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EXPLORING HOW ELEMENTARY ENGLISH TEACHERS IN REGIONAL AREAS TRANSFORMED THEIR TEACHING DURING THE PANDEMIC

by

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Abstract:

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about many changes in many spheres of life, including education. The country's unique geographic and demographic characteristics challenge Indonesia's government's remote learning policy to preserve education throughout the unprecedented period, including for English teachers in Indonesian regional areas. This study examines how elementary English teachers in regional Indonesia adapt their teaching throughout the pandemic. Through in-depth interviews, the experience of two elementary English teachers who taught before and during the epidemic was investigated in a qualitative study using a case study approach to determine how their teaching changed. The difficulties encountered and the help obtained were also examined. A thematic analysis of the interviews determined that the teaching transformation during the pandemic decreased, though to varying degrees, for each participant. The participants' difficulties contributed to the deterioration, for which the assistance they received was deemed valuable but insufficient. The study's findings indicate that regional English teachers in Indonesian regions request more institutional and governmental support for their teaching. Moreover, cooperation between several sectors is required to improve their education during and after the pandemic.

Keywords: English language teaching, regional areas, pandemic, Covid-19, transformation

Abstrak:

Banyak perubahan telah terjadi akibat pandemi Covid-19 di banyak bidang kehidupan, termasuk di bidang pendidikan. Kebijakan Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh yang dikeluarkan oleh pemerintah Indonesia untuk menjaga pendidikan sepanjang periode yang belum pernah terjadi sebelumnya, termasuk bagi para guru Bahasa Inggris di daerah-daerah regional Indonesia, dihadapi oleh karakteristik geografis dan demografis unik negara ini. Studi ini mengkaji bagaimana guru Bahasa Inggris di sekolah dasar di Indonesia bagian regional menyesuaikan pengajarannya sepanjang pandemi. Melalui wawancara mendalam, pengalaman dua guru Bahasa Inggris di sekolah dasar yang mengajar sebelum dan selama pandemi diselidiki dalam sebuah studi kualitatif menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus untuk menentukan bagaimana pengajaran mereka berubah. Kesulitan yang dihadapi dan bantuan yang diperoleh juga diselidiki. Berdasarkan analisis tematis dari wawancara, disimpulkan bahwa transformasi pengajaran selama pandemi mengalami penurunan, meskipun dalam derajat yang berbeda-beda untuk setiap guru. Kesulitan peserta berkontribusi pada penurunan tersebut, di mana

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bantuan yang mereka terima dianggap berharga namun tidak mencukupi. Temuan studi menunjukkan bahwa guru Bahasa Inggris di daerah regional Indonesia meminta lebih banyak dukungan institusional dan pemerintah untuk pengajaran mereka. Selain itu, kerjasama antara beberapa sektor diperlukan untuk meningkatkan pendidikan mereka baik selama maupun setelah pandemi.

Kata kunci: *pengajaran bahasa Inggris, daerah regional, pandemi, Covid-19, transformasi*

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has impeded the worldwide community, and the pandemic's repercussions significantly impact many facets of life. One of the most profoundly affected fields is education, where most schools have adopted online learning (UNESCO, 2021). As a result of this interruption, 45 million kids in Indonesia cannot physically go to school and are mandated to engage in remote learning (Azzahra, 2020). Furthermore, the disparities in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure between urban and rural regions in Indonesia may exacerbate the country's educational system's existing challenges (Kardipah & Syakdiyah, 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020). In addition, despite the guidelines for distance learning announced by Indonesian officials (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2020) and the establishment of an internet quota for online learning (Hermansyah & Aridah, 2021), teachers and students in regional areas still encounter various challenges in delivering high-quality education (Lie et al., 2020; Putri et al., 2020).

In the Indonesian English teaching context, English is not taught in all elementary schools in rural areas. Almost every elementary school in urban areas and major cities teaches English as a subject. In this regard, urban Indonesian students outperform their rural counterparts in motivation and advancement in their English language studies (Lamb, 2012). In addition, Lamb (2012) proposes that increasing student satisfaction and improving the educational experience in rural schools could potentially enhance student motivation. Hence, primary English teachers in remote areas of Indonesia may significantly enhance students' motivation and learning progress. However, some obstacles may prevent regional English teachers in Indonesia from providing a quality education.

Since before the pandemic, English teaching in rural or regional areas of Indonesia has been hampered by numerous challenges. Inadequate facilities, incompetent students, and competent instructors are a few examples of the obstacles (Febriana et al., 2018). In addition to

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the pandemic, regional limitations in facilities to support online learning may exacerbate the difficulties (Lie et al., 2020). Consequently, it may pose challenges for the Indonesian regional area's English teachers, particularly in sustaining students' motivation and instructional quality. The government's curricular support is a further concern that may impede the quality of English instruction in primary schools. English is not a necessary subject in Indonesia's current elementary school curriculum. Concerns have been expressed about raising the English subject status in the Indonesian elementary curriculum (Salim & Hanif, 2021; Sulistiyo et al., 2020). Positively, Indonesian elementary schools may elect to have English as a locally adapted curriculum (Zein, 2017). However, Sulistiyo et al. (2020) discovered that teaching English as a subject specifically adapted to the local context in elementary schools comes with several difficulties. These include a shortage of competent English instructors, inadequate teaching and learning resources, insufficient government assistance, and the absence of a standardized national English curriculum for elementary schools. Therefore, elementary English teachers may encounter a dual challenge today as they train in a subject that lacks curriculum support and is affected by the widespread online learning policy.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the delivery of English instruction was influenced by several circumstances, as seen by the observations above. Particularly for English teachers in rural locations, the pandemic may provide them with additional obstacles. Thus, it would be insightful to research how English teachers retain their students' English proficiency by analyzing their teaching transformation. In this study, "transformation" refers to the changing practices of teachers during the pandemic. Additionally, it may be beneficial to investigate the assistance that regional English instructors in Indonesia receive, with a particular emphasis on how they integrate this assistance into the provision of qualitative education during the pandemic. This will enable the identification of the challenges and insights that have arisen in the context of regional elementary English teaching during the epidemic. It is crucial to develop effective strategies to overcome challenges and turn them into valuable learning experiences. Furthermore, there is a lack of information in the existing literature regarding the provision of English education in Indonesian rural elementary schools amidst the pandemic. This study aims to enhance the existing knowledge on teaching primary English during a pandemic, specifically in Indonesian regional areas lacking sufficient facilities and instructional resources (Lie et al., 2020).

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Although there has been some research on English instruction during the pandemic, issues still require further investigation. Most of the research examined in the preceding discussion focuses on the circumstances seen in urban regions and the transition from secondary school to higher education. There is a lack of research that investigates how primary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in regional areas of Indonesia address the difficulties and adapt their teaching methods during the pandemic. Furthermore, while the government has provided help in the form of a quota for mobile Internet for students (Ariyanti, 2020), it is essential to ascertain the instructors' perception of the extent of this support, specifically in the regional areas of Indonesia. There is a lack of studies on the experiences of English teachers teaching in rural locations instead of urban areas. It is essential to investigate the experiences of this group. Thus, this study aims to enhance the existing body of literature that examines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on English elementary education in regional areas of Indonesia. In order to direct this investigation, two research questions are subsequently proposed:

1. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, how have elementary English instructors in regional Indonesia altered their teaching methods?
2. From their point of view, what are the primary difficulties and assistance teachers encountered when teaching English in Indonesian regional elementary schools during the pandemic?

METHOD

Design

This study employed a qualitative research methodology to gather insights into the participants' opinions, experiences, and viewpoints. Hatch (2002) argues that qualitative research involves interviewing individuals in their natural settings to gather information about their experiences. In addition, he elaborates that qualitative research leads to an understanding of the world through the perspectives of its inhabitants. In this case, a qualitative study tries to understand the world through people's eyes. A case study approach was adopted for this study. Yin (2003) states that the case study approach enhances our understanding of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related issues.

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Participant

Elementary English teachers from the researcher's professional network were contacted for this study. Potential participants must meet specific criteria: they must be elementary English teachers in regional areas in Indonesia who have taught English before and throughout the COVID-19 outbreak. The participants were not required to have supplementary criteria such as educational background, teaching experience, or gender. The individuals who expressed interest in participating in this study were formally contacted through email and text. Ultimately, two women in their thirties who work as teachers at separate private elementary schools on Flores Island were enlisted. This study employed Taylor and Helena as aliases to safeguard their identities. Taylor has a teaching tenure of six years, while Helena possesses an impressive eleven years of teaching experience.

Data collecting technique

The researcher employed semi-structured interviews to collect the data from the participants. The research questions served as the foundation for generating the interview questions. By including semi-structured interviews, participants can provide thorough insights into their teaching experiences throughout the epidemic, which aligns with this study's specific objectives. The interviews were conducted using videoconferencing software due to the geographical separation between the researcher and the interviewees. Zoom was chosen as the videoconferencing platform for conducting the interviews. Archibald et al. (2019) argue that it is a highly effective platform for gathering qualitative interview data because it establishes rapport, convenience, simplicity, and user-friendliness. Each interview lasted around sixty minutes, as suggested by Hatch (2002) as a general rule for the duration of interviews. Furthermore, this time frame enables the participants to share a greater extent of their personal experiences.

Data analysis technique

The data in this study was analyzed using thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2012) argue that theme analysis is a systematic approach to detecting, organizing, and uncovering patterns of meaning within a dataset. Furthermore, they suggest six thematic analysis processes: becoming acquainted with the data, creating initial codes, identifying themes, assessing possible themes, defining and labeling themes, and preparing the final report. Maso's (2002)

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recommendation was implemented to familiarize the researcher with the data and interpret it reflexively. The interview transcripts were highlighted, the code was written down, and the transcripts were color-coded to generate the initial codes. The utilization of these identifiers facilitated the systematic organization of the interview findings. Once all the codes were categorized based on their colors, they were systematically grouped into themes and further improved before giving them appropriate titles. By following these procedures, the facts concerning the participants' teaching transformation and their reaction to obstacles and support might be comprehensible and offer solutions to the research inquiries.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

English teaching in rural areas: Pre-pandemic and during the pandemic

Pre-pandemic

Before the pandemic, both participants believed that the time allotted for the English lesson was adequate for delivering the instructional materials. According to the participants, each English class lasted one hour and fifty minutes. Taylor stated, "With more than enough teaching hours, there is sufficient time for everything." The participants were able to ensure that the students in their English classes understood the material, as Helena said:

Before the pandemic, it took one hour and ten minutes to complete the lesson... Therefore, there is sufficient time for comprehension and explanations. If students do not comprehend [the lesson], we have ample time to clarify.

Before the pandemic, Helena typically based her lesson plans on the provided reference book. She stated that the English teachers at her school were expected to be innovative in their lesson preparation, rather than merely adhering to the textbook's recommendations.

The instructors created the lesson plan; the school provided only reference materials. I prepared everything for myself. Teachers at our school are not permitted to copy and paste directly from reference materials; instead, they must be creative... We cannot simply follow the lesson plan in the reference materials; therefore, we must develop the lesson ourselves.

According to the participants, various instructional strategies and media were used to teach English before the pandemic. Taylor, for instance, utilized communicative language teaching to develop students' speaking abilities. Taylor employed an audio-lingual methodology when instructing listening skills. A compact speaker was carried to the classroom for listening activities, such as learning through music. She stated, "I typically bring the mini-speaker to

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class so students can practice their listening abilities." Videos were also utilized in English instruction prior to the pandemic. According to Helena, "the students were instructed to view a video before answering questions about it."

Additionally, additional authentic resources were integrated into the instruction. The materials used were accessible outside of the classroom. For example, Helena would lead the children outdoors and employ contextual learning to educate them about the materials used to construct residences. "Therefore, we bring the students outside and show them that this is a door, this is a window, and this is the stair, so it is not just in the classroom," she explained. Helena additionally stated that she would conduct the students' observations of their environments outside during the lesson on colors and numbers to facilitate their learning.

Teachers must be inventive so that teachings extend beyond the classroom. For instance, if we are learning about colors, we can take the students outside, within a short distance of the schoolyard, and observe what objects are present. Oh, this color's English word is this. Also, some lessons are not always conducted in the classroom. Students are taken out of the classroom. We can say, "All right, let us begin counting the pebbles. What is the English term for batu-batu kecil and daun? Following that, we count in English along with the students.

According to the participants, teaching English had numerous advantages before the pandemic. Initially, the learning outcome should be observable by instructors. As Taylor expressed, "Before the pandemic, the outcome of what we want to achieve on that day of learning can be directly observed because we are with the students." Taylor stated that students' English competence level can be easily noticed in a direct interaction, leading to higher levels of satisfaction. Furthermore, the student demonstrated inventiveness during the lecture. Taylor remarked, "For students who had English lessons before the pandemic, their creativity was evident; for instance, when I give them a topic, they can independently develop it and are very enthusiastic." Moreover, Helena stated that video-based instructional media facilitates student lesson comprehension.

The abrupt outbreak of the pandemic induced perplexity among the participants. Both participants stated they had no idea how to teach English amidst the pandemic. Taylor, for instance, voiced her apprehension by observing that the pandemic was unanticipated and that the shift from face-to-face to online learning "was unexpected because students are accustomed to face-to-face learning." There was a two-month period during which Taylor's school did not

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give any assignments to the pupils due to confusion over how to complete them. Before online learning, Helena's school could provide students with educational modules.

During the pandemic

The interviews revealed that the participants' English-teaching practices underwent numerous significant alterations during the pandemic. During the pandemic, Taylor is reported to have refrained from conducting any online instruction. Taylor disclosed that she had not employed any videoconferencing activity, explicitly claiming that she had not used Google Meets or Zoom. However, Taylor directed the class to finish the current coursebook assignments. She recounted:

Since each pupil has their course book, I never conducted online teaching during this pandemic. Therefore, I instructed them to complete the assignment from specific textbook pages and gave them the due date.

Taylor required students to record videos for specific language skills and textbook assignments. She narrated, "What I can do, at least for reading and speaking recordings, is to request that they record and send me a video. Exactly that." The situation was different for Helena. Her school required teachers to create instructional videos for YouTube and distribute them to students. She elaborated, "We create the videos ourselves. However, the video is fundamental. I convert PowerPoint presentations into video format." Furthermore, the two participants employed the WhatsApp Group to disseminate materials, notice of assignments, and submit. The group comprised the whole student body of the class, their homeroom teacher, and other subject teachers.

Contrary to Taylor, Helena engaged in remote teaching during the pandemic. She utilized Google Meet as the medium for the meeting. During the pandemic, Helena modified her English class's teaching materials to suit the limited time available. Helena expressed the need to compress the English teaching materials to fit under the thirty-minute time limit imposed during the pandemic. Furthermore, she had the obligation to carefully choose solely the most crucial educational resources for her students. Helena explained this:

...and to be more selective with student-specific materials. When additional materials were available before the pandemic, I would incorporate them into the students' education. However, I have only selected the essential ones during the pandemic. If the subject is strictly about numbers, we only learn about numbers.

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Helena stated there was not much to do during the online learning in her teaching. She only taught the students vocabulary and their pronunciation. Additionally, she applied the Total Physical Response (TPR) method. She added, "I did a little practice for lower-level class; for example, when I asked them to stand up, they stood up." In addition, during the Google Meet class, she made PowerPoint presentations with images to teach the students about the vocabulary.

In both interviews, all the participants described their English teaching during the pandemic as insufficient. Taylor mentioned, "There was a sense of dissatisfaction; why did the teaching turn out this way?" In addition, Helena was dissatisfied with the English teaching during the pandemic, stating that simply providing students with online materials is insufficient. Helena added, "From March to June 2020, there was no interaction with the students at the start of the pandemic; there were only English assignments on the paper."

Primary obstacles encountered and assistance provided to the participants

Bad internet connection and inadequate data allowance

Online learning became essential to participants' teaching throughout the pandemic due to the need for an internet connection. In order to facilitate the students' learning, the teachers primarily utilized internet connectivity and internet packages to gather and distribute the necessary materials and offer online instruction. Various examples cited by participants in the interview highlighted the challenges of using the Internet to facilitate their teaching during the pandemic. For instance, Taylor indicated that the internet connection in her locality was unreliable. She explains, "The primary challenge I encountered was the internet connectivity. We intended to deliver instruction through Zoom or Google Meet; however, the main constraint was the internet connection." Helena revealed that the inadequate internet connection also resulted in technical complications throughout the online course. She remarked:

Occasionally, when we were in a Google Meet, the connection would drop, and students would enter and exit the Google Meet... Sometimes, I can hear the students, but they cannot. It is due to the poor connection.

Another concern related to the Internet is parents' limitations on their children's online usage. Since most students did not have mobile phones, their parents offered assistance with devices. Helena revealed that confident parents expressed concerns about allocating internet data usage because of online education and that pupils and teachers must exchange digital

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resources. Furthermore, due to specific tasks necessitating pupils to capture and transmit videos, a substantial amount of internet bandwidth was necessary, causing concern among the parents.

Complex parental involvement

The interviews also uncovered that the pupils' parents presented distinct challenges. Parental involvement in the educational process was essential while the students were still in elementary school. One of the factors contributing to this was that most students did not possess cell phones. Furthermore, this engagement elicited certain apprehensions. For example, Taylor asserted that her students' homework was accomplished by their parents. "Their parents do most of my students' homework, and due to the emergence of the internet, they can easily duplicate and transfer content from the internet to me," she clarified. Taylor further explained that this led to a disparity in the academic success of kids who usually struggled before the pandemic but suddenly showed significant improvement during remote learning.

Furthermore, Taylor asserted that the pupils failed to finish their schoolwork due to their parents' hectic schedules. Taylor clarified that confident parents lacked suitable mobile devices, mentioning that some parents reported not having an Android phone. The predicament faced by Helena's students was the unfortunate overlap between their parent's work schedules and their designated online learning hours. Due to the parents' work commitments and the students' need for their parents' mobile phones to engage in online classes and exchange educational materials and homework, a predicament emerged. Helena mentioned that having parents accompany their children during the Google Meeting could be distracting since it occasionally gave the impression that they were also being taught.

Unsupportive school

The school was also identified as a barrier to effective English learning during the pandemic. This significantly impacted Taylor. During the conversation, she disclosed that the school was shut down for kids and teachers during the pandemic. Taylor clarified that the school's location within a convent allowed only a few people to enter the premises during the pandemic. She stated:

Perhaps because the school is located adjacent to a convent, the Sisters also restrict access to the convent. Consequently, they were highly closed at the time, particularly given the prevalence of Covid-19. Even the teachers were prohibited from attending classes.

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In addition to the school closure, Taylor stated that her school did not provide the instructors with the necessary resources to conduct effective online learning, particularly an Internet connection. She stated, "The school did not provide us with the resources to engage in online learning." As a result, she mainly depended on her equipment, including her laptop and mobile phone, and used her own money to buy the internet package during the pandemic. Furthermore, teachers, specifically English instructors, lacked professional development options to support their teaching efforts throughout the pandemic.

Internal challenge

The individual difficulties faced by the participants exposed numerous hindrances. Helena expressed that she encountered challenges organizing her schedule to facilitate online study. As her school's sole English instructor, she was responsible for teaching eleven English classes. She stated that her most significant issue would be effectively managing her time. Especially for the administration, as I am responsible for overseeing a large number of courses. Taylor's insufficient finances hindered her ability to offer her kid a satisfactory education, leading to a lack of desire. Given the scarcity of resources at her disposal, she remarked, "I encountered challenges in producing a remarkable educational experience for the students."

Furthermore, Taylor admitted her deficiency in motivation to acquire the necessary skills for teaching during the pandemic. She stated, "Amidst this pandemic, the internal obstacle I encountered was my lack of extensive knowledge on effective teaching strategies specifically tailored for the pandemic..." I lack the motivation to engage in studying. Too lazy to perform an online search. Taylor experienced a sense of moral responsibility due to her failure to deliver sufficient guidance to her students during the pandemic.

Overcoming the challenges

The participants implemented various strategies to surmount the challenges above. Helena emphasized that effective communication is crucial in addressing issues such as internet connectivity problems and scheduling conflicts while engaging with parents and their complex situations. Helena reported that in the event of a connectivity problem during a Google Meet session for the pupils, she would inform the parents and instruct them to refer to the modules that were previously sent. In addition, she mentioned that the school would grant permission for kids to study on campus in cases where their parents lacked internet access or had conflicting schedules. "Parents who need help managing their internet data usage and time can send their

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children to school," she clarified. Both participants disclosed that when the COVID-19 case count was low, students could attend school in separate groups but were required to leave if the number of cases rose.

Main supports received

Throughout the pandemic, the participants received support from multiple entities during their instruction. Taylor's primary source of support was the allocation of internet quotas by the Ministry of Education. She expressed that the government's assistance with the internet quota was quite beneficial, particularly when our internet quota was depleted. The government's provision of internet quota support was flexible and considerate. Nevertheless, she also noted that the allocated amount of internet data was sometimes inadequate. Helena considered her school the primary provider of support for her English teaching during the pandemic, while Taylor experienced a lack of support from her school. Helena stated that teachers at her school were authorized to generate educational resources and provide online lessons while physically present at the school. In addition, the school offered a Wi-Fi internet connection, an internet stipend for teachers, webcams for teachers to create instructional videos for their students, and professional development on online teaching throughout the epidemic.

The school provides us with Wi-Fi... The school provided funds to purchase an internet quota if the Wi-Fi did not function. We were also provided with microphones and cameras...Additionally, the school held webinars for the instructors' professional development and productivity.

Reflecting on their teaching during the pandemic, the participants expressed their hopes for improving their English instruction during the interviews. Specifically, Helena expressed her hope for government oversight of education during the pandemic:

In these unprecedented times, I want the government to visit the institutions. By doing so, they can determine whether or not the teaching activities during the pandemic have been completed.

Helena expressed her wish for the government to mandate English as a compulsory subject in the national curriculum, discussing it in a broader context. She asserts that acquiring English at an early age has benefits. However, it was not deemed relevant throughout primary education nor incorporated into the mandatory syllabus.

Taylor had high expectations of furthering her personal growth by engaging in online instruction. As said earlier, she refrained from engaging in online instruction. She narrated:

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Perhaps I should read more about what constitutes an effective method and strategy for online instruction—additionally, sharing experiences with senior peers or instructors from other institutions. It could be beneficial for me to ask other acquaintances about their methods.

Discussion

Participants' teaching transformation

The results suggest that the teaching methods of the participants underwent modifications during the pandemic compared to the period before the pandemic. However, the overall change was mostly negative and differed in size across the participants. The transition can be perceived through several indicators, including restricted pedagogical techniques and strategies, reduced instructional time, imperceptible learning achievements, and insufficient teaching materials and resources. Taylor refrained from doing any online education during the pandemic, mirroring the findings of Lie et al. (2020) regarding language instructors in rural locations who did not make an effort to utilize videoconferencing software for teaching purposes. On the other hand, Helena persisted in teaching her classes using inadequate Internet videoconferencing software, such as Google Meet.

Another example was the restricted materials and resources used. Helena supplemented the pre-existing modules for her students with video resources and PowerPoint presentations, while Taylor relied on the students' current coursebook as the learning resource. Helena's actions align with the findings of Thumvichit (2021), which indicate that English teachers are still fulfilling their responsibilities throughout the pandemic. This includes establishing an engaging learning atmosphere and employing various instructional approaches.

Although the participants' instruction took a poor turn, it showcased their efforts to adjust their teaching methods to the unexpected circumstances. It aligns with the constructivist perspective put out by Stavredes (2011), which asserts that educators should establish a learning setting that adapts to the present conditions, specifically the COVID-19 pandemic in this particular case.

Furthermore, as stated by Vygotsky et al. (1978), learning is inherently connected to its social context, and the processes of adaptation and assimilation require the active engagement of individuals within a community of practice. The participants' adaptation of their practice

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throughout the pandemic indicates their difficulties, as their actions went beyond teaching and considered external variables. These factors may encompass the educational institution, the global health crisis, the challenges faced, and the assistance received. The results indicate that these factors impacted their practice during the pandemic.

Support, Motivation, and Challenge

Amidst the pandemic, the teaching methods of the participants may undergo alterations that a multitude of reasons might influence. Firstly, this might be attributed to the assistance provided to the participants. Helena's ability to teach English throughout the epidemic indicates that she had support from her school. The assistance, encompassing the availability of a satisfactory internet connection, tools for creating educational resources, and a program of professional growth to enhance her abilities, potentially facilitated her in adjusting her teaching methods amidst the epidemic. However, Taylor did not have the necessary support in their case. This could explain why Taylor encountered difficulties adapting throughout the pandemic. These findings align with the research conducted by Atmojo and Nugroho (2020), which revealed that teachers did not fully utilize technology in online learning. Unlike Helena's school, Taylor's school lacks explicit protocols for instructors within the pandemic. Khatoony and Nezhadmehr (2020) found that educational institutions failed to provide adequate assistance for online learning during the pandemic.

The participants' level of motivation may have influenced their teaching change. Taylor's apathy towards researching the teaching approach during the pandemic is apparent, as she exclusively depended on accessible resources, such as the students' coursebooks. These results align with previous research (Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020; Lie et al., 2020), indicating that motivation is a significant challenge for teachers during the pandemic.

Certain factors may have affected the participants' motivation to teach during the pandemic. First, the participants' motivation may have been affected by the support they received. As evidenced by this analysis of Helena's teaching methods, the more support teachers received, the more diverse their methods of instruction became. In addition to their teaching experience, their prior teaching experience may have also affected their motivation. Based on the participants' demographic data, Taylor has six years of teaching experience, while Helena has eleven years of teaching experience. Helena's increased teaching experience could enhance her ability to navigate the problems encountered in the classroom, thereby boosting her

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motivation, even amidst the pandemic. This aligns with the findings of Teng and Wu (2021), which show the relationship between teaching experience and agency.

The obstacles encountered by the participants may have been the subsequent factor that influenced the transformation. Amidst the pandemic, these challenges impeded their ability to deliver high-quality education to kids. According to the participants, the Internet was a significant challenge they faced when teaching during the pandemic. Ariyant (2020), Hijazi and AlNatour (2021), and Lie et al. (2020) discovered that the Internet hinders online education. Furthermore, the fact that the participants reside in rural areas of Indonesia, where the ICT infrastructure is less advanced than in urban areas, could have had a role in the internet issue. This was apparent when it was discovered that Helena's online teaching via Google Meets was interrupted due to her unreliable internet connection.

The Internet serves as the fundamental basis for online learning. However, its usefulness may be limited if instructors do not possess the capacity to augment their teaching through the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). In the Indonesian context, Lie et al. (2020) discovered that specific language instructors lacked the necessary expertise to incorporate technology into their teaching effectively. To ensure students receive a quality education throughout the pandemic, it is imperative that instructors possess expertise in ICT and can offer a dependable internet connection.

Participants urged the government to assist in implementing online learning, as indicated by the findings. As Helena stated, the administration refrained from visiting schools throughout the outbreak. This statement contradicts the suggestion made by Rasmitadila et al. (2020) that for online learning to be successful, there needs to be collaboration among schools, government entities, parents, and school committees. The lack of governmental supervision throughout online education may have played a role in its lack of success. Helena additionally implored the government to enforce English as a compulsory subject in elementary schools. This corroborates the findings of the earlier study conducted by Sulistiyo et al. (2020), wherein elementary school English teachers exhibited similar behavior.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

By employing a qualitative research methodology that utilized a case study approach

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and semi-structured interviews to gather data, it was ascertained that the participants' teaching practices transformed during the pandemic, exhibiting a decrease compared to their pre-pandemic teaching practices. The study's findings illustrate the transition through several elements: restricted teaching methods and approaches, shorter teaching periods, unobservable learning outcomes, and a lack of teaching materials and resources. Notwithstanding the adverse impact on teacher practice caused by the pandemic, participants demonstrated efforts to optimize student learning using the resources at hand.

The researcher subsequently attempts to provide recommendations from this investigation that could offer insights into the case. A variety of individuals and groups interested in the matter can actively work to reduce the pandemic's adverse impacts on the English education field, specifically in rural areas. Collaboration among institutions, parents, and the government is recommended based on multiple studies (Lie et al., 2020; Rasmitadila et al., 2020). Prior to engaging in collaboration, it may be necessary for each party to independently improve the quality of English instruction in Indonesian regional elementary schools. Elementary schools in regional areas can implement precise regulations and directives for English teachers to ensure their instructional approaches are more focused and effective amidst the pandemic. The potential for parents to complete their children's homework can be reduced if parents can successfully support their children's online learning. The government may also oversee institutions to ascertain the proper implementation of online education. Furthermore, the government might expedite the advancement of ICT infrastructure to address the internet issue revealed in this study. Implementing these ideas is expected to enhance the teaching transformation of primary English instructors in regional areas of Indonesia.

Limitation

While this study has addressed the research questions, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations in different respects. Notably, only two participants were included due to time constraints, limiting the generalizability of findings regarding elementary English teaching during the pandemic in Indonesian regional areas. Additionally, both participants were from private elementary schools, potentially impacting the applicability of findings to public schools. Nevertheless, this study offers insights into English learning during the pandemic, including teaching practices, challenges, and support, specifically in Indonesian regional areas. Future research could incorporate qualitative and quantitative methods with a larger and more diverse

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participant pool from various Indonesian regional areas to provide a more comprehensive understanding. This approach would offer a more holistic view of English teaching practices in regional areas, especially in response to disruptions caused by the pandemic.

Implication

Lastly, this research has enabled the examination of the teaching transformation of elementary English instructors in regional areas of Indonesia during the pandemic. Furthermore, participants have been able to contemplate and analyze their teaching methodologies during the ongoing pandemic. This study also adds to the existing body of literature on English instruction in regional locations, primarily focused on secondary school studies. Furthermore, the findings of this study would enlighten the government regarding the type of support they may offer to educators to enhance education and fulfill the Indonesian government's goal of advancing the nation's development through education.

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