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English Teachers' Perception toward the Switch from Offline to Online Teaching during lockdown in the Midst of Covid-19 Outbreak

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Abstrak

Pandemi Covid-19 yang secara tiba – tiba ini menuntut para guru untuk beralih dari pembelajaran tatap muka menjadi domain pembelajaran dalam jaringan teknologi. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk memaparkan persepsi guru bahasa Inggris terhadap peralihan dari pengajaran offline ke online selama lockdown di tengah wabah Covid-19. Subjek penelitian ini adalah 50 guru Bahasa Inggris SMA/SMK di Kabupaten Banyuwangi. Metode yang digunakan yaitu studi kasus dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Data yang diperlukan diperoleh dengan menyebarluaskan kuesioner melalui Google formulir dan melakukan wawancara. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan platform yang paling banyak digunakan dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris adalah Whatsapp dan zoom meeting. 68% guru merasa beban tugasnya lebih berat dibandingkan pembelajaran tatap muka karena perlu waktu tambahan untuk mengemas pembelajaran yang menarik agar dapat meningkatkan motivasi dan keinginan siswa dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Hambatan yang paling banyak terjadi selama pembelajaran online adalah fasilitas yang kurang memadai, kuota internet, koneksi internet yang buruk, proses penyampaian materi yang kurang optimal, lebih sulit memberikan penilaian, umpan balik, dan keterbatasan mengontrol aktivitas belajar siswa. Kesimpulannya kebijakan pembelajaran dari rumah selama pandemi Covid-19 belum terlaksana dengan baik dan menurut pengamatan guru hanya sekitar 35% siswa yang aktif dan serius dalam mengikuti pembelajaran online.

Kata Kunci: Persepsi Guru, Pembelajaran *Online*, Wabah Covid-19.

Abstract

This sudden Covid-19 pandemic requires teachers to switch from face-to-face learning into learning domain with technological network. The objective of this study was to describe English teachers' perception toward the switch from offline to online teaching during lockdown in the midst of covid19 outbreak. The subject of study was 50 English teachers of Senior High School in Banyuwangi. The research method was case study with qualitative research approach. The data needed collected by distributing Google form questionnaire and interview. The results indicated that the most platforms used in teaching English were Whatsapp and zoom meeting. 68% teachers felt that their workload was heavier if compared to face-to-face learning because they need additional time to package interesting learning in order to be able to increase students' motivation and desire in English lesson. The most common obstacles during online learning are inadequate facilities; the burden of purchasing internet quota, poor internet connection, the process of delivering material is not optimal, more difficult to give assessment, feedback, and lack of freedom in controlling the students learning activities. It can be concluded that learning from home policy during Covid-19 pandemic had not been implemented properly and according to the teacher's observations, only for about 35% students who were active and serious in carrying out online learning.

Keywords: Teachers' Perception, Online Teaching, Teaching English, Covid-19 Outbreak.

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INTRODUCTION

Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) has become a world health crisis due to its rapid spread. Many people in the world have been exposed to and infected by COVID-19 including Indonesians. This condition makes the governments have taken and instructed lockdown. The entire society is enforced to stay at home and all existing activities are temporarily restricted so that the spread of corona virus can be minimized. One of covid-19 pandemic impacts is on education around the world, which has led to the closure of large areas of schools, Madrasah, universities and Islamic boarding schools (Setiawan, 2020). Education is one of the fields that is badly influenced by pandemic where the process of learning is conducted through learning from home as stated in the Circular Letter of Ministry of Education and Culture Number 4 of 2020 concerning the accomplishment of Education Policies in the period of Covid-19 crisis spread which is strengthened by the Circular Number 15 of 2020 regarding the guidelines for carrying out learning from home throughout Covid-19 emergency (Kemendikbud, 2020).

The sudden Covid-19 pandemic requires teachers to immediately make changes in learning. The teachers are faced with the need to conform to online learning (König et al., 2020). The learning system which is usually conducted face-to-face in school has turned online, so the teachers are encouraged to change their teaching learning strategies and prepare learning materials which allow students to learn from home. The principle of learning from home is that students can access learning materials and resources without limitation of time and place. This activity is expected to promote distance learning and facilitate the distribution of material to students. The use of appropriate teaching methods as well as teachers' behavior and attitudes in managing teaching learning process is needed for online learning.

The implementation of learning from home policy with the temporary closure of learning activities at school which is decided in a sudden and without adequate preparation by the teachers and school will certainly have an impact on the learning process. Conventional learning that has been carried out so far is expected to be immediately repaired and transformed into a learning domain in all-technological network. This condition become a new challenge for English teachers to package English material and learning into fun and interesting for students during pandemic situation because English is often considered by the most difficult subjects among others in school, whereas the learning objectives must be achieved. To achieve this goal, the use of varied online platforms provides the ease of English teaching learning process. The utilization of online multimedia for teaching English as foreign language is very important to increase students' achievement (Mulyadi, 2018).

In fact, some researchers have been conducted studies of learning patterns and the perceptions of learning in the Covid-19 era, such as study performed by (Dubey & Singh, 2020) who revealed the teachers' believe if online teaching can enhance their knowledge and also the working hours. Their research result stated that the teachers are implementing online teaching positively and actively involved in forming students' future during lockdown period and young teachers are more actively participated in online teaching because of being more familiar with technology. Previous research also conducted by (Diningrat et al., 2020) about lecturers' perception of early childhood education toward the barriers of online teaching and pedagogic competence, the results indicated that the crucial barriers in the emergency of online teaching were limited connection and bandwidth, lack of students active participation and feedback, computer viruses, quality of material and online assessment.

The current research on the teachers' and students' perception toward online classes in Udupi District and Dakshina Kannada found that the teachers get some troubles in online teaching because less of appropriate training and expansion, and then the students get sufficient support from teacher, feel comfortable but they believe online learning cannot replace conventional learning in the classroom (Kulal & Nayak, 2020).

While the research held by (Fauzi & Khusuma, 2020) related to elementary school teachers' in online learning during Covid19 pandemic indicated that the teachers comprehend the online learning context but various obstacles found during its implementation such as facilities, network, data packages, planning and learning evaluation and collaborating with parents. They stated that online learning can be an alternative during covid19 pandemic although it is not as effective as real traditional classroom.

Online learning can indeed be a solution to the difficult pandemic condition like today, although it cannot be denied that there are many obstructions faced in the learning process as stated by (Windiarti et al., 2019) that the teaching obstructions by using internet learning devices are the teachers' unfamiliarity of utilizing e-learning, time management, students' motivation, internet quota fee and network falters. Apart from these technical constraints, teachers are required to be able to develop models, strategies, methods and skills in online learning. This really requires creativity from teachers to always upgrade their scientific knowledge in order to be able to create learning products needed by students. These barriers must be overcome immediately in order to maximize the learning outcome such as by providing adequate facilities, giving training to the teachers in utilizing online media for teaching. Online learning must be carefully prepared so that the learning outcome remains the quality as it should.

Learning from home policy obtained various responses from schools, teachers, parents and students. The varying perceptions of teachers and unreadiness of schools in implementing learning from home indicated that the government policy still faces several challenges. Teachers as the frontline in implementing online learning are indicated to have various actions related to effective learning techniques and procedures during the pandemic. Teachers play the most important role in implementing the changes from direct learning in the classroom to online learning because they are the controllers in learning process (Bao, 2020). Online learning can be arranged by combining several types of learning resources such as documents, images, videos, and audio which can be seen and read by students. Learning resources are the main point in developing online learning. Learning objectives can be achieved properly if the teachers package the learning as attractive as possible and in accordance with the students' characteristics even it is in online activities.

It must be admitted that online learning from home is not a common educational concept, so certainly it raises various perceptions. This policy also seems to be carried out with minimal preparation even without preparation, so there are still many gaps in its implementation. Therefore, the researchers are encouraged to conduct qualitative research about English teachers' perception toward the switch from offline to online teaching during lockdown in the midst of covid-19 outbreak to know kinds of platform, learning media strategy and methods used by teachers in teaching English, the facilities owned by teachers to support online learning, learning process from home, how to control and assess the students during online learning, the English teachers' barriers in online teaching, and positive and negative impacts of learning from home. The English teachers' perception toward learning from home policy is valuable to diagnose the students' learning needs easier which ultimately lead to various alternative choices of learning strategy solutions that can be selected for more effective learning to all pupils, so the quality of learning process can be maintained.

This research results are supposed to provide an overview of English teaching in senior high school during the pandemic, the most widely used platforms in teaching English, some barriers occurred during teaching English online and how effective the implementation of online learning during English teaching learning process. This information can be input for other teachers and educators in selecting appropriate online learning media, strategy and methods for teaching. The description of teachers' perceptions can be used as consideration in providing treatment to improve teacher competence in managing the learning process from home. It is suggested for other researchers to undertake further studies of this field pertaining to the performance of online learning process.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method was a case study with a qualitative research approach. A case study is a research which describes a phenomenon by explaining a case occurs in a group, so it can provide important information to be concerned (Hodgetts & Stolte, 2012). So that the information are obtained related to the English teachers' perception toward the switch from offline to online teaching during lockdown in the midst of covid-19 outbreak, how is the process of English teaching learning during pandemic, and the challenges faced by teachers in teaching English for Senior High School students. The total respondents were 50 English teachers of Senior and Vocational high school in Banyuwangi.

The primary data was collected through online questionnaire by distributing Google forms link. The questionnaire consisted of 12 items question which were distributed to all targeted samples via Google form. The research questionnaire includes several things, namely: 1) the facilities owned by teachers to support online learning, 2) online platforms used in teaching English, 3) the teachers' competence in using and operating online learning platform, 4) whether the teachers need additional skill to carry out online learning, 5) how is teachers' perception toward online learning, 6) how the learning process from home, 7) how to control students during online learning, 8) how to assess students, 9) the barriers in online teaching, 10) the positive and negative impacts of learning from home policies, 11) teachers' suggestion in order that online learning process can be more optimal, and 12) teachers' preference related to online, face-to-face, or blended learning.

For getting more in-depth information, interview was done via telephone, while other secondary data is collected from various relevant sources, such as articles published in journal, mass media news and others. The process of analyzing data in qualitative study is performed during and after finishing data collection in particular period. At the time of interview, the researchers analyzed the interviewee's answers. After collecting and processing the data is complete, the next step is analyzing the data in descriptive statistics. According to (Sugiyono, 2011) descriptive statistic is a statistic applied in analyzing the data collected by describing them as they are without any intention of making generalizations. All data collected were analyzed by exploring the perceptions of each item asked in the questionnaire and interview to determine the English teachers' perceptions toward the switch from offline to online teaching during lockdown in the midst of covid-19 outbreak. Then the findings are elaborated in detail.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Due to Covid-19 pandemic outbreak teachers need to do online teaching in order that the students can continue their learning, and the most efficiently learning to narrow crowds and virus diffusion is by complying recommendations from the government, namely online learning models. Online education is selected to take over the academic connection between students and educators (Cahyadi, 2020). From the results of the answers to questionnaires and interviews with respondents, it can be seen that teachers' perceptions toward online learning policies can be described as follows. First question asked to the respondents was the facilities used by teachers in online teaching. 31 teachers (62%) used laptop, 6 teachers (12%) used computer, and 35 teachers (70%) used mobile phone/tablet when implementing online teaching. Most of them used both laptop and mobile phone for teaching. They usually use laptop for creating materials and conducting video conference, then use mobile phone for sending materials and sources link, checking students' assignments and giving feedback.

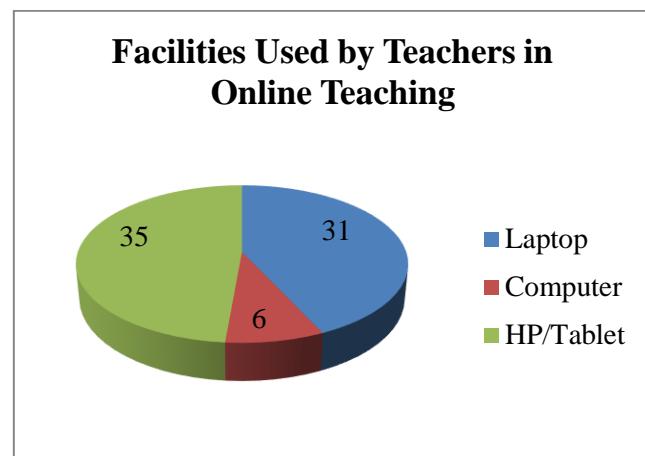


Diagram 1. Facilities Used by Teachers in Online Teaching

The second question in questionnaire was about the platforms used by English teachers during teaching learning process which is shown in the following diagram:

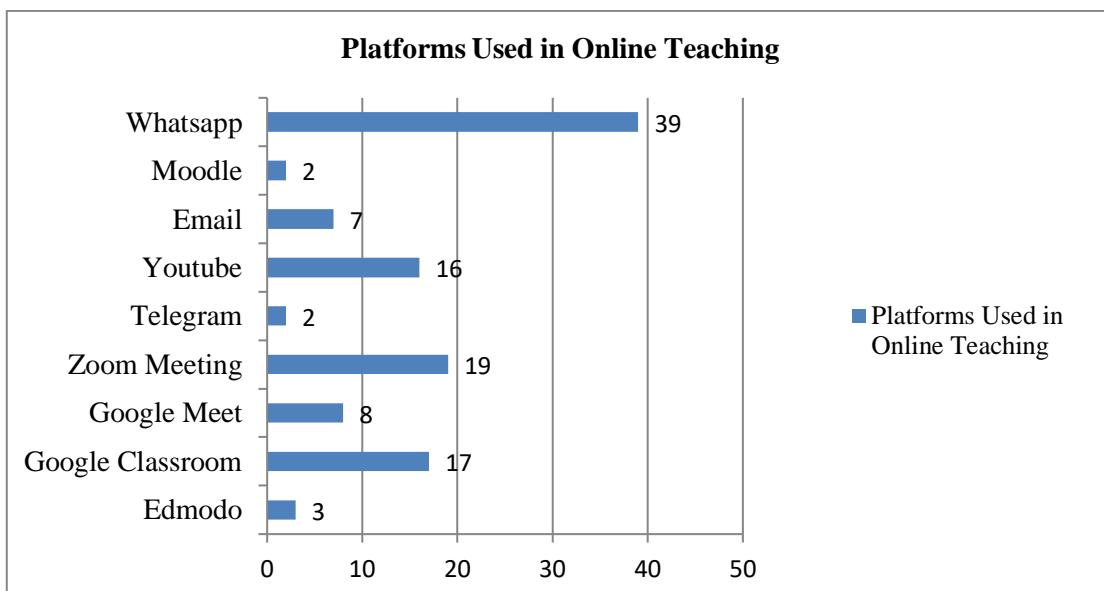


Diagram 2. Platforms Used by Teachers in Online Teaching

The applications of learning media most often used by English teachers to support learning process from home were Whatsapp as many as 78 % (39 people), Moodle was 4% (2 people), email was 14% (7 people), Youtube was 32% (16 people), Telegram was 4% (2 people), zoom meeting was 38% (19 people), Google meet was 16% (8 people), Google classroom was 34% (17 people), Edmodo was 6% (3 people) and other applications were 26% (13 people). Commonly the teachers used more than one online application to support their teaching. The main choice of online learning platform is Whatsapp, where the teachers create a Whatsapp group so that all students can be involved in the group. The teachers choose Whatsapp because it is more practical, simple, efficient use and effective because it does not require a lot of quotas in the learning process. Another reason is that almost all students are familiar and use this application. Currently Whatsapp is easier to operate and can be reached by many people. It makes teachers easier in sending questions, exercises

and materials. In the educational field WhatsApp enables students and teachers to create group which supports interactions, it allows students to send messages, documents, photos, audios, videos and location (Wijaya, 2018).

The second choice of learning platform was Zoom meeting as many as 19 teachers (38%) use it due to it is the best alternative to replace face-to-face learning. Through zoom meeting the teachers can deliver materials to the students more effectively during distance learning. Zoom meeting also allows teachers to interact directly with students and open discussion session like in a real classroom. Zoom as an effective technology tool connects students and academics through virtual meeting from comfortable place to improve students' participation and their success level (Shadat et al., 2017). Through this application the teachers can explore students' knowledge, provide direct feedback, and observe student activities. Another purpose is for making students' more excited in learning because they are motivated by their friends who are present in virtual class and it can also help reduce boredom in learning alone in their home. The third choice of online learning application was Google classroom (17 teachers). The fourth choice was Youtube then followed by others application. All platforms mentioned really help teachers to be able to adapt on this difficult pandemic situation in facilitating learning for students.

Most teachers 84% (42 people) are capable in operating and utilizing online learning platforms, only 8 teachers (16%) from total respondents who less capable in operating online learning applications. It means that there is no serious problem regarding utilization and setting the materials through digital technology. 11 teachers (22%) stated that they need additional skills and training to operate online learning platforms because they are still having less experience of online teaching and less familiar with digital technology, especially those related to learning. Then regarding teachers' perceptions of online teaching can be seen in the following diagram:

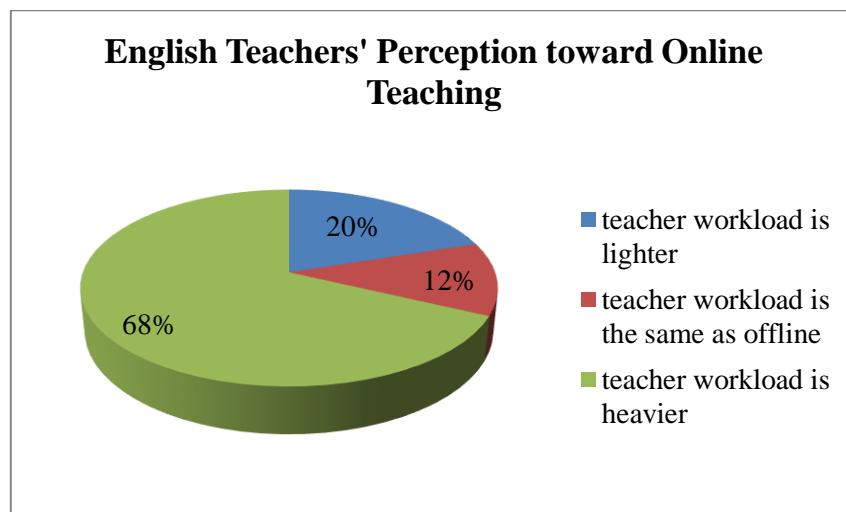


Diagram 3. English Teachers' Perception toward Online Teaching

Diagram 3 showed the English teachers' perception toward online teaching; most of them (34 teachers) mentioned if their workload is heavier during online teaching because they need to prepare online learning material to make it more interesting. The teachers are encouraged to think hard how to design online learning as well as possible so that it makes students interested and easily understands the points of material presented. Then 6 teachers stated if their workload is same as offline. They do their job like teaching, giving any correction and feedback to the students' assignments according to predetermined working hours as before the pandemic occurred. While 10 teachers mentioned if their workload is lighter in online teaching because they

do not need to come to the school, they can teach from home while doing the others homework like looking after their children and it encourages collaboration between parents and school authorities.

The next question is about how the teachers design their teaching during pandemic. Most of teachers create Whatsapp group to facilitate online learning. Usually they share the concept and summary of the material in the form of pdf, ms.word, or power point and send link of learning resources via WhatsApps group. Then they provide an explanation and conduct discussions through virtual meetings by Zoom meeting or others conference video application. Even if students still do not understand the point of material, the teachers will also send videos, google drive or youtube link regarding the tutorial and detail explanation of material through Whatsapp group. So students can download and study the material anytime they need. Then the teachers facilitate students to collect assignments via WhatsApps messages in the form of photos, Ms.word, pdf, or video link if the assignment is making conversation video. After giving explanation usually teachers gave any tasks and quizzes through Google drive, edmodo, moodle or other applications to make the learning process more varied.

The results of further interview explained that the learning model carried out by teachers was they must pack the material as simple as possible and interesting enough such as making attractive learning video, catchy power point presentation so that the lesson can be easily understood by students. After that the teachers send materials and learning sources through WhatsApps group, then asking students to read or study it. If students have questions and get some difficulties, they can ask through Whatsapp group or personal chat. After delivering materials, teachers give exercise/quiz through Google form or ask the students to do the assignments on their book or LKS (Lembar Kerja Siswa)/students' work book. Then for next meeting teachers use zoom cloud meeting application to discuss the material and exercises that have already given before. Some teachers get difficulties to design online learning, so they need assistance from the school operator to use digital technology in making any link for giving assignments and quiz due to their inability to utilize technological sophistication.

Besides the teachers must make a structured schedule for students, narrow down basic competencies to facilitate students' learning by adjusting current pandemic conditions so the students' understanding of learning material can be deeper, create relaxed but serious learning atmosphere to prevent students' stress during learning from home. Online learning in this pandemic situation causes students' stress, bored and less enthusiastic in taking part on learning process due to many distractions which often arise (Jatira & Neviyarni, 2021). When conducting conference video, the teachers are not only giving lectures but also more focused on discussion and interaction activities involving students to participate more actively in virtual class because if it is only lectures from the teachers, students can do other activities like playing games, chatting with friends, playing social media without paying much attention to the materials presented by teachers due to lack of monitoring. So involving parents to monitor their children's learning activities is badly needed. Then for practicing the conversation in pairs or in group, the teachers utilize Whatsapp video call or ask the students to send the voice note or make video then send the link through messages.

The next question related to how the teachers control their students during online teaching. The teachers declared if it is hard to have direct control during online learning. Some teachers' strives in controlling the online class such as by monitoring the exercises collected by students at a specified time as a portfolio result of teaching learning process, by asking students to fill out online attendance through Google form, sending the voice note and photos when doing assignments via existing Whatsapp group. Furthermore when teaching through video conference on zoom cloud meeting, the teachers can control the students by turning off all the audio while explaining the material but it requires students to activate the camera, or giving random questions in the middle of lesson to detect exactly students who join online class. Many teachers claimed if students lack focus on online class, they were often late in submitting the tasks given and on average only 35% of students

who were really serious in carrying on online learning due to lack of flexibility and access to control students' learning activities directly like in offline class.

For assessment during online learning the teachers find difficulties to measure students' abilities in receiving subject matter, but teachers are supposed to survive and continue the learning process. Teachers usually gave assessment by looking at the level of attendance, portfolio, pretest, assignments, post test, oral test, midterm test and semester test given. The teachers also assess the students' active participation in online classes for those who are answering the questions given, giving opinion to discussion forum and actively asking questions related to the materials delivered either through Whatsapp group or zoom meeting. To evaluate speaking skills, students are required to attach a recording of their voice through the Moodle application or voice note in Whatsapp. For other skills like writing, reading, and listening students only need to answer the available questions in Moodle or Google form and submit the answers. Some teachers add the students' score due to less freely in explaining the learning material because of the limited signal, quota and the parents' assistance. The important thing is that the students try hard to provide learning outcomes from the assignments they gave.

There are many barriers faced by English teachers during online teaching such as inadequate facilities from both teachers and students, some students' mobile phones are less supportive for online learning, some of them do not have android, trouble network especially for students who live in rural area, and wasteful internet quota. Although government has provided internet learning quota but it cannot be obtained by all students. The teachers are confused about how to create a lively learning atmosphere like offline classes to anticipate student boredom. It makes the teachers think hard to find ways in order to convey the material well because it is difficult to explain and provide understanding of the material to students. Besides, it lacks of students' response in online learning, sometimes students feel lazy to join online classes and they do not do assignments due to many reasons like do not have a lot of internet quota. Many students do not focus during the teaching learning process; it is proven by several times during online class using video conference, they were driving, cooking etc. In online learning the teachers cannot see the students directly, thereby it reduced two-way communication.

Online learning offers both positive and negative sides. The positive sides of online learning are more time efficient, flexible, energy saving and do not need physical space. Teaching can be done from home without coming to school. The teachers are encouraged to learn more and get new knowledge in operating online learning applications, so it makes them more creative and innovative in preparing learning materials. The online learning process is faster by only sharing learning links that must be accessed by students and give them opportunity to ask questions if anyone does not understand yet. Indirectly both teachers and students are faced with the fact that they have to adapt to difficult circumstances, namely to utilize the technology in a positive way. Through distance learning, students are more independent because they can search for learning resources on the internet more freely, they can get to know technology for learning earlier and of course it can lessen the dispersion of covid-19.

Besides the positives, there are many negative sides of online learning such as limited interaction with students, not all students can actively participate due to less supportive facilities, difficult to directly monitor students especially the development of students' attitudes which become teachers' responsibility as educators. Students are getting distress in understanding materials being taught because they are still not familiar with online learning, sometimes the meanings conveyed by teachers do not match with what the students have caught. Technical constraints often arise due to inadequate network, sometimes the teachers or students suddenly come out from conference video. Students are less motivated join online class because they are bored only seeing the screen, there is no direct interaction with teachers and their friends so it lacks of community sense. In addition, during online learning many students' grades decreased.

Due to many obstacles during only learning, the teachers give some suggestions in order that it can run better and more smoothly, they are the government involvement in infrastructure and facilities procurement such as the provision of internet quota and mobile phone or supporting facilities for underprivileged students, internet network must be reachable in remote areas. The availability of infrastructures, easy internet access in rural areas, financial support, and socialization related to the importance of online learning are indispensable (Febrianto et al., 2020). Government also needs to provide structured free training to teachers or educators and equip them with the techniques or ways to design online classes so that they are proficient in operating some recommended applications for online learning because they are required to prepare the appropriate and interesting material. The teachers also suggest that there should be a simplification of curriculum and more concise material so that it is not too burden students. Besides, there must be high awareness from all parties especially students to keep study hard even without direct monitoring from the teachers. In this case role of parents are needed to control their children during online learning, accompany and remind them to do assignments on time and monitor their children to use gadget as wise as possible for the sake of learning so that the learning intention can be reached optimally.

After analyzing the questionnaires and continuing with interviews to several English teachers, most of them 33 teachers (66%) prefer offline to online teaching because they think teaching offline is more effective, they do not need to be afraid of limited facilities which can interfere learning process. And 17 teachers (34%) prefer blended (the combination between direct learning in real classroom and online class) to full online learning. However, technological sophistication must be utilized in learning so that we are not left behind with the development of digital technology. But no one teacher intends full online teaching like the current pandemic condition because of many obstructions come up and less effective. The teacher's preferred choice of teaching can be seen in the following diagram:

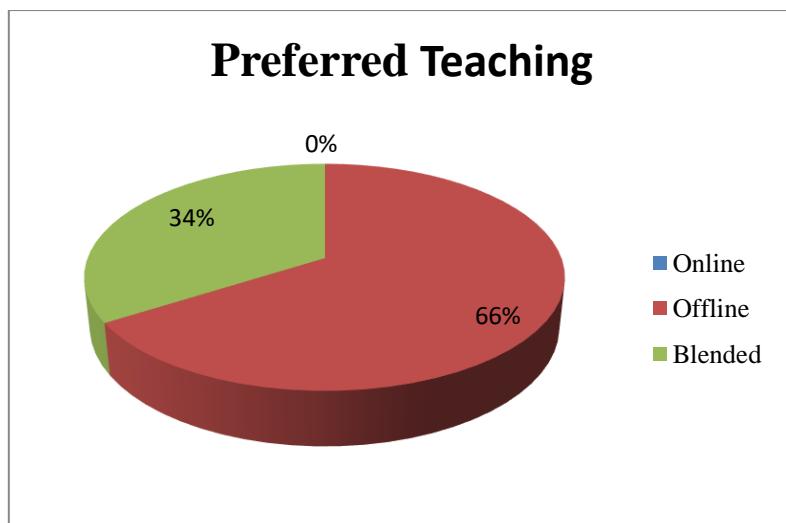


Diagram 4. English Teachers' Preferred Choice of Teaching

This study supports the previous research conducted by (Kulal & Nayak, 2020) who claimed that online learning cannot take the place of offline learning. The differences of this research with previous studies are the subjects are English Teachers of Senior or Vocational high schools in Banyuwangi district where most of respondents are living in villages in which not all of their students are having adequate facilities and able to utilize technology for learning. The research result can be occupied as evaluation on the utilization of e-learning for online class, it can be a consideration in providing treatment to improve teacher competence in managing the learning process from home.

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CONCLUSION

The implementation of online learning gets diverse responses from teachers. Due to an action is influenced by perception, it is very important to know the teachers perception about learning from home policy. The research results concluded that learning from home policy during Covid-19 pandemic had not been implemented properly and according to the teacher's observations, only for about 35% students who were active and serious in carrying out online learning and collecting the assignments given on time and based on predetermined deadlines. The research results also revealed that the most common obstacles during online learning are inadequate facilities; the burden of purchasing internet quota, poor internet connection, the process of delivering material is not optimal, more difficult to give assessment, feedback, and lack of freedom in controlling the students learning activities. So in this case, the role of parents is badly needed to supervise their children's activities during school time from home and give motivation to join the class based on the schedule shared by the teachers and do the assignment on time.

The governments' attention to the implementation of online learning is very crucial, especially in the provision of supporting facilities and infrastructures so that it can be reached by all groups of student, including underprivileged and students in remote areas. The teachers should care about technological development, so the government must facilitate by conducting free trainings for teachers to get extensive knowledge related to online learning platforms which support online learning. This can be occupied as evaluation on the utilization of e-learning for online class.

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