

**PROBLEMS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN EFL CLASSROOM: EXPLORING
ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE**

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Abstract: The status of English as an international language becomes a compulsory subject for almost all non English-speaking countries throughout the world. However, most of non native English speakers encountered some difficulties in learning English. This study aimed to investigate the problems of teaching English for EFL classroom in junior and senior high school level. Qualitative design is used as the research methodology in this study. The participants of this study were 10 English teachers from junior and senior high school. The participants are chosen purposively based on their experience in teaching English, both novice and experience teachers. Close-ended and open-ended questionnaire as well as semi-structured interview are employed as the research instruments for this study. The closed-ended questionnaire focused on student-generated difficulties (internal factors) and the open-ended questionnaire focused on non students-generated problems (external factors). While for semi-structured interview questions are developed based on the respondents' responses in questionnaire. This study came up with the findings that the problems of teaching English in EFL classroom that come from students are various such as students' low motivation in learning English and the students' high anxiety of making mistakes. While for external factors, it is found that non students-generated problems consist of limited time to learn English, excessive numbers of students in one class, unsupported EFL classroom setting, inadequate instructional materials and unsupported schools facilities to teaching English

Keywords: teaching English, teaching problems, EFL classroom

INTRODUCTION

Language is used as a tool for communication. Human can express ideas, opinion and feeling through language. Human life can not be separated from language because in every aspect of life the language is always used, both in written and spoken communication. Without language, people can not exchange meaning properly. As the consequence, there will not be an effective communication between the conversation actors.

There are numerous kinds of language all over the world. Comparing to other languages, English is the language that most widely-used worldwide. Currently, English has a significant impact on human life. The objective of English is not only for international purposes, but also for local purposes (Gunantar, 2016). According to Crystal (1997), the better one's English comprehension the bigger the opportunity he will get for a better life like travelling, higher education, employment, etc. Furthermore, (Michalak & Bavli, 2018) stated in their research that English as a foreign language is becoming increasingly important because, among other things, it improves people's employability, facilitates international communication and cooperation, and provides access to worldwide research and information. As a result, the importance of using English has spread to a larger worldwide population (McKay, 2018). It is possible because the effect of English as an International language has successfully altered global dominance of the English role.

The status of English as international language (D'Angelo, 2012; Strevens, 1992) or International English (Trudgill & Hannah, 1985) makes it becomes an important language to be learnt. Almost all countries throughout the world, particularly in Indonesia, put English as a compulsory subject in education. The learners are required to be able to understand and use English properly as a requirement for school graduation.

As non native English speakers like Indonesian, learning English sometimes become the hardest thing for most of EFL learners. It is so because the written English is very different in the way it is read. In other words, the EFL learners encountered some difficulties in learning English due to the language learning style in English is different from the way they learn their first language (L1). Learners often make mistakes in learning English both in spoken and written language because they tend to transfer the regulations from their L1 into the creation of their L2 (Thomas, 1983).

Learning English is believed as a complex process in which the learners are required to have four comprehensions in English such as listening, reading, writing and speaking (Susanthi, 2021). In order to achieve an optimal learning teaching process, one of the main supporting factors is qualified teachers. A qualified teacher who has well-known of what he will be taught will support the learning process. However, a good and qualified teacher only is not a guarantee to have an effective learning process. In fact, there is a very qualified teacher in teaching English but the learning process still finds any obstacles. There are various challenges faced by teachers in teaching English for EFL learners particularly in Indonesia. Teachers may sometimes encounter some problems and difficulties in teaching English to the students.

It is a big question why most of EFL learners who have learnt English for a long time have not been able to understand and utilize the English language in their daily life appropriately. Let's say they have had a qualified English teacher in their classroom, but their ability in English is still considered low. Commonly, learning will give positive changes for the learners especially in cognitive aspects. The learners who learnt English for a quite long time should be able to understand, use and communicate in English well. The reality, however, most of EFL learners, even who have learnt English for a long time, they still find themselves unconfident in using

English for communication. It can be inferred that the problems in learning English is complex. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the problems of teaching English in EFL classroom for learners in junior and senior high school level.

There have been some researches related to the problems of teaching in English for EFL learners. (Noor, Harahap & Dewi: 2023) stated that teachers who teach English in elementary level found some challenges such as the teachers' emotional control, personal experience of teachers and the teacher's interest in the character of the pupil. Their research just focused on problems that come from the English teachers in primary level. Another research from (Glass.Jr & Hoffman, 2016) stated that teaching English for under educated adults is a frustrating experience for many teachers. Furthermore, (Hibatullah, 2019) in her reseach stated that international EFL college students who study abroad (non English-speaking country) find some similiar difficulties in learning English abroad and in their home country. It is revealed that international EFL students struggled with receptive and productive language abilities, lecturer resources, learning approach, vocabulary, motivation, exposure, and culture.

In spite of there is a spike study interest in problems of teaching English in EFL classroom, the researches are mostly focused on the problems in teaching English for EFL learners in elementary and adult leraners or university students. Though there is a research focused on junior and senior high school level (Akbari, 2015), but the scope is still in Iran. In other words, there are still limited researches related to the teachers' problems in teaching English for EFL learners in junior and senior high school level in Indonesia. Therefore, the researcher in the present study is interested to conduct a research on problems of teaching English for EFL lerners in junior and senior high school level. The current study is hopefully can contribute to the improvement of English teaching in Indonesia, both for teachers, students and all parts that involved in educational realm. Given that teaching and learning is an educational activity that will color the interactions between educators and students in order to build healthy social relationships (Dewi Kustanti, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative design as the research methodology. Ary et.al (2002) stated that instead of dealing with numbers and statistics, qualitative research deals with data that is expressed in words. The data gathered are the experiences and perspectives of the subjects; qualitative research seeks to produce a more accurate depiction of the individuals, things, events, places, conversations, and so forth. Since the author analyzed the questionnaire results and interview by Indonesian English teachers, the type of methodology in this study used was content analysis. According to Ary et.al (2002), content analysis is the approach of acquiring and examining the text's document. The content includes any message that can be conveyed by words, meaning, images, symbols, concepts, or themes.

As many as 10 English teachers from junior and senior high school in North Sumatera, Indonesia are purposively chosen as the research participants. The participants were chosen due to their profession are teachers and they are still working as teachers, both novice and experience teachers. Close-ended and open-ended questionnaire as well as semi-structured interview were employed as the research instruments. The questionnaires are created by adapting ideas from (Roinah, 2019) and modified it to meet the objectives of the current study. The close-ended questionnaire focused on internal factors, namely students-generated difficulties and open-ended questionnaire focused on external factors or non students-generated difficulties. The questionnaire items then shared online via WhatsApp to be completed by respondent in Google Form. While the

semi-structured interview questions are developed based on the participants' responses in questionnaires. Some of the respondents were interviewed to get in-depth information related to the problems of teaching English in EFL classroom.

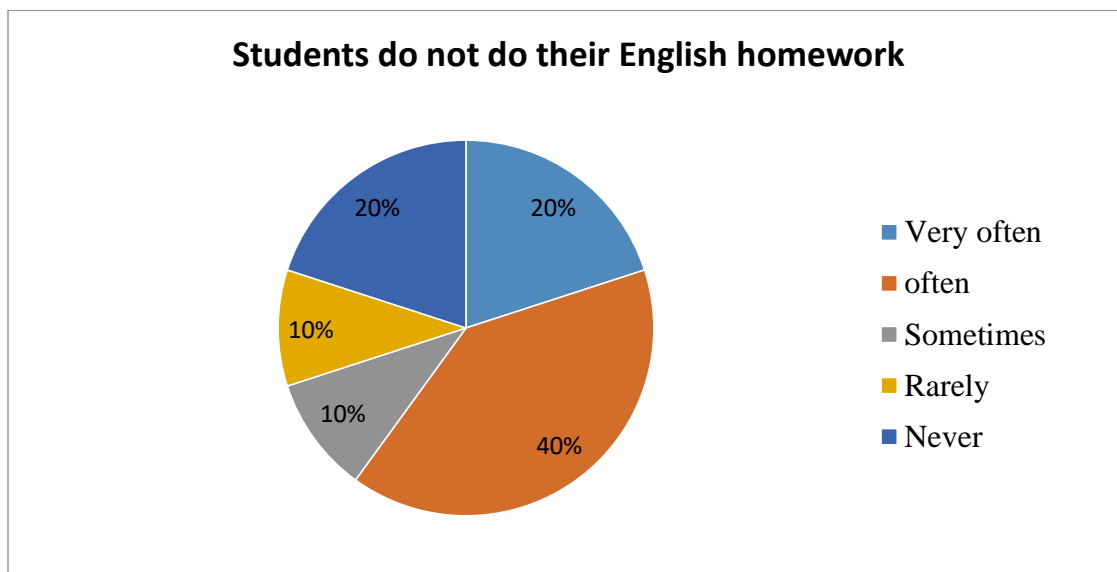
Because the focus of this study is to find out the participants response on problems in teaching English for EFL learner, the way the respondents give their response in interview is not provided. Sometimes the participants use English to answer the questions in open-ended and semi-structured interview. The researcher then translated it into English.

Following the completion of the data collection procedures, the data was analyzed in order to answer the research question. The researcher used several data analysis techniques to analyse the data, including: (1) reading and analysing all responses, (2) sorting the data, (3) organising, coding, and analysing the data, and (4) elaborating the data analysis to obtain the findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As it has been stated previously, this study used close-ended and open ended questionnaire as well as semi-structured interview as the research instrument. The researcher in the current study presents the result of participants' response which is obtained from questionnaires in Google Form. The followings are the problems encountered by English teachers in teaching English for EFL learners in junior and senior high school level. The findings of close-ended questionnaires that focused on students-generated difficulties in learning English or it is known as internal factors are presented below.

Low Students' motivation in learning English

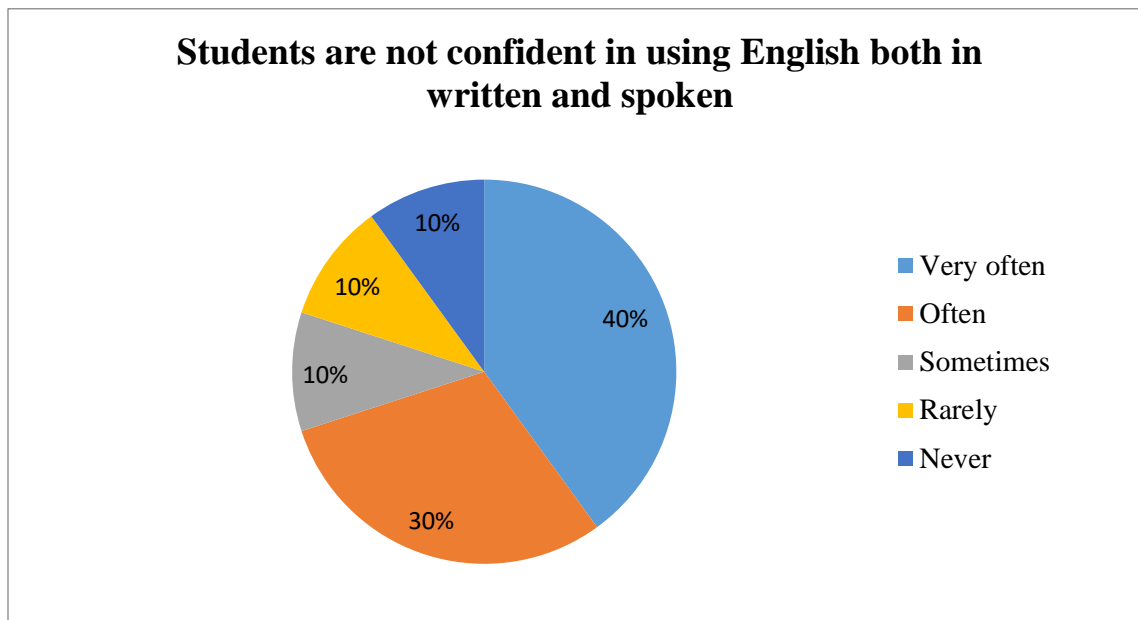


Based on the questionnaire results, it can be inferred that the students have a low motivation in learning English. Almost a half of the respondents revealed that their students often missed their English homework. The percentage for 'very often' and 'often' frequency of missing in doing English homework is as much as 20% and 40% respectively, and for 'sometimes' and 'rarely' frequency, the respondents stated only 10% of their students missed the English homework. While for 'never' frequency, as much as 20% of the participants stated that their students

never missed their English homework. In other words, 20% of the participants revealed that their students always do their English homework.

Based on the findings, it can be implied that the students' motivation in learning English is considered low. It is obviously seen from the low percentage of participants' students willingness in doing homework.

High anxiety in making mistakes of learning English



Based on the close-ended questionnaire results, it can be inferred that most of the respondents' students are tend to have a high anxiety in utilizing English, in which as much as 40% of the respondents stated that their students are not confident in using English both in written and spoken language. For 'often' frequency, it is found that as much as 30% of the respondents revealed that their students have low confident in utilizing English. While for the 'sometimes, rarely and never' frequency, it is found respectively 10% students who are not confident in using English both written ans spoken English.

The findings of this close-ended questionnaire is in line with the research finding conducted by (Roinah, 2019). She stated in her reasearch that the problems in teaching English for EFL learners are come from the internal factors that influenced by attitude towards learning, learning motivation, study concentration, intelligence and learning success, and study habits.

Another instrument research employed in this study is ope-eded questionnaire. For open-ended questionnaire, it focused on problems in teaching English for EFL classroom that caused by external factors or non students-generated problems. The participants' responses about the problems they may face in teaching English for EFL classroom in junior and senior high school level are various such as (1) limited time for English learning (2) excessive numbers of student (3) unsupported classroom environment in improving students' English comprehension, and (4) inadequate learning media, and (5) unsupported school facilities for learning English.

The last instrument used for the present study is semi-structured interview. Based on the participants' responses in online questionnaire, the researcher then develop interview questions in order to get more detail information about the problems of teaching English in EFL classroom on

junior and senior high school level. The followings are interview results obtained from research's respondents.

A. Students-generated problems (internal factors)

- P01 : *I found most of my students do not do their English homework. They often give kinds of reason on why they didn't complete their homework. Personally, as a teacher, it puts me in a difficulties in which I dont know how well they have understood the lesson we learnt.*
- P02 : *The students often express their ideas or opinion in Bahasa Indonesian well. However, when it comes to English they become worry in making mistakes. As a result, the students tend to keep their opinion in their mind without trying to put it in written or spoken language.*
- P03 : *I often find my students are not motivated in learning English. Their look in English subject seems to be not excited. When I asked them, they said that learning English is very difficult, in which they need to struggle in learning it due to the different of written and the way it is read.*

B. Non students-generated problems (external factors)

1. Limited time for English learning

- P04 : *For me, time to teaching English to my students is not enough. As we know that in learning English, students are required to be able in four skills of English (reading, listening, writing and speaking). However, learning English twice a week is not enough to optimazing the students comprehensions in the four skills.*

2. Excessive numbers of student in one class

- P05 : *Personally, sometimes I find it difficult to teaching English for EFL classroom due to the excessive numbers of the students in one class. I think if the students are not too crowded, I can control my students' progress in learning English individually. Yet, because there are more than 30 students in one class, I have no enough time to check their progress in detail.*
- P06 : *Too crowded students in one class sometimes make me not focus to every students. I mean, sometimes I just focus to the students who have a quite and good understanding in English*

3. Unsupported classroom environment

- P07 : *When I finished teaching English to my students, particularly speaking skills, I really hopefully they can practice it immediatly. However, the classroom setting is not supported to improving learners' ability in speaking skills. In other words, my students are rarely practice their English due to the unexistence of speaking-class zone.*

4. Inadequate English learning media

P08 : *As far as I can see, the English textbooks used in learning English for my students are considered low of pragmatic aspects. Most of the conversation in the ELT textbook do not provide pragmatic competence. As the consequence, it is a little bit challenging for me and my students to learn English based on its context.*

P09 : *My students sometimes choose and use wrong words in a conversation due to the unprovided pragmatic aspect in ELT textbook. The students tend to use unsuitable words in practicing a conversation with their friends.*

5. Unsupported school's facilities

P10 : *Sometimes I need media to assist my teaching process. I need to put technology as learning media but the school facilities do not support it. I have to bring my own loudspeaker to teach my students listening skills. Also, youtube is also one of media that commonly used to hinder to students' boredom. But, unprovided projector in my classroom puts me in a difficulties in teaching English for EFL learners.*

Through the semi-structured interview, the information of problems in teaching English for EFL learners are provided in detail. Based on the interview results, it can be implied that Indonesian EFL teachers find some problem from external factors in teaching English for EFL learners in junior and senior high school. The participants revealed that there are five main problems commonly faced in teaching English such as limited time for learning English, too crowded students in one class, unsupported EFL classroom setting, inadequate English learning media, and unsupported school's facilities.

For limited time to learn English aspect, it is stated that English learning schedule which only twice a week is not enough to teaching speaking, writing, reading and listening skills. Excessive numbers of students in one class also puts the teachers in difficulties to evaluate the learners' progress individually. The setting of EFL classroom which is not support the students to improve their English comprehension become one of the main problem. The students can not freely practice their English speaking due to unpresence of English-class zone. Meanwhile, inadequate English learning media and unsupported school's facilities also become a big problems and obstacle in teaching English for EFL learners. The teachers can not provide students with technology in learning English because their schools do not provide technological tools like loudspeaker and projector in classroom.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Basically, the problems of teaching English in EFL classroom are influenced by internal and external factors. Those factors, students-generated problems and non students-generated problems, are considered as serious problems. Due to the existance of the problems, most of English teachers find some difficulties and obstacles in teaching English for EFL learners, particularly in junior and senior high school level. The problems that are often encountered in teaching English for EFL learners for internal factors such as the students' low motivation in learning English and a high anxiety of making mistakes in written and spoken English language. While for external factors, the teachers revealed that they find it difficult to teaching English for EFL learners due to the limited time of learning English, excessive numbers of student in one class, unsupported environmental setting, inadequate learning media and unsupported school's facilities. Therefore, both internal and external factors that caused problems in learning English are need to be

considered as an serious problems by the students, teacher and the all of parts that invlved in educational realm in order to create an effective circumstances of English teaching learning process.

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