

Teaching speaking in new normal: some practical ideas

¹Muhammad Anjar Nugraha, ²Slamet Wahyudi Yulianto

^{1,2} English Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Subang, West Java

¹anjarnugraha@gmail.com, ²slamet.wahyudi.y@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought a huge challenge not only to students but also to lecturers. The lecturer who teaches productive skills like speaking should design an effective learning process to overcome an online learning crisis. This study aims at revealing the lecturer's strategies in conducting online learning; the practical ideas in implementing learning management systems; and the online learning principle for teaching speaking skills. It is library research that the data is taken from books, relevant research journals, both printed and electronic documents, the authors' experience, and information that relate to the research.

Keywords: *Covid-19, teaching speaking, new normal, practical ideas*

INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID 19) pandemic has influenced many aspects of human life on this earth, including education. Education is one of the areas affected by Covid-19 pandemic. For this reason, the government recommends online learning. Online learning is one of the government's efforts to break the chain of killing this virus in the middle of a teaching and learning process that must survive. However, this effort is not an easy solution to be implemented. Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture solution also reaps the pros and cons.

Schools for all levels from kindergarten to tertiary are closed and the students have to study at home. The students are adjusted to have virtual learning during this closure. Many online platforms are implemented to support the teaching and learning process. Therefore, technology skills are a must both for teachers and students. Besides, big data is needed to improve online learning.

Speaking course is one of the productive courses that push the interaction between student-teacher or student-student in the classroom. Since Indonesian students have a lack of chances to practice English in their daily life, the teacher has to create an effective and interesting activity during class. Students speaking performance was affected by topical knowledge, listening ability, and motivation to speak (Tuan and Mai, 2015). Hence, creating an interactive and interesting speaking class during online learning is a challenge during this pandemic. The teacher has three roles in speaking class: as a prompter, as a participant, and as a feedback provider (Harmer, 2007).

Bearing in mind the previous elaboration, this study aims at revealing the challenges of online learning during the pandemic, highlighting the theory of speaking in a new normal and establishing some practical ideas to adapt to this new normal. A practical idea was taken from the researchers' own experience in teaching speaking skills during the pandemic.

1. The Challenges of online learning during the pandemic

This part covers the result of two research journals about challenges from two different perspectives between teachers and students. To reveal teachers' perspective toward online learning, this study is beginning to discuss the research from Lestyanawati and Widyantoro (2020) entitled *Strategies and Problems Faced by Indonesian Teachers in Conducting E-Learning system during COVID-19 Outbreak*. The participants of this research were 55 numbers of Junior and Senior High Schools teachers randomly selected to administer the questionnaire. The data shows there are six problems arose during e-learning: (1) The teachers' disability in accessing technology; (2) school facilities in supporting e-learning; (3) the difficulties in explaining the material (4) students' limitation in accessing the internet (5) Students' economically disadvantaged family background ; (6) and parents' support system. These findings are in line with Octaberliana and Muslimin (2020). They found that unfamiliarity of e-learning, slow internet connection, and physical condition are three barriers in conducting online learning.

Besides, it was found three strategies applied by the teachers, they are: (1) Applying only online chat; (2) Using video conference; (3) Combining both online chat and video conference in online teaching and learning process. The supported application in the online classroom such as WhatsApp, Google Classroom, YouTube, Zoom, and Google Meet (Lestyanawati and Widyantoro 2020).

Meanwhile, to reveal the students' perception towards online learning is taken from Allo (2020) entitled *Is the Online Learning Good in the Midest of COVID-19 Pandemic? The Case of EFL Learners*. The findings show 6 point, they are: (1) Online learning is very helpful in the middle of the pandemic; (2) Voice Note will be effectively used when giving instructions; (3) Individual tasks are better to keep the distance physically due to pandemic; (4) Group tasks to help friends who do not have an internet pulse; (5) Material and assignment must be preceded by explanation; (6) Make use of facilities such as free Messenger application. Furthermore, the alternative that can be done by the teacher are training to implement the Learning Management System; converting a big-size file into smaller ones, and giving break during the online class (Octaberliana and Muslimin, 2020)

2. Teaching Speaking in new normal

Dealing with this new normal, Daud (2020) argues the learning revolution during the pandemic. This revolution demands us to have (1) New mindset; (2) New Learning Approach; (3) New Normal Curriculum; (4) New Media; (5) New Pedagogy (6) and New Assessment.

First, our mindset should be changed during this pandemic,. We can not teach the students in the same manner as we usually use. Online learning is a must during this pandemic. Therefore, the teacher should prepare a lot of tools and skills to adapt to this new normal. Even though we often do online learning but in this new situation we have to do it all the time. Second, the new learning approach refers to build independent learning. Since the students have learned in their own homes, it will be less teacher-centered. In other words, self-regulated learning is an important aspect of students' achievement.

Third, the existing curriculum can not be followed during this pandemic. The learning outcome is set in the normal curriculum. Those outcomes are hard to achieve in this new curriculum. The contextual curriculum is needed to imply an effort to adapt to the students, teachers, parents, and school situations. Fourth, since the government has decided that online learning is the only way to be used during this pandemic, the demand for digital technology has brought a huge challenge. Hence, the internet of things during pandemic has proven fast. Fifth, as it is mentioned before, the students learn at home all the time. So, parents' involvement is significant in their learning process. The teachers have to find how to involve parents to guide and care for their child/children at home during learning time. Last, authentic assessment refers to how assessing the students in the easiest way that suits their condition. Thus, the learning revolution has become a challenge during this new normal, especially in speaking class.

All around the world, teachers, and schools have been discovering and analyzing the new strategy to adapt to a new condition. It is one of the efforts to make the quality of learning outcomes is achieved even during a pandemic. Karatas and Tuncer (2020) conducted a study to find out the impact of distance learning on language skills development (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) of Turkish pre-service teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL). The data showed that distance learning most advantages for writing skills rather than speaking skills. The speaking skill was ignored during online courses since writing skills have become the new model of communication. Further, they suggest four tips to reduce the disadvantages of speaking skills in online learning. First, choose suitable platforms that allow verbal interaction. Second, integrate pair and group work into courses. Third, design a speaking homework where the students can record and submit their recordings. Last, try an automated speaking evaluation system (e.g., ELSA).

3. Practical Ideas

Teachers are demanded to conduct e-learning during this pandemic. Many platforms of digital sources have been implemented, one of them is Google Classroom (GC) (Okmawati, 2020). She found that the effectiveness of GC can be classified into six elements: message recipients, contents, communication media, format, source, and timing. First, the students can get the teacher's message or post directly on their account. It means the students can see the lesson, task, or discussion immediately. Second, the teacher can create both materials and tasks. The students' classwork as well can be recapped for each assignment. Third, GC is able to build a learning interaction. It refers to the interaction between teacher-student and student-student. Fourth, GC has an easy format to be implemented both by teachers and students. The teacher creates the class, then share the class code to be enrolled by the students. Fifth, the teacher is able to attach any content such as pdf handbook, document, video, and link as the teaching materials. Last, the teacher does not have a time limit for posting the materials or tasks. The teacher is able to set the due date for the assignment as well.

The above findings are in line with the researchers' experience. The researchers got the benefits of GC as a platform for gathering students, posting the materials and tasks, building interaction, and recapping the learning activities. The students are able to enroll in the class, get the message immediately, and submit the task. This finding contrast with Alim et al., (2019) who found that not all the students have a smartphone; Wi-Fi availability; enough data; and collect the assignment using their friends' account. Hence, during this pandemic, the students push themselves to have their smartphone with enough data.

However, it does not mean that GC is efficient in teaching speaking skills. It is effective with various limitations. The researcher found that GC provides chatting only in the class and private comment. The speaking teacher seems difficult to assess the students' utterances immediately. Since GC has provided chatting only, it will be harder if the teacher wants to make a class oral discussion. Therefore, GC should be integrated with other platforms in teaching speaking. The example of how GC was integrated with other platforms can be seen as follow:

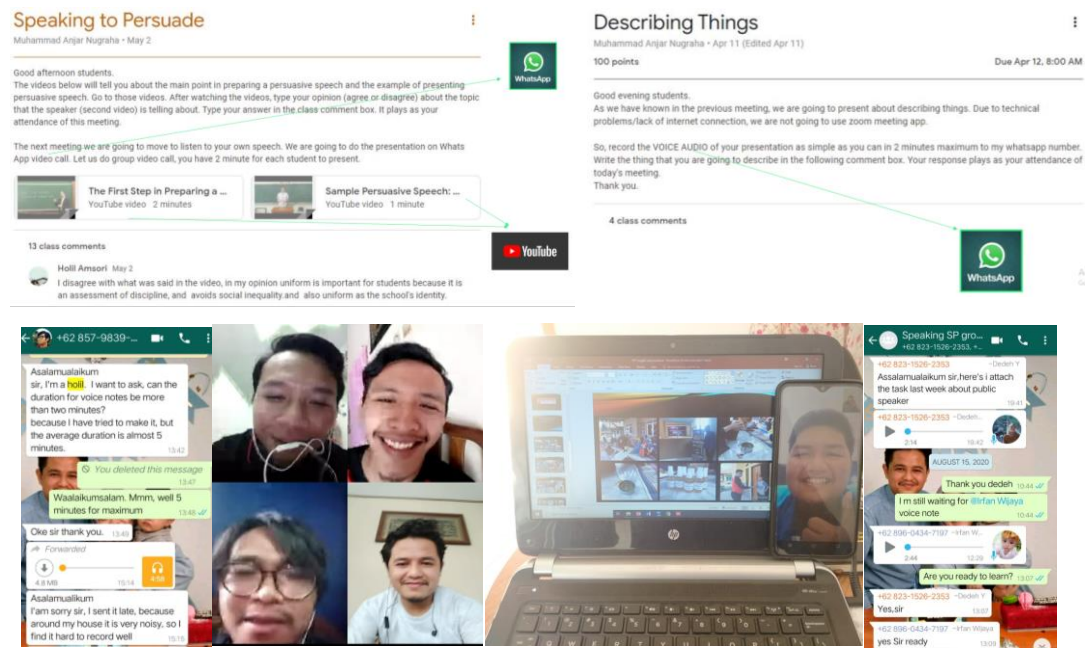


Figure 1. GC was integrated with WhatsApp in the teaching and learning process

The picture above is the examples of how integrating GC with other platforms like WhatsApp. Voice note messenger and video calls are some of the benefits the students can get unlike on GC. It can be seen that the students are able to share their ideas spoken using voice notes; do group discussions, and individual presentations. As far as the author has been teaching during a pandemic, GC and Whatsapp seem the easy platforms that can the students followed. It is in line with Barus and Siamnjuntak (2020) who found that GC and Whatsapp are recommended to be implemented in online learning because of the comfort of the students, the appropriateness of the content, the efficiency of time, the easy application, the clarity of applied learning which runs well, and the enjoyment that easily applied both in computer and smartphone.

Meanwhile, the author rarely uses meeting conferences such as Zoom Meeting and Google Meet. Zoom is a video conferencing administration we can use to meet with others - either by video or sound just or both, and it lets us record those meetings to see later. Meanwhile, Google Meet is a video conferencing builds starts with Google account that can begin a Meet call from inside Gmail (Babu and Kalaiyarasan, 2020).

These two platforms consume bigger data rather than WhatsApp video calls. However, if both students and teachers have enough data and in stable signals, they will get

appropriate virtual meeting learning. It is in line with the study from Haqien and Rahman (2020). They conducted a study to find out the tertiary students' perspective towards the Zoom meeting. The data showed that 20% of the participants have tried and 80% is new to the Zoom meeting, and only 70% of the participant said that it is effective. The main factor that makes the Zoom meeting is not effective is an unstable signal.

As it is mentioned in the previous part, automated speaking evaluation is suggested in the speaking class. It will help the students to practice English autonomously. One of the applications suggested in this study is Hallo: Speak English with natives. It is a social live streaming community that uses video chat for English language learning and teaching. Language learners can watch live videos from native speakers. (Play.google.com (n.d)). The logo of Hallo can be seen as follow:



Figure 2. Hallo Logo

This online application has three features. They are video streaming, audio calling, and texting. In video streaming, users are able to learn about English by watching videos. The users as well will have the experience to do calling and chatting with people abroad. This application pushes the user to use English both in audio calling and chatting. In other words, the user should give an extra effort to use English during the conversation. Thus, the teacher can use this application to help the students practice English more at their own homes.

CONCLUSION

This paper reveals the condition English for Language Learner during pandemic Covid-19 and practical ideas that have been conducting by English teachers. To overcome the educational challenges during this new normal, the teachers need to have a new mindset, new learning approach, new normal curriculum, new media, new pedagogy, and new assessment. Future studies should be conducted to examine teachers' ideas relates to the online learning process after the government gives free data quota both to teachers and students.

REFERENCES

- Allo, M. D. G. (2020). Is the online learning good in the midst of Covid-19 Pandemic ? The case of EFL learners. *Jurnal Sinestesia*, 10(1), 1–10.
- Babu, Udhaya Mohan & Ganesan, K. (2020). DIGITAL CLASSROOM AT THE TIME OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIOD. *National Conference Digital Learning*, 51.
- Barus, I. R. G., & Simanjuntak, M. B. (2020). Whatsapp Group and Google Classroom-Based Learning Materials in English Classes : Students ' Perceptions (Study Case taken from College of Vocational Studies – IPB University). *Scope of English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, 3(1), 47–54.

- Daud, Afrianto. (2020). Teaching English during Pandemic (New Normal): Some Practical Ideas. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qpuf02verFg&t=552s>
- Haqien, D., & Rahman, A. A. (2020). Pemanfaatan Zoom Meeting Untuk Proses Pembelajaran Pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *SAP (Susunan Artikel Pendidikan)*, 5(1), 51–56.
- Harmer, Jeremy. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching*. Malaysia: Pearson Education Limited.
- Karataş, T. Ö., & Tuncer, H. (2020). Sustaining language skills development of pre-service EFL teachers despite the COVID-19 interruption: A case of emergency distance education. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 12(19). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12198188>
- Lestyanawati, R., & Widyantoro, A. (n.d.). *Strategies and Problems Faced by Indonesian Teachers in Conducting E- Learning System During COVID-19 Outbreak*. 2(1), 71–82.
- Octaberlina, L. R., & Muslimin, A. I. (2020). Efl students perspective towards online learning barriers and alternatives using moodle/google classroom during covid-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 9(6), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v9n6p1>
- Okmawati, M., & Tanjak, D. (2011). *Journal of English Language Teaching THE USE OF GOOGLE CLASSROOM DURING PANDEMIC*. 9(2).
- Tuan, Nguyen Hoang & Mai, T. N. (2015). *Factors Affecting Students' Speaking Performance at LE THANH HIEN High School*. 3(2), 8–23. <https://doi.org/10.4108/eai.19-7-2019.2289545>