EXPLORING TEACHER'S TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN IMPLEMENTING BLENDED LEARNING DURING COVID-19: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries and all continents. Closures of schools and other learning spaces have impacted 94 per cent of the world's student population, up to 99 per cent in low and lower-middle income countries. The crisis is exacerbating pre-existing education disparities by reducing the opportunities for many of the most vulnerable children, youth, and adults those living in poor or rural areas, girls, refugees, persons with disabilities and forcibly displaced persons – to continue their learning. Learning losses also threaten to extend beyond this generation and erase decades of progress, not least in support of girls and young women's educational access and retention. Some 23.8 million additional children and youth (from pre-primary to tertiary) may drop out or not have access to school next year due to the pandemic's economic impact alone (United Nation, 2020).

The current condition of Indonesia and almost the entire world is experiencing the Covid 19 pandemic or the corona virus. Luthra & Mackenzi (2020) said there are four ways Covid 19 has changed the way we educate future generations. First, that educational processes around the world are increasingly interconnected. Second, redefining the role of educators. Third, teach the importance of life skills in the future. And fourth, to broaden the role of technology in supporting education. This pandemic has hampered community activities, and some have even stopped completely. Then the government provides restrictions on restrictions to cut the spread of covid. The barrier provided by the government, one of which is closing schools. Meanwhile, teaching and learning activities are conducted through blended learning.

Moreover, Graham, Woodfield, and Harrison (2013) defined blended learning is described as the intentional combination of traditional face-to-face instruction with technology-mediated instruction. Lalima & Dangwal (2017) stated Blended Learning has several advantages and some of them are Learning is completed using ICT, either on the web or in a detached mode, allowing both teachers and students to spend more time for creative and acceptable activities in the classroom, students can access to virtual learning and CAI without sacrificing the social aspect and

traditional education and Correspondence is given a higher degree. In Mixed Realizing, the correspondence cycle is completed, which would be impossible if we followed the standard methodology. While Krasulia (2017) stated one of the disadvantages of Blended Learning is Blended Learning may have disadvantages in specialized viewpoints if it is not properly planned and implemented, as it relies solely on the specialized assets or devices with which the Blended Learning experience is delivered. To have a significant impact on the educational experience, these devices must be reliable, simple to use, and modern.

In addition, There are many studies found that blended learning gives positive impact for EFL teaching, but another studies also found some problems experienced by the teachers, and also the platforms used to implement blended learning in the classroom. Ma'rufa and Mustofa (2021)found that teachers used several digital platform in teaching English through blended learning, and then the school decided to use Google Classroom for virtual classes.

Ambarwati (2021) found that there are many problems faced by the teachers during the implementation of blended learning specially in face-to-face classes, those are: there is no group discussion, limited time in learning, and few students attend the class, meanwhile, some problems in online classes include: internet connection, lack of internet quota, and the media such as smartphone. Another study conducted by Talis (2018) found students had a favorable opinion of the application of the method of blended learning in ELT (English Language Teaching). The students have positive opinion in learning through blended learning.

The current study tries to explore the implementation of blended learning during pandemic by exploring teachers' story narratively using narrative inquiry approach.

METHOD

This research design was qualitatively through narrative inquiry. According to Creswell (2012:502), narrative research is a method that focuses on exploring people, getting data through stories, reporting personal experiences, and discussing those experiences with the person. According to Clandini (2006), Narrative allows us to know how social and personal aspect interconnect in the life of teachers, as well as how the teachers' experiences are molded by the wider social and institutional narratives the live.

Research Procedure

The procedure of this research was adapted from Creswell (2012:514). The procedure show a clear and comprehensive steps to conduct narrative inquiry. As a result, it was accomplished in research context. Those steps were identify a phenomenon to explore, Purposefully selected teacher, Collect the story from the

teachers, Re-story the teachers' story, Collaborating with participants, Reporting the finding about the participants' Experience, and validate the accuracy of the report.

FINDING

Teaching English in Pandemic situation

Teachers were generally professional educators tasked with educating, teaching, guiding, training, and evaluating the learning process. Pandemic situations that occur globally have been changing the role of teachers in learning. Teachers who teach in the classroom using face-to-face method were required to teach online from home during this pandemic. This system automatically changes the learning system from face-to-face to online. From the story, it was found that teacher used online learning since this the pandemic.

"I used or applied online learning at school during the pandemic because it was one of school policies and also a learning recommendation from the government during the pandemic".

Online learning which was applied during the pandemic gave new stories for teachers in term of teaching and learning process. There were many new experiences in implementing full online learning such as finding material, preparing a suitable media for students, and designing learning activities. It was also challenging for the teachers to create an interesting learning activities using technology. In term of technology for learning process teacher used google classroom and whatapp.

"It has been determined here that the teachers used WhatsAap and Google Classroom as an online learning application because it was easily accessed by the students. Besides, it could also use learning videos from youtube."

Talking about the advantages and disadvantages, of course all the online platforms has both advantages and disadvantages, the decision to choose whatapp and Google classroom because it is easier to be accessed by the students it was found that

"Both of these media had advantages and disadvantages. Usually, when conducting a video conference, we used WhatsApp because Google Classroom could not do that, both of them are used here as the main platforms because those could be reached easily by the students"

Moreover, EFL teaching for developed country in this pandemic situation was challenging. The implementation of full online learning raises some problems. Teacher found that virtual class implementation in pandemic situation did not work well because of internet network limitations, Another problems also came from the students where they had different motivation to learn. So it made full online learning in this pandemic could not run well.

"Sometimes the students just filled in the absence, even though there was media that has been sent on the Google Classroom, sometimes students just saw it, filled in the absence. When there was an assignment, only some students who collected it. May be, we should provide material that students were curious about it next time."

In addition the teacher recognized that the implementation of full online learning was hard to be implemented and maked difficult the students.

" I figured out that the students who present list was incomplete during my class" .

"Initially, the students had difficulties when doing online learning from home, they did not understand what the teacher ordered, so that they became unactive in online classs".

Under these themes, teachers' experience represented the situation that teaching English in pandemic situation using full online learning was challenging. It requires more creativity to teach students in pandemic situation. At the beginning of pandemic, it was found that the implementation of full online learning make the teachers use various online platform that suitable for the students' condition. In other hand, from the narratives, full online learning was seen difficult to be implemented because of some factors such as how teachers manage the class in online, how to apply suitable media and material in full online, how the facility support and how students self-responsibility through online learning. Therefore, there should be another way in teaching and learning process. The teacher was pushed to use some online platform which was appropriate to the students. Besides, it must also pay attention to how it is applied and how the students keep active even more active than the teacher.

Designing Pattern of Blended Learning
The Indonesian government established the concept of new normal in July 2020, it was new life order in aspect of human life. In term of education, the government allowed the school to conduct teaching and learning at school for green zone. However, educational stakeholder must meet several requirements to be able to carry out learning at school. Therefore, blended learning was used as an appropriate method to be implemented in this era. In terms of blended learning, the teacher stated that blended learning was not something new. Teacher has been applying blended learning since the school began to implement face-to-face learning in new normal era during this pandemic.

"Blended is not something new for me because I have applied it to students and in fact it was not affective."

Furthermore, the teacher has been teaching for 25 years, the teacher said that he had attended the training because he taught in several schools, although it was difficult to implement it.

"Regarding blended learning training, I have attended it that was held in the other school. It was not effective because it had to be prepared from all aspects, especially a good network.''

For the application of bended learning and how to create a new learning system that was more suitable in the pandemic era, teachers were expected to be able to integrate conventional teaching and modern teaching continuously. Here, teacher told how to apply and integrate the blended learning model (online and offline).

"Blended learning combined various forms of devices that could be used in learning, from commonly used communication applications such as WhatsApp, Zoom, Facebook, and web-based learning programs such as Edmodo, Zenius, Quipper, Zenier, or using other applications such as Google Classroom by providing material and discussed in class and vice versa.

Furthermore, The teacher stated that some preparations were made before the online meeting or online class. teacher shared a grid of material through the WhatsApp group or Google Classroom and instructed students to learn it. When the students found difficulties, teacher could respond or follow up in face-to-face meetings.

"I prepared the material before the day of my schedule , such as in the form of ppt, video or link then I sent it to them and asked them to learn it, if there was something difficult, they could ask in a face-to-face meeting.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Blended Learning

Teacher narrated that the implementation of blended learning has been being implemented in school during pandemic created positive effects for students. however There were also weaknesses in the implementation of blended learning that found by the teacher even students.

"Each method had advantages and disadvantages. One of the benefits was we could give assignments directly from home because we have used the media, so we could give assignments to students at any time and at the appointed time. While the problem, it came mainly from students because learning had to be online and used several media. Sometimes, even though students had smart phone, laptop and so on, sometimes they did not have internet service that supported it, even though there was internet data, the location also determined it."

Challenge of Implementing Blended Learning

The third theme discussed about the problems faced by the teachers in implementing blended learning during pandemic. Moreover, this section also told the teachers' story in solving the problems. This theme was divided into two subthemes, those were current problem and break it out.

Current Problems

Teacher found that good preparation could become a successful key in implementing blended learning during pandemic. Other same problems also related to the students' motivation or awareness in his online class.

"I had to have good preparation in online teaching, such as materials, assignments, videos, ppt and so on that were needed, those must be prepared before. So we could be organized in online teaching".

"In online learning, students were less motivated to learn, unlike face-to-face learning, it was proven that they were not active when online learning".

Break It Out

Blended learning came as a solution and it was an ideal learning in the pandemic era. The existence of face-to-face classes in blended learning could be a solution to some of the difficulties found in full online learning. Blended learning was the right solution to the learning process during this pandemic.

Related to the previous theme about problems in implementing blended learning such as students' balance availability, scheduling, how to integrate face-to-face and online learning, teacher explained that internet quota provided by the government may be able to help students in online learning.

"Internet quota assistance from the government was very helpful for students during online learning, even though the connection was little bit slow"

Future Route

In this section, the teachers narrated their evaluation and hope to the existing blended learning during pandemic situation. teacher revealed about things that must be evaluated when implementing blended learning especially when doing online class were giving an appropriate materials and interesting media. Besides, teacher expressed his hope in the future for better blended learning implementation, particularly good network services or internet access in all areas.

"Something that must be evaluated in the application of blended learning such as suitable material followed by good delivery or practicing, for example adding interesting media such as puzzles or interesting videos from youtube related to the material, in order that they were not bored during online class."

"I hoped that a good internet access could be distributed to wide area, even to remote villages because there were students here whose houses were remote, so it made them difficult to take online class."

DISCUSSION

This part highlights the significance of narrative and its connection to relevant theoretical and empirical research. The important experiences were represented by teachers through their personal stories related to the teaching learning process on blended learning during this pandemic situation. Narrative inquiry has been accepted to understand the language education from the perspective of those who involve in teaching and learning (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014; Barkhuizen, 2015; Bell, 2002).

Based on the narration, teacher shared their personal important experience in teaching English in chronological of event and time. It was started from the early pandemic teaching using full online, then applying blended and also teacher strategy expectation of future learning strategies. Those are included as a narrative research time frame. It is in line with Connelly and Clandinin (2006) stated that narrative inquiry is not only describing an event, a person, or an object, but also describing them with a past, a present, and a future (p. 479).

Related to the facilities in online learning, the internet connection plays important aspect. Based on the finding, both of teachers try to conduct an innovation in teaching. So teachers decided to use online platforms that suitable and acceptable by students, namely WhatsApp and Google classroom. Besides, teachers add power point, videos from Youtube, and so on related to the material. But on its implementation, both teachers found it hard to be implemented to their students because of internet connection. In fact, internet connection is the factor support the success of online learning. According to Piccoli et al. (2001) the quality of technology such as internet quality affects significantly on satisfaction in online learning.

In term of the student, this research found that the students are varied. Teacher found that some students did not attend the class virtually and the students seem to be passive in online class. Those all related to the students' awareness in learning. So, beside the teacher and facilities, the students also affect the teaching and learning process in online learning. It is supported by a study conducted by Lie et al. (2020) where they explore language teachers' online engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia and it was found that there were five factors related to online learning processes; those are learners, the prior exposure of the teachers to online learning, technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and the support system.

To conclude, teacher in this research have tried to teach even though in pandemic situation, teacher used an appropriate online platform to teach virtually but teacher found it hard to implement because of some factors such as internet connection and students' awareness to learn.

CONCLUSION

At the beginning of this pandemic, all the educational activities or teaching and learning process was conducted from home virtually and it was not too successful and effective especially in State Senior High School 1 Pakong. Therefore, Blended learning can be a good solution for the learning activities in pandemic situation. Teachers' experience and creativity are needed in implementing blended learning. Dealing with online platform, it was found that the teachers choose an appropriate platform to the students, and the suitable platform used by the teachers in State Senior High School 1 Pakong were Google classroom and WhatsApp as the main platform in online class.

Furthermore, based on the teachers' story, it was found that the success of the implementation of blended learning in this pandemic is affected by some factors such as students' motivation, internet access and scheduling at the school. In this research, internet access becomes a big problem for the students in online class and challenge for the teachers, the students did not attend the class by the reason of internet access or connection. Sometimes, students just fill in the attendance list and was not active in Google classroom. In addition, only a half students read the assignment without submitting. Therefore, the teacher uses face to face learning to give reinforcement about the material given virtually.

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