

Optimizing Indonesian Language Learning During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Elementary Schools

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ABSTRACT

Learning during the pandemic has an impact on student learning activities in learning Indonesian. This impact causes learning to be carried out online. The purpose of this study was to find out how the teacher's strategy was to optimize Indonesian language learning in elementary schools during the *covid-19* pandemic. This research is descriptive qualitative research that examines the strategies of elementary school teachers in optimizing online learning. Data collection techniques using observation, interviews and questionnaires. The research was conducted at an elementary school in Madiun with 10 grade 4 teachers as the subject. The results of optimizing Indonesian language learning show that students learn Indonesian using thematic books with Whatsapp group application services, *google meet*, *google classroom*, *Microsoft 365*, *google form*, *social media*. The results of the assessment are carried out using quizzes or tests in the form of assignments.

Keywords: Indonesian Language, Learning, Elementary Schools.

INTRODUCTION

The Coronavirus Disease (*Covid-19*) pandemic has shifted the function of activities and activities in several countries, including Indonesia. The Indonesian government has declared an emergency status for the *Covid-19* response as an effort to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. One of them is in the field of education by learning from home or doing online learning. The impact of online learning is not an option, but a necessity that requires all of us obedience and totality to make it a success, in order to reduce the spread of *Covid-19*. Uncomfortable and not easy of course, but this is the best effort at the moment. The Ministry of Education and Culture stipulates a regulation that education in Indonesia is still held, but with a different system, namely *Study From Home* (SFH) (Putro, Amri, Wulandari, & Kurniawan., 2020). Improving the quality of learning is largely determined by the learning designed and implemented by the teacher. The teacher as the spearhead in the implementation of education is a very influential party in the learning process (Yuniati, Suyuthi, & Hakim, 2021). Online learning carried out by teachers certainly has challenges in teaching readiness, especially learning carried out in elementary schools. Distance learning itself is an alternative learning that has been carried out for more than 10 years, including Open Middle School, Kejar Package A, Kejar Package B and Open University services as a PT institution that provides

higher education services. Although distance learning had been implemented in the years prior to the pandemic, its application was still limited to universities. Unlike elementary school students, they have never done online learning, so teachers have to use various sources for communication and information. Referring to the letter from the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding distance learning or online learning, teachers need to optimize new learning designs and use online-based technological advances. This is in line with the opinion of Tounder et al. (as cited in Lestari, 2018) which says that digital technology in educational institutions is a supporting tool in learning, both as a means of accessing information on learning resources or as a means of supporting learning activities and related to assignments. Andri (2017) explains that technology plays a very important role in improving the quality of education, besides that the role of technology can increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the teaching and learning process so that it can make it easier to achieve educational goals.

Organizing literacy and training related to the use of technology can be one solution in dealing with some of the challenges of online learning during the *Covid-19* pandemic. On the other hand, the application of technology in learning in schools has not been evenly distributed and optimal. Not a few teachers so far have not understood and even been able to use technology

in their learning (Sadikin, Lestari, & Aini, 2020). The trend of today's learning is a combination of face-to-face learning, offline learning (interactive computers) and online learning (internet). Learning that is traditionally on a face-to-face basis is now also moving towards offline and online learning, as well as learning that was originally online such as distance learning has also begun to move towards a face-to-face combination (Dwiyogo, 2015). The online learning period makes the literacy movement decline, such as reading habits before class starts, being in the library during breaks, bringing storybooks to read at home, reflecting on reading assignments, flag ceremony activities every Monday, sports together once a week (usually Fridays), and singing the national anthem in class. Various activities during direct learning are far from the Minister of Education and Culture's regulations regarding character development, one of which is through literacy learning. This Permendikbud was born as a response to the community's encouragement to make significant changes in the world of education, especially related to the moral decadence that is spreading among students, student brawls, free sex, permissive lifestyle. The various habituation activities raised in the Permendikbud are actually not new. Habituation such as reading literacy in daily learning that is carried out routinely in schools is one concrete evidence of the implementation of the Minister of Education and Culture. But for a long time, it is no longer visible for the reason of online learning. Whereas only the scope of the school can be intervened by the government to foster a reading culture in schools, and it can become a habit at home or in the community. However, along with the pandemic, learning activities are carried out online so that activities that prioritize reading culture, especially in learning Indonesian, are difficult to do.

According to George (2020), the problems of online learning are very complex, such as inadequate access to the internet by teachers or students which can affect the implementation of learning in line with the statement that there are distance learning challenges during the *Covid-19 pandemic*. One of the difficulties faced by teachers in online learning in elementary schools is learning Indonesian. Indonesian language learning is text-based learning (Isodarus, 2017). Indonesian language learning has a goal to improve communication effectively and efficiently and increase language knowledge. The improvement of quality Indonesian language learning is carried out continuously and continuously involving all education stakeholders. This is inseparable from the factors of schools, teachers, the learning process and students. Indonesian language learning in elementary schools is carried out in an integrated manner which consists of

four language skills. Text is a medium of language, communicating, and conveying ideas. This is in line with the opinion that Indonesian language subjects are teaching language skills, which include receptive and productive skills, not teaching discussing a language. Receptive skills include listening and reading skills, while productive skills include writing and speaking skills (Jayanti, 2017). Indonesian language learning should be oriented to the formation of language skills and other scientific abilities (Abidin, 2012). Learning Indonesian is not only for fostering communication, but also as a parent of knowledge. So that learning carried out in elementary schools is based on a theme or what is called thematic. In the implementation of Indonesian language learning, various strategies are carried out by teachers to optimize Indonesian language learning so that it can attract students even though they are studying from home. Learning strategies are tactics used by teachers in carrying out learning on target (Abidin, 2012). Several studies conducted by researchers show that optimizing learning during a pandemic involves various technologies. This includes training teachers to prepare online learning using interesting learning media and involving student activity. Media creation using Canva, smart training and e-learning (Aldino, Hendra, & Darwis, 2021; Mahardika, Wiranda, & Pramita, 2021). The purpose of this study is to describe how to optimize Indonesian language learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

METHOD

This research is descriptive research using a qualitative descriptive method. Through this research, the researcher will explain descriptively about optimizing Indonesian language learning during the pandemic. This research was conducted at SD Taman 02 Madiun City with 30 grade 4 students as the subject. Data was collected using field notes or observations, questionnaires and interviews. The source of this research data was obtained through a learning process carried out online or online with the subject in learning Indonesian. Analysis descriptive is data analysis by describing or describing data that has been collected as is (Sugiyono, 2013). Based on descriptive qualitative research methods, the researchers used three stages of analysis, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Optimization of Learning through Online Media

Learning Indonesian is not only able to read but must be integrated into digital literacy skills. The use of technology in learning is in line with the conditions of

learning at home which must utilize technology. Indonesian subjects in the 2013 curriculum pay attention to cultural development literacy through text-based learning. The learning carried out by the teacher must be able to build transitive critical awareness, which is characterized by the depth of interpreting problems, build confidence in discussions, and build the ability to be able to receive useful information and reject information which is detrimental in today's digital era (Damayanti, 2019). Based on the results of observations and field notes, Indonesian language learning carried out by Taman 02 elementary school teachers was carried out using online media, namely *Whatsapp group*, *google meet*, *google classroom* and *Microsoft 365*. The media used are printed materials such as the thematic book revised edition of Erlangga publisher, supporting books such as LKS books (student worksheets), notebooks. Learning is done by forming a *Whatsapp group* consisting of 30 students and 1 teacher who teaches thematic, 1 sports teacher, 1 math teacher. Indonesian language learning begins by preparing a class through *google meet*, then giving problems related to the material, for example events around students, providing material in the form of power points, explaining the material and giving assignments or evaluations. *Google meet* is held once a week. This is because not all students are in smooth internet coverage. Some students live outside the city of Madiun, so it is not every day that a *google meet* is held. In addition to using *Google Meet*, the delivery of material is done by uploading it to *Microsoft 365* which is already owned by each student.

The stages in the implementation of Indonesian language learning can be done with the introduction or habituation, implementation, and evaluation stages. The introduction or habituation stage is carried out by introducing text and literature-based language materials to students through the let's read application, the kindle application, digital Gramedia, Ipusnas, storial, google play books and the like. Texts that have been given or uploaded by the teacher through online learning applications can be accessed by students themselves via Android or uploaded via Google Meet or other learning platforms. The text that has been accessed is then read by students independently. The implementation stage is carried out by giving assignments to students to summarize the reading, conclude the content, make a synopsis and retell. Each book or text read is written in a daily journal to see the number of books read. Students are also free to choose the books they read at home with their parents. The evaluation stage is carried out by the teacher by giving questions in the form of oral and written questions related to the text he has read. In addition, evaluation is carried out by assigning students to make posters or

works related to the books they read and reflect on the books they read. At the end of the evaluation, the teacher provides reflection and follow-up as reinforcement and moral messages from books read by students. The three stages in learning Indonesian are in line with the school literacy movement contained in the 2013 curriculum that must be carried out by schools from elementary to high school.

Implementation of Indonesian Language Learning Strategies

The application of the ideal strategy needs to be done by the teacher in the classroom, especially in learning Indonesian. The strategy in optimizing Indonesian language learning is carried out with the stages of preparation, implementation, and evaluation. The preparation stage is carried out by preparing materials, questions, assignments, and evaluations in the form of power points or digital book summaries. The material to be delivered is sent via *Whatsapp group*, *google classroom* and *Microsoft 365*. Based on field notes and questionnaires, the forms of the preparatory stages carried out by teachers at Taman 02 Madiun elementary school, namely, making PPT, preparing for *google meet*, uploading materials on *Microsoft 365*. In addition, the teacher also prepares an evaluation through the *Google Form platform*. The implementation stage is carried out with synchronous and synchronous learning. Activities in the form of online discussions and giving assignments independently or in groups at home, while face-to-face meetings use *Google Meet* and *Microsoft 365*. At the implementation stage, students are required to perform such as presentations that have been made in videos, make short stories about environmental conditions and the *covid-19 pandemic*, read news from social media and be analyzed both in terms of sentences and news clarity. This is to train students' sensitivity and honesty towards *hoax news* that is widely circulating.

The evaluation stage is carried out from the beginning to the end of learning. Evaluation is done by giving practice questions. An example is answering several questions that have to do with the material presented at that time. Students are asked to work on the questions sent by the teacher and then work on and send directly through the *google form*. Students also collect assignments in the form of photos or videos to the *Whatsapp group*. Group activities are sent via *Whatsapp group*. Practical assignments or performance assignments are carried out by students individually and uploaded to social media, such as poetry reading assignments, independent activity assignments, and being asked to document through sequential photos or video recordings.

The learning strategy used by teachers in elementary schools is to apply problem-based learning strategies and inquiry. The stages in problem-based learning do not only stop by giving problems to students but also provide follow-up or reflection. The problem is taken from the student environment that has to do with the material in theme 1. Students learn with the guidance of the teacher through *Whatsapp groups* then discuss in groups in their groups. Each group will present and deliver the results of the group discussion via *Microsoft 365* or *Google Meet*. With group discussions, students have activities to provide information to each other through group *Whatsapp groups*, so that teachers can more easily monitor student activities. Students continue to actively discuss even though learning is done online. This is in line with the opinion of Sanjaya (2010) which states that problem-based learning strategies are learning activities that emphasize the process of solving problems faced scientifically. Problem-based learning strategies have the characteristics of an activity, problem solving, problem solving and scientific thinking.

The inquiry strategy is used by the teacher to direct students to get findings related to learning Indonesian. Some of the teacher's activities using the inquiry strategy are finding the main idea, finding the core of the paragraph, making a concept map from the text they are reading, finding the topic and core of the text, and making conclusions from the text in their own language. Application in the learning process can improve students' ability to make observations and provide answers to a problem through data interpretation to obtain a conclusion. Sanjaya (2010) explains that the inquiry learning steps consist of 1) orientation, 2) formulating problems, 3) formulating hypotheses, 4) collecting data, 5) testing hypotheses, 6) formulating conclusions.

CONCLUSION

Optimization of Indonesian language learning in elementary schools is carried out by using online-based media, applying ideal learning strategies, namely problem-based learning strategies, using inquiry methods. The implementation of strategies that are in accordance with the learning plan will have an impact on the success of teachers in the learning process even in the conditions of the covid pandemic. In addition, learning Indonesian is not only a reading process but learning includes writing, speaking, and listening. Learning starts from the preparation, implementation, and evaluation stages.

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