The Challenges of Teaching Using "Active Learning" Method in the Pandemic Era

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Abstract

As we all know, the Covid-19 Pandemic is currently ravaging the world. Due to social separation to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus, several activities have been restricted. The teaching-learning process, on the other hand, must continue for students and teachers. Holding teaching and learning activities online is one approach to keep them going. In order for students to keep on going active, a method of active learning is used in the process of studying. This study describes the difficulties that a teacher experiences when using active learning methods in Japanese online class. This research employed a qualitative approach. The participants in this study were six children from the Al-Ihsan Orphanage. Much experience was gained from teaching using the active learning method, with one of the teachers learning to create materials that can stimulate student activity to play an active role in learning by creating appealing and understandable PowerPoint slides, then inviting students to discuss the material. As a result, students are more eager to share their thoughts, and the information being taught is better grasped.
Keywords: Active Learning; Online learning; Teaching.

A.   Introduction

As we all know, the COVID-19 outbreak is presently doing havoc not just in Indonesia but around the world. Many people have suffered losses as a result of this scenario, ranging from economic to daily activities. However, these activities could not stop there, so new ideas arose to keep things going as usual. It is a teaching and learning process in this scenario. Because pandemics frequently last for a long time, interrupting learning activities can cause pupils' cognitive loss. As a result, today's teachers use communication technologies as a form of remote learning to supplement face-to-face instruction.

Learning can be done in various methods, but 'active learning' is thought to be the most appropriate for this remote learning approach. *Active learning* is defined as a teaching style that actively engages pupils in the learning process. The notion of active learning is derived from John Locke's (in Warsono (2017: 4) Creed and the tabula rasa principle, which asserts that "knowledge comes from experience." To put it another way, to acquire

information, one must first experience it for oneself. According to Zuckerman (in Warsono (2017: 4), learning will be gained through experience (learning from experience). Through active learning, active learning, and interaction with teaching materials and other people.

From these various opinions, DePorter and Hernacki (in Warsono (2017: 14), in their famous publication on how to learn to unleash all the potential of students entitled "Quantum Learning," state that learning can occur in 10% of what we read; 20% of what we hear; 30% of what we see; 50% of what we see and hear; 70% of what we say; 90% of what we say and do. These proportions are the result of an experience in Dale's Cone (Dale, 1969).

All forms of teaching that focus on students as the person in charge of learning are active learning. In other words, active learning refers to student-based learning or "student-centered learning" (Warsono, 2017: 14). So Bonwell and Einson (in Fayombo 2012: 80), say "in Active Learning Strategies, greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their own

meaning, attitudes, and values." The learning activities of students can be seen from their involvement in carrying out their learning tasks. Learning activities can be pursued by studying in groups or individually (Zaman 2020: 25).

As a facilitator, the teacher plays a valuable role in active learning. A facilitator is someone who assists students in learning and possesses the necessary skills to attain learning objectives. Indeed, 'active learning' is more focused on the students themselves because they are expected to be more involved in the learning process, but the role of the instructor is equally critical because they must give the essential facilities during the learning process. Then, teachers must grasp the educational theory and learning methodologies and be qualified to master teaching materials for active learning to take place effortlessly.

According to Clarke (in Warsono (2017: 20), facilitators are:

1. someone who knows each group member's strengths and abilities and helps him or her feel comfortable sharing hopes, concerns, and ideas;

someone who knows the strengths and abilities of each group member and helps him or her feel comfortable sharing hopes, concerns, and ideas; someone who knows the strengths and abilities of each group member and helps him or her feel comfortable sharing.

2. Someone lends their support to the group, giving participants the courage to share and experiment with new ideas.

3. Someone who understands different values and is sensitive to the needs and interests of each member of the group. Gender, age, color, ethnicity, economic status, social standing, and other factors may contribute to these disparities.

4. Someone who sets a good example through their attitude, words, approach, and actions.

After determining what will be assessed from the students, the facilitator's next responsibility is to organize learning. By incorporating student learning styles, this learning design must be tailored to the needs and interests of students. The facilitator must then analyze the learning process at the conclusion to be used to better the next lesson.

Based on this background, the researcher wants to share the experience of what challenges are faced when teaching foreign languages using the 'active learning' method, which is carried out online in the pandemic era.

B.   Research Method

The descriptive qualitative method is used in this study. The qualitative approach is a research procedure that generates descriptive data in written or spoken words from humans and their observed behavior, to understand specific individuals and their backgrounds as a whole Bodgan and Taylor (in Setiyadi (2006: 219).

Six students from the Al-Ihsan Orphanage in Surabaya provided data for this study. Observation, documentation, and field data records were used as data gathering strategies. Data analysis approaches are used to examine what happens during the learning process. The researchers then searched for data from other reference sources such as books, journals, and the internet and compared it to the current data.

C.   Results and Discussion

The study was based on observational data from six teaching practices at the Al-Ihsan Orphanage in Surabaya. The teaching practice was five times, including three teaching meetings and two introduction and closing meetings. Each meeting lasted between 1 and 1.5 hours. Classes are held online using Zoom and employ the active learning method.

Teachers face several challenges in applying active learning methods online, namely:

1. Material Preparation

The teaching materials used references from the internet and the book Minna no Nihongo I during the learning process. In addition, the teacher used PowerPoint as a teaching tool. Because the students who take part in the lesson have never studied Japanese, the teacher looks for references from the internet and books easily understood by students.

The challenge faced by teachers at this stage is how to process the teaching materials into PowerPoint so that they are easy to understand. The solution is to make PowerPoint short, concise, and clear, and the teacher

should also add many illustrations. As a result, students can easily remember the material presented.

2. Material Delivery

The material is delivered with the help of PowerPoint while applying the "active learning" method. First, before starting the lesson, the teacher invites students to discuss what they know about the material to be delivered. Then, the teacher will deliver the material, and at the end of the lesson, the teacher will give a small quiz to find out how well the material has been delivered.

When the teacher invited a discussion, the teacher encountered a problem in that students appeared afraid to respond to queries from the teacher. There was a long halt as a result. The teacher's issue when administering the quiz was that she was concerned that the kids might cheat because they were not supervised.

The solution is to give students encouragement and understanding that when in the learning process, learning is one way so that the material can be appropriately absorbed. By studying too, students will learn how to express the correct opinion and build self-

confidence.

The solution proposed by the teacher is that before the quiz starts, the teacher gives an understanding that quizzes are one way to measure students' abilities based on what they have just learned. Therefore, it does not matter if there is a wrong answer because our abilities will develop from that mistake. As a result, students became more active in expressing opinions about the material discussed and became more honest when doing online quizzes.

3. Dealing with Students

The next challenge is when the teacher cannot supervise students fully and directly to immediately understand which parts of the material are not understood by the students. The solution is that teachers in specific segments stop delivering material and ask students which parts they do not understand, so they will not forget the questions they want to ask. As a result, students do not hesitate to ask questions and can explain the questions they have.

Next is the challenge when giving assignments to students to ensure whether they understand the material being taught. This assignment is also a form of training. As a result, students memorized and understood more if they were given assignments.

4. Application Media Use of WhatsApp and Zoom

Because learning is carried out remotely, teachers use WhatsApp and Zoom applications to deliver teaching materials. However, teachers are still not able to master these applications. Therefore, teachers have to figure out how to run WhatsApp and Zoom applications to support the learning process.

Another obstacle faced when using the Zoom application is that during learning, many students are off-cam. Learning has been done online, so it can not directly monitor the activities of these students. The solution is to ask students to turn on the camera during learning so that the teacher can find out which part of the material makes them difficult by looking at their facial expressions. As a result, when students turned on their cameras, they were much more active than when they turned them off.

5. Internet Service Provider

The internet network is also very

influential in the learning process.

If the internet network is not good, then learning will not run smoothly. For example, when using online applications, constraints are often video zoom stuttering, where sound is not heard several times until the amount of quota used when using zoom. The teacher's solution is to use wifi and find a location that gets a good signal. As a result, teachers can minimize network technical problems so that the learning process can run smoothly.

D.   Conclusion

Based on the results of research and discussions that have been carried out previously, the following conclusions can be drawn:

In this pandemic era, teachers gain many experiences while teaching using the "active learning" method. Teachers must create materials that can stimulate students to learn actively by using PowerPoint slides that are attractive and easy to understand, then invite students to discuss the material being taught. As a result, pupils are more ready to offer their ideas, and the knowledge given is more easily grasped. Although the "active learning" technique focuses on student learning, the role of the teacher is critical to the success of the learning process.

The issue for teachers in implementing the "active learning" method in the epidemic era is to locate appropriate teaching materials that are easy to understand. Therefore, PowerPoint slides must be as brief and precise as feasible. The teacher must then provoke active learning when delivering the material, and because the teacher does not deal directly with the students, the teacher cannot fully supervise the students, so the teacher creates a quiz at the end of the lesson to determine how far the students' knowledge has progressed. Following that is the usage of WhatsApp and Zoom programs, which are somewhat inconvenient due to the considerable distance between teachers and pupils, so they must unavoidably teach using these online applications, and teachers must learn about these applications. Following that, the network element plays a significant role in determining the success or failure of remote learning.

However, with that challenge, further learning will be more effective. The teachers evaluate the learning process and result to be used as material for further learning improvements.

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