



Students' Barrier and Motivation Regarding English Online Learning during the COVID-19 Outbreak

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to analyze students' barrier and motivation regarding English Online Learning during the COVID-19 outbreak. The subject of the research was eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Batang Hari in academic year of 2020/2021. This research employed a descriptive research method using quantitative and qualitative techniques to explore and explain students' barrier and motivation. Based on the data presentation and analysis of the research, it can be concluded that Eleventh graders at SMA Negeri 1 Batang Hari encounter barriers regarding online learning during the COVID-19 outbreak such as condition for accessing the internet, deficiency in using the online learning application used by the teacher; the courseware is too rigid and becomes a burden, the learners did not know how to get help from the teacher, and the learners did not know how to get help from the teacher. Besides that, several motivations are also identified in this study, they are: (1) The students were willing to study English using the media chosen by their teacher, as long as it is easy to use. (2) Majority of students ask their English teacher when they had difficulty in learning English through online learning. (3) Majority of students were always working on English assignments given by the teacher because they were afraid of their parents and teacher. (4) They will try as best as they can in completing the assignments. (5) Most of the students were motivated and enthusiastic to study English through online learning.

Keywords: *Students' Barrier, Motivation, Online Learning, COVID-19.*

Introduction

In dealing with the COVID-19 outbreak widespread in Indonesia, the government already applied a social distancing policy at the beginning of March 2020 to reduce the possibility for new infections and prevent sick people from coming in close contact with healthy people to stop the spread of coronavirus. To respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, The Minister of Education and Culture of Republic Indonesia issued Circular Number 4 of 2020 regarding the Implementation of Education Policy in Emergency during Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) as an effort to maintain the physical and mental health of students, teachers and all school stakeholders. There are five directives in this policy, one of which emphasized that learning from home through Online Learning is aimed to provide a meaningful learning experience for students without being burdened by the demands of completing all curriculum achievement for class and graduation.

As a result, for the ten months, all students across the nation have been forced to study from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. This measure is an effective way to reduce the risk of infections and to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. However, as a developing country, Indonesia faced many challenges in implementing Online Learning. Many academics unit started Online Learning but still, a lot of students are stuck with old procedures such as face-to-face interaction, practical learning, fixed schedule and hours. Also, not all students are familiar with the Online Learning System, which is a new thing for them.

According to Qifu (2013), Barriers to learning are situations or problems that prevent learners from accessing programs, which make it difficult for the learners to engage in their study or make it hard for learners to learn and concentrate. Barriers to learning faced by learners are complex and diverse and differ from student to student and even from day to day, which may be emotional, physical and mental health concerns; maybe attitudinal, organizational or practical; maybe employment and financial issues; problems arising from their housing, legal and transportation situations; and maybe issues to do with social support and family relationships. Some emotional and mental, or attitudinal barriers may be related to learners' characteristics, such as their motivation to learn or their overall attitudes to learning or online learning.

Merrill (1992) thinks that learning barriers can be classified into three groups of issues, they are ethical issues, legal issues and cultural issues. Based on Mullenburg and Berge (2005) research, there are eight barriers to online learning in order to seriousness, from light to heavy, they are (1) Administrative issues; (2) Social Interaction; (3) Academic skills; (4) Technical skills; (5) Learners motivation; (6) Time and support for studies; (7) Cost and access to the Internet; (8) Technical problems. Among those eight barriers, social interaction, administrative issues, learner motivation, time and support for studies were the four of the most importance.

Method

This study utilized a descriptive research method using quantitative and qualitative techniques to explore and explain students' barrier and motivation regarding English online learning during the COVID-19 outbreak. Furthermore, this research is mixed methods research because using two data collection methods, quantitative and qualitative. Creswell & Clark (2011) defined mixed- methods research as a study that includes at least a quantitative strand and a qualitative strand. A strand is a component of the study encompassing the basic process of conducting qualitative or quantitative research: posing a research question, collecting data and analyzing data, and interpreting the results. The major characteristic of mixed methods research is that it combines qualitative and quantitative approaches by including both strands in a single research study (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

In this study, the researcher chose purposive sampling to select the sample. According to Black (2010), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method, and it occurs when "elements selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher". Therefore, the researcher chose English classes that are taught by Mrs RY as a sample for the online survey, with a total of 137 students and consisting of 4 classes.

Result

The results section of the study shows that there were bound around eight aspects for students' barrier: (1) Conditions for accessing internet; (2) Computer or network operation skill; (3) Communication and Interaction; (4) The courseware; (5) Course content; (6) Learning resources; (7) Learning support services; (8) External support and economic burdens. Whereas for students' motivation, the themes arranged were bound around five aspects, they are: (1) Students' willingness to study English through the media chosen; (2) Students' responses in facing difficulties during English online learning; (3) Students' motivation in doing their assignments; (4) Students' motivation in completing assignments; (5) Students' motivation and enthusiasm. The explanation or discussion about students' barrier and motivation regarding the themes are as the following:

Discussion

1. Students' Barriers

a. Condition for accessing the internet

According to Qifu (2013) lack of acces of the internet is one of the seven barriers faced by online learners. In this study, it can be seen from the data obtained from the questionnaire statement: 'I live in remote or rural area so I cannot easily access my online class due to unstable internet connection', the researcher assigns values 1-4 to the different level of agreement. It showed that 43,8% of students disagreed, 28,5% agreed, 14,6% strongly disagreed, and 9,5% of students strongly

agreed with the statement.

b. Computer or network operation skill

As regards to computer or network operation skill, the data obtained from the questionnaire statement 'I cannot find difficulties in operating the application used for online learning', it showed that 48,2% of students were agreed, 26,3% strongly agreed, 24,1% disagreed, and 1,4% of students strongly disagreed with the statement and from the interview with 12 students, the majority of the students mentioned that the application used by their teacher during online class was easy to use and they did not have difficulty in using the application.

c. Communication and Interaction

Based on the data obtained from the questionnaire statement: 'I have trouble comprehending lessons delivered by the teacher during online learning and there is a little interaction between teacher to students and student to student during English online learning', it showed that 62,8% of students were agreed, 27% strongly agreed, 9,5% disagreed, and 0,7% of students strongly disagreed with the statement.

d. The coursewere

Majority of students thought that the coursewere was too rigid. The information comes from the learners' answer to the questionnaire statement: 'The online coursewere is too rigid'. The researcher assigns values 1-4 to the different level of agreement. It showed that 45,3% of students were agreed, 29,9% disagreed, 24,1% strongly agreed, and 0,7% of students strongly disagreed with the statement. Whereas from the interview with 12 students, most of students thought that the online coursewere was too rigid because the teacher gave an explanation in text only and the material through photos of students' worksheets. There were no quizzes, material that was explained in a video, discussion between students or between teacher and students.

e. Course content

According to information obtained from the questionnaire statement: 'Course content is too much and becomes a burden for me', the researcher assigns values 1-4 to the different level of agreement. It showed that 44,5% of students disagreed, 28,5% agreed, 19% strongly agreed, and 8% of students strongly disagreed with the statement. From the interview with 12 students, it showed that majority of students mentioned that the course content was not too much for them because the teacher never gave them many assignments and there was enough deadline for each task.

f. Learning resources

According to Qifu (2013) online learners expected that online courses should be designed to take full advantage of adult learners' existing knowledge structure, abilities and experinces, provide every online learner with an open online learning system with real choices, as well as with interactive space. But, in fact, there were still online learners that felt 'there are not enough learning resources on the platform' was a barrier for them. Based on the data obtained, most of students think

that the learning resources provided by the teacher, was enough for them. The information comes from the learners' answer to the questionnaire statement: 'There are not enough learning resources on the platform'. The researcher assigns values 1-4 to the different level of agreement. It showed that 47,4% of students disagreed, 32,8% disagreed, 14,6% strongly agreed, and 5,2% of students strongly disagreed with the statement.

g. Learning support services

According to Qifu (2013) as a learning support services provider, one of the primary responsibilities of an institution is to make the 'communication and interaction' occur naturally and effectively during the learning process of the distance learners. Teachers, as designers and facilitators of learning activities, should guide learners to understand course content and better develop their knowledge skills. In addition, according to Mungania (2004) teachers need to be competent as facilitators of online courses to overcoming learning barriers. Based on the responses from the questionnaire statement: 'I do not know how to get help from teachers when I come up against difficulties in study English through online learning', it showed that 58% of students agreed, 37,2% disagreed, 19% strongly agreed, and 9% of students strongly disagreed with the statement.

h. Economic burdens and external support

Based on the data obtained, most students agreed that internet fees had a great impact on them. This information comes from learners' answers to the questionnaire statement: 'The internet fees are too expensive, and it becomes a financial burden to my parents. Here the researcher also assigns values 1-4 to the different level of agreement. It showed that 46% of students agreed, 30,7% disagreed, 13,9% strongly agreed, and 9,5% of students strongly disagreed with the statement.

2. Students' Motivation

1. Students' willingness to study English through the media chosen by the teacher

Most of students showed that they all willingly to study through the media chosen by their teacher. The information comes from the learners' answer to the questionnaire statement: 'I am willing to study English through the media chosen by my teacher'. Here, the researcher also assigns values 1-4 to the different level of agreement. It showed that 65,7% of students agreed, 28,5% strongly agreed, 5,8% disagreed, and none of students chose strongly disagree with the statement.

Students' responses in facing difficulties during English online learning

Based on the data obtained, majority of students ask their English teacher when they had difficulty in learning English through online learning. The information comes from the learners answer to the questionnaire statement: 'I always ask my English teacher when I have difficulty in learning English through online learning'. It showed that 49,6% of students agreed, 35,8% disagreed, 9,5% strongly agreed, and 5,1% of students strongly disagreed with the statement.

Students' motivation in doing their assignments

Based on the data obtained, majority of the students always work on English

assignments given by the teacher. The information comes from the learners answer to the questionnaire statement: 'I always working on English assignments given by the teacher through online learning platform during COVID-19 outbreak'. It showed that 66,4% of students strongly agreed, 28,5% agreed, 2,9% disagreed, and 2,2% of students strongly disagreed with the statement.

Students' motivation in completing assignments

Based on the data obtained from the questionnaire statement 'Even when I am not fully understood what my English teacher is talking about during online class. I will try my best in completing the assignments given by the teacher' showed that 57% of students strongly agreed, 40,1% agreed, 2,2% disagreed, and 0,7% of strongly disagreed with the statement.

Students' motivation and enthusiasm

Based on the data obtained, most of the students were motivated and enthusiastic to study English through online learning. The information comes from the learners answer to the questionnaire statement: 'I am motivated and enthusiastic to study English through online learning'. It showed that 60,6% of students agreed, 24,1% disagreed, 13,9% strongly agreed, and 1,4% of strongly disagreed with the statement.

Conclusion

Based on the data presentation and analysis of the research, it can be concluded that Eleventh graders at SMA Negeri 1 Batang Hari encounter barriers regarding online learning during the COVID-19 outbreak. First, although the condition for accessing the internet was not the main barrier for most students, there was still a substantial minority of students who felt a lack of access to the internet as their main barrier during online learning.

Then, for student's motivation regarding English online learning during the COVID-19 outbreak, the students were willing to study English using the media chosen by their teacher, as long as it is easy to use. Second, majority of students ask their English teacher when they had difficulty in learning English through online learning. Third, majority of students were always working on English assignments given by the teacher because they were afraid of their parents and teacher. There were also students who always working on the assignments because she was worried about her score. Fourth, they will try as best as they can in completing the assignments. The last, most of the students were motivated and enthusiastic to study English through online learning.

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