja Siswa) that had been printed out and shared to all students that did not have data cellular or smartphone. TS and FY similarly also suggested that all students' working from LKS then should be captured and sent their work to the teacher by borrowing smartphones from friends, parents or neighbours. Due to unreliable internet connection and other technical issues during the real time learning conducted during screen time (video conference), teachers might instruct their students to do handwritten task which later could be captured and submitted electronically (Anderson, 2020; Morgan; 2020).

Meanwhile, TA believed that the role of parents during online learning was very crucial

in monitoring students' work. LE added that it was important to have a discussion with all teachers and school to support the students with free data cellular. Schools that instructed online learning were expected to maintain a clear communication toward administrator, teaching staff and parents when planning to the online learning, and families (parents) should need to make sure that their children know how to access the learning platform and sometimes to monitor them (Morgan, 2020). Hughes (2004) also added that fulfilling and meeting the needs of learners in distance (online) learning were essential, encompassing the information related to the assessment, technical support, educational counselling, library services and students' rights and responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

The coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak has insisted a significantly transformative change toward the implementation of education in many countries. Learning process instructed remotely and online was applied and teachers had no options to adopt this kind of situation in a relatively sudden short time. This study attempted to draw a current situation of learning activity during the Covid-19 pandemic in particular context of schools located in South Aceh subdistrict, Aceh province. This study revealed the discussion of the perceptions of eight respondents (English teachers) toward the implementation of online learning during the pandemic that was categorised into six subthemes.

First, the initiation of steps, technique and method of online learning activity. This feature concluded that most teachers deployed WhatsApp group as their main app for informing the students about the course, sharing learning materials, designing and submitting the assignment. Second, maintaining the interaction and discussion during online learning. In this feature, commonly, the interaction and discussion between teacher and students mostly occurred before, during and after the live-learning time. As usual, the discussion covered the questions and answers, comments and opinion exchanges conducted in WhatsApp group or additional learning platform. The third feature was discussing about the preparation of learning material. Most teachers admitted that most learning materials were collected from the internet and textbooks. Later, the lessons were transformed into digital format such as word, pdf or PowerPoint

slides to be shared for the students. The next feature was about how teachers made the assessments toward students' works. Similarly, most teachers designed and informed the assignment directly in the WhatsApp group and later provided a qualitative measurement toward students' performance. In this case, students' active participation in group would be highly appreciated by teachers, and other technical assessment was not clearly explained.

The fifth subtheme was about the challenges experienced by the learners during the online activity. Teacher perceived that most students were challenged by the unstable and limited internet access to participate effectively during online class. This main issue resulted to impact other technical issues such as learners' unfamiliarity toward the use of learning platform, the disturbance of downloading learning materials, and so on. Lastly, the respondents were required to propose the efforts and strategies to overcome those challenges. Mainly, most teachers were aware of students' motivation and learning engagement during online learning. To tackle this, teachers should maintain a consistent communication with students, provided reasonable amount of assignments, and clearly brief instruction. Finally, schools were also asked to provide a complete and special information related to needs of students toward implementation of online learning during the pandemic.

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