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The Students' Perspectives in Challenges of English Online Learning During Pandemic at MAN 1 Ngawi

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Abstract

The study aims to identify the challenges of the English online learning process during the pandemic by 10th graders at MAN 1 Ngawi. 10th-grade students of MAN 1 Ngawi were the subjects in the study. The perception of 10th graders regarding the barriers that arise in English learning at MAN 1 Ngawi is the object of this research. In carrying out this study, the researcher uses qualitative descriptive methods. Qualitative data analysis techniques that the researcher used in this study are divided into coding, data reduction, data presentation, and interpretation or withdrawal or conclusions. The study used online questionnaires and interviews to obtain data. The researcher also used triangulation techniques to obtain the validity of the research data. This study shows that the online English learning process experiences challenges faced by 10th-grade students, namely difficulties in understanding learning materials, unstable networks, and errors in E-learning applications. Related to this research, there are several implications, namely: a) to provide suggestions and information for schools and improve insight for learners; b) to add knowledge related to the challenges facing 10th graders in online English learning; c) as a comparison or reflection material to improve the quality of ICT-based learning in the future.

Keywords: *Challenges; Student Perception; Online English Learning*

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengidentifikasi tantangan proses pembelajaran online bahasa Inggris selama pandemi oleh murid kelas 10 di MAN 1 Ngawi. 10th grade students of MAN 1 Ngawi merupakan subjek dalam penelitian ini. Persepsi murid kelas 10 terkait hambatan yang muncul dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di MAN 1 Ngawi adalah objek dalam studi ini. Dalam melaksanakan studi ini, metode deskriptif kualitatif digunakan oleh peneliti. Teknik analisis data kualitatif yang digunakan peneliti dalam studi ini dan terbagi menjadi pengkodean, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan interpretasi atau penarikan kesimpulan. Penelitian ini menggunakan kuesioner online dan interview dalam memperoleh data. Peneliti juga menggunakan triangulasi teknik dalam mendapatkan validitas data dari penelitian. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa proses pembelajaran bahasa Inggris online mengalami tantangan yang dihadapi oleh siswa kelas 10 yakni kesulitan dalam memahami materi pembelajaran, jaringan yang tidak stabil, dan kesalahan dalam aplikasi E-learning. Terkait penelitian ini terdapat beberapa implikasi yakni, a) Untuk memberikan masukan dan informasi ke sekolah serta meningkatkan wawasan bagi pembelajar; b) Untuk menambahkan pengetahuan terkait tantangan yang dihadapi siswa kelas 10 dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris secara online; dan c) Sebagai pembanding atau bahan refleksi untuk meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran berbasis ICT yang lebih baik dimasa mendatang.

Kata kunci: Tantangan; Persepsi Siswa; Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Online

1. Introduction

The National Long-Term Development Plan contained the national development priority is the realization of a society that is noble, civilized, cultured, ethical, moral based on the philosophy of Pancasila [1]. One realizes it by strengthening the nation's character and identity through education. National education serves to shape the character and develop the ability and civilization of a dignified nation to educate the nation's life, which aims to develop the potential of learners. Education is an integral part of human life that can never be abandoned. The rise of ICT has spread rapidly throughout the world and has been used in every aspect of life, especially its utilization in education, especially English learning [2]. Learning that integrates ICT can provide students with enthusiasm in doing tasks. Because the awareness related to the implementation of ICT in education is very important, educational institutions release electronic learning projects to present the right technology, and therefore the quality of teaching and learning can be successfully developed. The global pandemic has forced countries to take unprecedented preventive measures: all educational institutions are changing their instruction from face-to-face learning to distance learning [3]. So, students from elementary to tertiary levels are forced to stay at home rather than attend classes at school to maintain social distancing.

Pandemic conditions that have occurred since March 2020 have led to many changes in educational practices. The most obvious impact is on learning practices where there has been a shift from offline to online learning. Previous literature proved that the closure of educational institutions was an effective strategy to break the chain of critical transmission during pandemics. However, it negatively influences learners' academic studies, including impaired assessment, learning disorders, and more severe effects on students from disadvantaged backgrounds [4]. In this Covid-19 period, among the world's student population, tertiary level students experienced academic impairment on an unprecedented scale. Research reveals that pandemic situations trigger concerns in students related to academic activities and economic, social affairs, and fear of infection [5]. This condition is very much hitting the social life of students due to the absence of meetings between friends and relatives [6], financial conditions due to the loss of part-time work, and emotional health, resulting in increased anxiety, boredom, and frustration [7], and academic life increasingly worried about future careers and education. Before the Covid-19 outbreak, some educational institutions used online classes only to facilitate the language learning process [8]. The pandemic resulted in all students attending online classes, doing online activities, and taking quizzes with the Google Meet, Zoom, and WhatsApp apps. MAN 1 Ngawi also applied it in English learning during Covid-19.

The developments of E-learning have evolved to a large part, including various online learning approaches, namely video conferencing, blended learning, and virtual classes [9]. The utilization of the internet in the learning process can help instructors and learners [10]. Some literature has investigated the positive impact of EFL learning integrating ICT [11]. This is in line with [12] that technology can provide opportunities for meaningful teaching and learning environments that affect critical thinking, independence, and student motivation. Currently, the use of technology in the learning process in Indonesia must be emphasized in line with the 2013 curriculum framework, namely the concept of learning that aims to promote

student learning autonomy and communication development. This encourages the use of ICT as an integral part of instruction and curriculum by schools or other educational institutions. Nowadays, all subjects, including English, are indirectly urged to use learning tools that change from instructive to constructivism [13]. This research is based on the online learning theory that the integrated education system is an internet connection to make it easier for teachers and participants themselves [14]. Another theory supports learning English is considered important to be mastered from the basic to the high level because it is currently used as one of the qualifications for employment or further study [15]. The challenges of online learning and student constraints are certainly one of the theories supporting this research that distance learning raises various obstacles students face[16], [17].

Due to pandemics disrupting their academic functioning, learners experience significant educational disruptions[18]. Delays in reopening educational institutions have a negative effect on their academic growth and mental state [19]. Prolonged online learning at home decreases and disrupts students' learning habits and work performance, leading to dysfunctional learning behaviour and growth stress [20]. Online learning strategies make students feel pressured and uncomfortable [21]. They face challenges in switching to online learning, addressing online education issues such as high internet costs, no internet access, and adjusting new online assessment methods and workloads [22]. According to the interviewer's study, online learning of English during the spread of covid-19 is more prominent in reading and structure. MAN 1 Ngawi English teachers experience a lack of flexibility in monitoring English skills development, and English skills assessment does not run as effectively as face-to-face classes. This results in teachers not guaranteeing that the rest of them can perform English assignments because they can search for answers over the internet. Based on the above statement, 10th graders felt that learning English during the pandemic was less effective and experienced some obstacles. MAN 1 Ngawi has several obstacles in integrating ICT, especially in English online learning. Lack of enthusiasm for online learning signals that hinder students or teachers, and some students do not perform tasks given by teachers.

Much literature addresses the barriers and benefits of online learning. Technology has an important role in the learning process, so the proper integration of technological tools is needed [23]. Online learning can advance access to education and training and the quality of learning. [24] said that the potential benefits of online learning and prioritizing that technology should be cost-effective, and students or instructors should have easy access to online resources and proper training. Learning that utilizes technology also has benefits, namely facilitating the achievement of educational goals during the pandemic period, making it easier for educators to create learning designs, more exciting learning atmospheres that can motivate students, and facilitating the provision of information and teaching materials. [25] state that poor online learning integration can create unwanted obstacles ranging from poor communication, frustration, and a sense of isolation. Obstacles from the educator aspect in the form of mastery of science, creativity and innovation, internet mastery, motivating ability, ability to be qualified in the concept of online learning, system management, selection of appropriate teaching materials, and mastery of classroom control must exist and be able to apply appropriately [26]. While from the student's aspect, the things that must be embedded in their following distance

learning are the ability to operate technology, independence, learning responsibility, high motivation, interaction, innovation, and creativity [27]. Students prefer face-to-face classes compared to online classes because some obstacles such as lack of motivation, lack of understanding, weak internet connectivity, lack of participation, and poor interaction are the biggest obstacles to distance learning [28]. English teachers and 10th graders also experience problems and benefits related to online learning that researchers have outlined in MAN 1 Ngawi. Seeing the urgency of this integration, the specific researchers chose 10th graders as research targets because of the importance of English as a second language after mother tongue which every school certainly teaches. It can also be used as a reference or comparison in the future related to the challenges of online learning that integrates ICT faced by students during the pandemic.

In line with government policy in addressing the spread of the Covid-19 virus so that online learning is applied to all levels of educations. Although there is a study on Covid-19 related to educational studies, to the author's knowledge, there has been no research conducted on English learning at MAN 1 Ngawi, so this is one of the updates. The gap between previous studies is one of the findings in this study related to E-learning applications that have experienced errors. They face challenges during the implementation of distance learning, especially in English subjects. Therefore, the researcher tried to fill the gap in this study by researching the students' perspectives on the challenges of English online learning during the pandemic at MAN 1 Ngawi. This research aims to illustrate the challenges faced by 10th graders in the English online learning process at MAN 1 Ngawi during the pandemic as well as references to improving ICT-based learning in the online learning process. The hope is also to be used as a reference or comparison for future research to provide information about the challenges of ICT integration during the distance learning process.

2. Method

A descriptive qualitative research design is used for this study, which is appropriate because it can obtain descriptive information in verbal or written words from individuals or behaviours observed by the researcher [29]. Descriptive studies aim to create accurate, factual, and systematic data about the facts and characteristics of a particular area or population [30]. In short, researchers chose qualitative because the data is in the form of words that describe students' perspectives regarding English online learning barriers. To gain better insight into students' perspectives on English online learning challenges, researchers distributed online questionnaires through WhatsApp groups to 10th graders at MAN 1 Ngawi because they needed facts that matched qualitative research instruments. Transcript interview describes student barriers when online learning is based on ICT. Meanwhile, data sources are obtained from participants or interviewees. Participants' ideas, assumptions, and thoughts are the main information of Qualitative studies and can be collected by various methods [31]. This method includes observations, review of readings or documents, interviews, as well as reflections from participants (a kind of diary). [32] stated that questionnaires and interviews were selected for the study because they are a fast and reliable method for collecting data or information from respondents effectively and efficiently. The

interviewer can observe body language, other responses, and expressions to problems as well as not only being able to record statements that have dialogue (the interviewee) [33], [34]. This makes it easier for the authors to draw conclusions in this study. Questionnaires filled out by respondents in writing are called online questionnaires [35]. This technique is easy because it does not have to meet with people to be interviewed and saves time supported by a pandemic situation requiring social distancing [36]. The subjects in the study were 10th graders who faced the challenge of online English learning and English teachers. The selection of these subjects is because they experience online learning barriers that integrate ICT during the pandemic, so there must be an adaptation attitude. In contrast, the object of this study is the perception of students' related problems that arise in online English learning. Information gathering is important so that research can run as usual. This step has many data researchers need to obtain research results [37]. In determining the validity of the data, the researcher needs several techniques to obtain data validity from research results that combine various data techniques and existing data sources. The use of triangulation and data collection through interviews and online questions to measure data. Experts measure the validity of data to obtain valid data [38] To obtain accurate data related to the challenges of ICT-based online English learning, and students are interviewed and given online questionnaires to be examined so as to reduce the biases and opinions of researchers. The researcher investigates using qualitative data analysis techniques. Data analysis is divided into four stages: coding, data reduction, data display, and interpretation or drawing conclusions [39]. Previous research that has been conducted by [40] that online learning is formulated to meet the educational needs of the pandemic period, teachers have not met the requirements that are capable so educators must be ready to face challenges. The similarity of the current research with previous research is the finding of the challenges of learning English online, while the difference is that the previous literature focused on the challenges of online English learning faced by students and which currently focuses on the challenges and opportunities of the online teaching-learning process for students and educators. The literature researched by [41] that technology is useful in English learning encourages students' motivation and interest and provides a space for authentic learning. However, there are weaknesses in integrating ICT, namely the possibility of disruption and abuse and restrictions on student thinking. The similarity between previous and current studies is the challenge of the English learning process. While the difference is the object of study and conditions due to the spread of covid-19.

3. Findings and Discussions

3.1. Findings
3.1.1. Challenges in English online learning faced by 10th graders

Educational activities affected by the spread of the Covid-19 virus are the learning process, especially English language learning. Therefore, all academic activities are conducted online following the instructions of the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. Educational institutions agree that learning using online platforms can facilitate learners or instructors without face-to-face contact [42]. Distance learning can make it easier for learners and educators because instructors can make announcements, store classroom materials and tasks while students can

learn self-taught based on teacher material. Although there are some problems in online learning, students cannot access learning materials that influence the learning process that students follow [43].

In accordance with the results of the questionnaire analysis obtained, the researcher obtained some of the obstacles students faced in English learning during the pandemic. The challenges faced are unstable networks, difficulty understanding learning materials, and E-learning applications that often experience errors.

The summary of the obstacles students faces while learning English is as follows:

Table 1 Student challenges in the online learning process

No	A student perspective on the challenges of the English online learning process
1.	Unstable network
2.	Difficulty understanding the learning material
3.	E-learning applications that often experience errors

Based on the explanation above, obstacles related to learning English faced by 10th-grade students during the study period of the spread of Covid-19. Obstacles facing students include difficult-to-understand, network unstable, and error E-learning applications. This aligns with the researcher's findings at MAN 1 Ngawi has analyzed.

a. *Unstable internet network*

The unstable internet network certainly affects the online learning process that integrates ICT [44]. This is in line with [45] lack of network stability can inhibit the online learning process. Unsanngging networking issues can interfere with learning between learners and educators at MAN 1 Ngawi.

The researchers' findings showed that learners experienced obstacles when learning online. Geographical conditions or residential areas of students that are difficult to reach by signalling are also aspects of network stability [46]. This leads to a less than optimal English distance learning process. This is in line with the statements of most of the interviewees, as evidenced below:

"Terdapat masalah jaringan yang tidak stabil yangmana hal ini menyebabkan sulitnya saya dalam mengakses aplikasi E-learning untuk mengikuti pembelajaran online bahasa Inggris" (S2)

[There was an unstable networking problem which caused me difficulty in accessing E-learning applications to follow English online learning] (S2)

b. *Difficulty in understanding learning materials*

In emergencies such as the current spread of the Covid-19 virus, learners face various obstacles: a lack of learning materials so that students cannot understand the material provided by teachers, which is categorized as pedagogical challenges [47]. Students who have difficulty understanding learning materials will not be optimal when following the distance learning process [48].

The results of the online questionnaire analysis showed that learners experienced problems in English distance learning during the pandemic. The use of elusive language in learning materials provided by teachers resulted in the absorption of knowledge into English being less than optimal [49]. The following evidence is taken from the results of students' online questionnaires:

"Materi pembelajaran yang diupload oleh guru ada yang sulit dipahami sehingga saya kurang tertarik dengan mata pelajaran bahasa Inggris" (S4)

[The learning materials uploaded by the teacher are difficult to understand, so I am less interested in English subjects] (S4)

c. *E-learning applications that have errors*

An E-learning application is an open-source learning system that uses web applications that can be accessed using a web browser and running on a server [50]. Utilizing technology and information can streamline time, cost, and energy and facilitate communication with learners related to academia. Nevertheless, some learners experience obstacles such as unscheduled task collection, unsupportive online learning environments, and E-learning applications that experience errors that hinder the learning process [51].

According to the above statement, the English learning process at MAN 1 Ngawi has obstacles students face, namely E-learning applications that experience errors.

This is because the media used requires a stable internet network. This is evidenced by the results of the student questionnaire statement below:

"Sejauh ini kesulitan yang saya hadapi yaitu aplikasi E-learning yang sering error sehingga menghambat dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris" (S1)
[So far, the difficulties I have faced are E-learning applications that often error to hinder English learning] (S1)

3.2. Discussions
3.2.1. Challenges in facing the English online learning process by 10th graders at MAN 1 Ngawi

Online learning can run effectively in developed countries, while online learning does not work effectively in some developing countries due to a lack of internet access and less supportive factors. Education is also a focal point of social activities and interactions. If academic activities are stopped, some teens and children will miss out on the social interaction-based activities necessary to develop and learn [52]. Students must continue to learn, especially young adults and underprivileged children, both of whom are affected by the suspension of educational institutions, so this is a big problem that must be addressed [53]. Problems faced by learners during the English online learning process are media platforms that are errors, unsupportive internet connections, and difficulty understanding the learning materials provided.

a. *Unstable network*

Some countries are trying to overcome the closure of educational institutions and the shift of online learning to ensure the continuity of knowledge acquisition between students [54]. All schools in Ngawi Regency also strive to continue to carry out learning, including MAN 1 Ngawi, although with a different method, namely distance learning. [55] has observed that teachers strive for a simple approach to education but can create innovation and teaching methods transitioning from standard face-to-face guidelines to modern technology where sessions are held virtually. However, due to Covid-19 implementing ICT, emergency learning also faces various obstacles: unsupported internet networks. These findings align with [56], who conducted a similar study on the use of technology in education. Since the 2013 curriculum was implemented, the government began providing workshops to several schools related to a combination of technology, content, and pedagogy in a teaching process called TPACK. The problem of online implementation is not only felt by teachers, but students who are involved in the learning process also cannot avoid the problems that arise from the implementation of online learning [57]. The problem experienced by students is not being ready to face the change of learning from the original face-to-face to online, the number of tasks given by teachers, the difficulty of signals, especially when it becomes a power outage, lack of understanding of the materials provided by teachers, supporting tools (HP, laptops, internet quotas) that

are inadequate, lack focusing on students in learning at home because of the additional burden from parents to help work without knowing the time [58].

In accordance with the analysis of online questionnaire results, many previous studies have found the constraints experienced by S2 in inadequate networks. S2 states that students' residence or geographical condition leads to an unstable internet network, which is difficult to reach by internet network or internet network traffic. Students can make various efforts to keep the internet network stable: restart their device, search the nearest Wi-Fi area, and contact the customer service operator for further assistance. The application of ICT in learning requires a stable internet network to not interfere with the course of the learning process. Supporting factors in distance learning include the availability of facilities such as laptops, computers, and gadgets, the availability of networks/signals, quotas to support online applications that can be accessed, the availability of online applications to support the implementation of online learning, and the availability of learning resources that students and teachers can use in the learning process [59].

A researcher can conclude that the challenges faced by S2 in online English subjects are influenced by several factors, one of which is the area where students live unreachably well by networking or the influence of internet traffic. The challenges facing students regarding unsupported networks can hinder the optimization of online learning.

b. *Difficulty in understanding learning materials*

The implementation of ICT-based online learning is not entirely optimal. This is in line with [60] which states that ICT integration in Indonesian educational institutions has a positive impact and perception; integration has not focused on functional and communicative activities in teaching and learning but is still focused on the technical level. Time allocation and technical issues are the main obstacles to integrating ICT in English Foreign Learner (EFL) classes in Indonesia. While there are benefits to this learning, it does not rule out the possibility that the disadvantages of distance learning still exist. The importance of commitment between educators and learners so that learning that integrates ICT can run optimally without obstacles to understanding the material delivered by teachers [61]. However, on the other hand, there is another flurry of either learners or teachers in their respective homes that limit the material of questions they do not understand. So, the hope is that teachers can apply effective teaching to students who need more than just understanding content or pedagogy. This includes pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) theory, which refers to [62]. Student learning difficulties are described by the presence of gaps or distances between expected academic achievement and academic achievement achieved by students in fact (actual achievements) [63]. Thus, learning difficulties are obstacles experienced by learners in the learning process that cause them to get less than optimal results in the learning process. Learning difficulties are everything that makes it not smooth (slow) or hinders a person in learning, understanding and mastering something to be able to achieve the goal [64]. The existence of learning difficulties can be characterized by low or below-average achievements achieved by class groups; the results achieved are not balanced with the effort made and are slow in performing learning tasks [65]. Students who have learning difficulties will be difficult in absorbing the subject matter delivered by the teacher, so students will be lazy in learning, cannot master the material, avoid lessons, and ignore the tasks given by the teacher [66].

Based on online questionnaires, other students also experienced similar obstacles related to the challenges faced by S4 during the online learning process that integrates ICT. Internal and external factors can affect the learning constraints experienced by students. External factors

come from outside the students, such as the community, school, and family environment. In contrast, factors in students are internal factors such as intelligence, motivation, talent, interests, and mental health [67]. Students' difficulty in understanding the material will impact learning achievement because achievement can be obtained from the treatment of learning in school and outside school and the provisions or efforts of students in learning. This is similar to the statement of [68] that the factors that cause students difficulty in understanding learning materials include; (a) lack of interest and attention of students during the learning process, (b) student readiness in receiving subject matter, (c) essential concepts that are prerequisite concepts for learning different concepts, (d) instilling material concepts that are lacking in for students, (e) learning strategies by memorization, (f) lack of practice questions and student strategies in solving problems. S4 also experienced this during the distance learning process, which implements ICT, inhibiting learning English. In the implementation of learning amid the Covid-19 pandemic conditions, it will be different from the usual conditions. Learning in pandemic conditions makes educators unable to meet directly with students [69]. In pandemic conditions, learning is implemented by using communication media such as HP as a tool to convey materials [70]. Problems that must be faced occur both in teachers, students and parents. This leads to ineffective online learning. Problem is a gap from what is expected with existing reality, and from that, it requires handling to improve or achieve the expected [71].

In accordance with the above statement, the researcher concluded that the obstacles experienced by S4 arise because one of the materials presented by teachers is less attractive to students and challenging to understand learning materials. Therefore, students should consult with educators they face not achieving the desired achievements.

c. *E-learning applications that have errors*

[72] state that modern education is experiencing new challenges due to the urgent transition to online learning. Online method change should be considered a method for sharing knowledge and developing the professional competencies of the younger generation without eliminating the benefits of direct interaction. A well-planned design is needed to integrate E-learning, including components related to E-learning [73]. Online learning requires tools that support effective and optimal learning. Nevertheless, there are challenges facing educators, parents, and even learners that hinder the learning process. This is in line with research conducted by [74] that the constraints of the implementation of the distance learning process include; ICT uses Jardiknas network where the internet connection is not as good as others, E-learning applications sometimes have errors, and late response in response to the initiation of learners. The problems of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic include students not understanding factors derived from teachers, materials delivered by teachers online, there are limitations of teachers in using online learning support technology, and teachers who cannot exercise full control over students when online learning takes place [75]. Then the factors that come from students are less active and interested in participating in online learning; not all students have devices or media that can support online learning, and the absence of internet access [76].

The online questionnaire results showed similar perspectives regarding the constraints faced by S1 on media platforms, which often experience errors. The media platform used during online learning by MAN 1 Ngawi is E-learning provided by madrasah. S1 said media platforms often experience errors because applications are rarely opened or updated and require a stable internet network. The consequences that will be caused if the application is rarely opened or updated then vulnerable to errors, not getting new features and menus, will be the

target of a virus attack. E-learning applications require a stable internet network, which significantly affects. The obstacles faced by 10th graders lead to obstruction of the online learning process that integrates ICT.

Based on the above explanation, the researcher concluded that the obstacles experienced by S1 during distance learning arise due to several factors, one of which is the need for a stable internet network in operating E-learning applications.

4. Conclusion

In this part, the researcher describes the conclusion based on the previous data analyzed using some theory. The researcher concluded that the online English learning process implementing ICT experienced several challenges faced by 10th-grade students at MAN 1 Ngawi. Students' constraints during the online learning process that integrates ICT include difficulties in understanding learning materials, errors in E-learning applications, and unstable networks. The problem experienced by both teachers and students is that internet connectivity is not supportive to be less than optimal. The application of ICT-based learning must require careful preparation for devices or infrastructure to hamper teaching and learning activities.

The results showed that 10th graders experienced some difficulties in English learning that were applied during this emergency. This is because several factors, namely student residence or geographical conditions, affect the internet network's stability, the use of language is difficult to understand, and the rareness in updating E-learning applications makes frequent errors. However, the hope is that students can pursue strategies to overcome the obstacles faced during the learning process.

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