



## SUPPORTING FACTORS FACED BY STUDENTS IN LEARNING ENGLISH IN THE NEW NORMAL ERA

**Novayanti Sopia Rukmana<sup>1</sup>, Geminastiti Sakkir<sup>2\*</sup>, Ahmad Bukhori Muslim<sup>3</sup>,  
Martin Andrew<sup>4</sup>**

Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia<sup>1,2</sup>

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia<sup>3</sup>

Otego Polytechnic NZ, New Zealand<sup>4</sup>

Email: geminastitisakkir@unm.ac.id

**Abstract.** This article was a part of the research with the title "Students' English Learning Strategies in the New Normal Era". The research method was the qualitative descriptive design. This research was used to determine the supporting factors faced by students in learning English in the new normal era. The subjects that will be involved are students in SMA/MA/SMK/equivalent in South Sulawesi Province. The data was obtained from the questionnaire. The qualitative data were analyzed through qualitative data analysis techniques consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. The results of the analysis will be in the form of a description of the supporting factors faced in learning English in the New Normal period. This description will be useful for learners, teachers, policymakers, and theorists of education and foreign language learning. This research is related to the implementation of students' English learning strategies in the new normal era. The researcher distributed the questionnaire on the Google Form link to several high school students in South Sulawesi and 206 students sent back the results. The results of the study showed that many supporting factors faced by students in learning English during the current New Normal (before the Pandemic, during and after the Covid-19 Pandemic). These factors and challenges come from student conditions, teacher conditions, school conditions, environmental conditions, material conditions, learning processes, administrative processes, and the application of technology.

**Keywords:** Factors, Learning, Strategies, New Normal.

### INTRODUCTION

The process of teaching and learning involves a lot of strategy. In order to make the learning activity successful and efficient, strategy is a task that both the teacher and the student must complete during the teaching and learning process. Of course, the teacher has the first obligation for designing a strategy and it followed the students in learning activities. According to Silver, et al, "The goal of teaching is to weave together a conversation that unites these disparate individuals around a common core of learning. Strategies are the different types or styles of plans teachers use to achieve this goal". The ability to select an effective speaking instruction technique for the students comes to the teacher. Various methods are used and created during the

teaching and learning process. Strategies employed to achieve the ability to write and speak would be different because the goals of each skill are not the same. Writing focuses on the ability to produce written language, whereas speaking focuses on producing oral language. Moreover, the strategies for teaching English skills should be made appropriate for each skill to attain the expected outcomes. The students need a suitable strategy for gaining the materials from the teacher. The strategies which are used by the teacher have to match the student's ability and condition. The speaking strategies help the teacher to conduct teaching speaking better. The teachers' strategies that were implemented in seventh grade will be different from the teachers' strategies in eighth and ninth grade. The teachers' strategies in classes in which the students have high motivation are also different from the class in which the students have low students motivation.

In Indonesia, it's more common for English to primarily be taught and learned as a foreign language. This implies that rather than in the course of daily communication, English is mostly learned and taught in classrooms. In Indonesia, English language learners lack easy access to using the language for communication outside of the classroom. As stated by Oxford and Shearin (1994), a foreign language in this context is a language learnt only during formal education. As a result, Indonesia provides different challenges to English language teaching and learning that are not present in nations like Hong Kong, where English is more often spoken on a daily.

Berns (1990) defined foreign language learning as learning a target language in a country that does not use this language as a speech community. Because the target language (in this case, English) is not the primary communication medium among people, there aren't many opportunities for learners of foreign languages to use it outside of the classroom. When a target language is seldom used outside the classroom, input and language use in the classroom are essential (Suryati, 2013).

According to Sulistiyo (2009), there are several factors creating difficulties in teaching EFL in Indonesia. First, EFL teachers must teach students in large classes, often with more than 50 students. Although the definition of a 'large' class in language learning varies (Wright, 2005), this number is not ideal for a language classroom. Second, not all students who attend English classes are motivated. English is a compulsory subject, which means that students must learn the language for examination purposes; however, their exposure to English occurs only for approximately two hours per week. Low student motivation and lack English standard requirements are challenges for teachers as well as students as learners. Third, at both school and university, the English-teaching focus is largely on reading skills (Sawir, 2005; Setiyadi, 2001; Sugirin, 1999), with less emphasis on English grammar and vocabulary.

In conclusion, a number of factors seem to make it difficult to teach and study EFL in Indonesia. Success in EFL teaching and learning is significantly influenced by

various of factors, including teacher qualifications and low English proficiency, classroom size, student motivation, classroom-oriented learning, and a lack of learning materials (Bradford, 2007; Kassing, 2011; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Sulistiyo, 2009; Yulia, 2013).

Curriculum change policies in Indonesia have occurred several times a long time ago, and this too happened when the Covid-19 Pandemic struck. The spread of Coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) is now started to make an impact on the education system. This is being done in an effort to stop the transmission of Covid-19. It is hoped that all educational institutions will stop from conducting their regular activities, which will help to slow the spread of Covid-19. The same thing has been done by various countries that are exposed to this virus, with lockdown or quarantine rules implemented to reduce interactions between lots of individuals who could help the spread of Covid-19. Concerning the spread of the coronavirus and its influences on teaching and learning programs appear some questions must be answered.

Based on the description above, it is necessary to observe the English students' strategies in learning EFL during curriculum changes that have occurred in Indonesia. Based on this condition researchers are interested to conduct a research entitled: **"The Supporting Factors faced by Students in Learning English in the New Normal Era"**.

## **METHOD**

In this study, the researchers use qualitative descriptive research. Regarding this method, the researchers are interested in getting data on the supporting factors faced by students in learning English in the new normal era. To answer this question, the researchers collected qualitative data concurrently throughout this study. The subjects of this study were SMA/ MA/ SMK/ equivalent students in South Sulawesi Province. This research wants to see the strategies used by students in learning English in the new normal era. The number of schools consists of about 535, the numbers of English teachers are approximately 1605 people, and the numbers of students are approximately 50,000 students. The instrument was carried out online so that researchers hope that many students can be involved in this research. In around a month, there were 206 students sent back the result. The data analysis was a process of searching and arranging the data taken from the questionnaire. Qualitative data analysis consists of three current flows of activity: data reduction, display, and data verification.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This study deals with the implementation of English learning strategies in this new normal era. The researchers start distributing the online questionnaires to the students about the supporting factors faced by students in learning English in the new normal era. The researchers share the questionnaire in Google Form link to some senior high school English students in South Sulawesi and there were 206 students sent back the result.

### **a. Factors influencing English students' strategies before the Pandemic era**

Many factors influenced the learning strategies of English senior high school students before the Pandemic Covid- 19 era. There are some students' reasons for the change of the curriculum implemented in Covid- 19 Pandemic era.

#### 1) Students Condition:

- Basic knowledge or pre- knowledge, cognitive level, ability of students (S8, S12, S16, S30, S31, S33, S47, S57, S60, S62, S66, S71, S78, S80, S95, S96, S108, S120, S122, S123, S125, S134, S138, S139, S141, S177, S192, S194, S197, S198)
- Students' vocabulary (S3, S17, S19, S82, S91, S92)
- Students' motivation, mood, feeling, interest, spirit (S10, S39, S69, S70, S87, S92, S93, S98, S104, S106, S115, S127, S129, S131, S163, S188)
- Students' response, feedback, attention, readiness, presence and activities (S2, S13, S14, S20, S22, S26, S38, S44, S73, S76, S79, S90, S132, S142, S144, S145, S146, S206)
- Reading interest (S19, S150)

#### 2) Teachers Condition:

- Teaching strategies and method (S9, S10, S19, S29, S77, S84, S105, S106, S135, S136, S143, S158, S181, S201)
- Teachers quality (S7, S101, S112, S173, S174)
- Teachers readiness/ presence/ support (S4, S7, S36, S48, S52, S94, S172, S173, S174, S175)
- Readiness of classroom management (S28, S68, S76, S125)
- Mastery of teaching materials (S15, S34, S109, S110, S111)

#### 3) School Condition:

- School facilities and infrastructure (S6, S103)
- Internet network, communication signals, quota (S43, S148, S155, S161)
- Competition atmosphere (S182)

#### 4) Environment Condition:

- Time allocation/ duration (S1, S101, S119, S147, S149, S167, S188, S189)
- Learning environment (S7, S9, S49, S90, S152, S166, S169, S199)
- Social and/or economic background (S55, S188)
- Corona virus (S61)
- Distance students' house and school (S55)
- Transportation (S188)
- Learning challenge (S27, S41)

5) Learning Process:

- Face-to-face learning (S54, S99, S103, S107, S178, S179, S180, S183, S184, S185, S186, S187, S190, S191, S193, S195, S196, S200, S202, S203, S204, S205)
- Online learning (S37, S46, S50, S51, S58, S86, S97)
- Practical learning (S16, S78)
- Learning strategies variations (S5, S23, S40, S42, S63, S102, S116, S117, S126, S65, S167)

6) Materials Condition:

- Readiness of teaching materials (S190)
- Media, tools and learning resources (S75, S190, S206)
- Curriculum change (S65, S124, S158, S159)

**b. Factors that influence students' strategies during the current Pandemic era**

Many factors influenced the learning strategies of English senior high school students during the current Pandemic Covid- 19 era. There are some students' reasons for the change of the curriculum implemented in Covid- 19 Pandemic era.

1) Students Condition:

- Basic knowledge or pre- knowledge, cognitive level, ability of students (S10, S25, S30, S31, S32, S33, S39, S50, S51, S53, S60, S78, S95, S96, S98, S106, S111, S120, S123, S125, S141, S159, S190, S192, S194, S197, S198)
- Students' motivation, mood, feeling, interest, spirit (S16, S36, S46, S48, S54, S58, S59, S62, S70, S87, S104, S115, S118, S132, S166, S167, S169)
- Students' attention, readiness, presence and activities (S12, S14, S26, S63, S68, S16, S121)
- Students healthy (S65)

2) Teachers Condition:

- Teachers' readiness/ presence/ support (S4)
- Teachers interaction (S183, S184, S185, S195, S202, S203, S204, S205)
- Mastery of teaching materials (S3, S15, S34, S82, S173, S174, S175)
- Teaching strategies and method (S28, S99, S101, S196, S201)

3) Environment Condition:

- Learning environment (S13, S76, S90, S93, S188, S199)
- Time allocation/ duration (S19, S49, S117, S119, S122, S147, S149, S165, S188, S189)
- Corona virus (S23, S29, S61, S84, S94, S100, S129, S143)
- Parent attention (S28)
- Student living environment (S8)

4) Learning Process:

- Less eye contacts (S1, S48, S75, S107, S150, S181, S182, S206)
- Less communication (S7, S9, S57, S71, S86, S107, S152, S177, S178)
- Online learning (S20, S138, S139, S142, S179, S180, S186, S187, S191, S200)
- Learning activities (S2, S6, S17, S21, S38, S41, S44, S45, S47, S73, S76, S79, S135, S145, S146)
- Learning strategies (S135)
- Students participation (S126)

5) Materials Condition:

- Readiness of teaching materials (S135)
- Curriculum change (S40, S76, S124)

6) Technology Implementation:

- Internet network, communication signals, internet quota (S7, S9, S24, S37, S43, S55, S66, S69, S91, S109, S110, S130, S144, S148, S155, S161, S173, S174, S175, S188)
- Use learning applications (S22, S102)
- Use social media (S28, S89, S92, S101)
- Use mobile phone/ handphone (S36, S52, S80, S92, S105)

From the findings and explanation above, the researchers can say that the factors faced before the pandemic and during the pandemic Covid-19 came from the condition of students, teacher conditions, school conditions, environmental conditions, learning processes, administrative processes, and technology implementation.

Many electronic or e-learning media are currently used in the learning strategies used by English students during the Covid-19 era. They benefit from current technological improvements. Students can be motivated and encouraged to master language skills as such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing English through e-learning (Sakkir, 2016). The strategies they use in improving their language skills, grammar and vocabulary have changed from before and after the Covid-19 pandemic based on online learning.

This is similar with O'Malley and Chamot's classification of Language Learning Strategies (SBB) into metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategies (1990: 197). Metacognitive strategies include selective attention activities (e.g., paying attention to certain language aspects such as keywords or phrases), planning activities (e.g., planning the organization of spoken or written discourse), monitoring activities, and evaluating activities (e.g., re-check understanding after reading or listening to a discourse). Cognitive strategies include activities of repetition, grouping, inferring, summarizing, applying, using pictures to understand the meaning, and utilizing



linguistic knowledge. Additionally, cooperative activities, clarifying queries, and self-reinforcement are all examples of social/affective strategies.

## CONCLUSIONS

Many factors influenced the learning strategies of English senior high school students before the Pandemic Covid- 19 era. There are some students' reasons for the change of the learning strategies implemented in Covid- 19 Pandemic era. Most of them such as Basic knowledge or pre-knowledge, cognitive level, ability of students; Students' vocabulary; Students' motivation, mood, feeling, interest, spirit; Students' response, feedback, attention, readiness, presence and activities; Teaching strategies and method; Teachers quality; Teachers readiness/ presence/ support; Readiness of classroom management; Mastery of teaching materials; Internet network, communication signals, quota; Time allocation/ duration; Learning environment; Face-to-face learning; Online learning; Learning strategies variations; and Curriculum change.

Many factors influenced the learning strategies of English senior high school students during the current Pandemic Covid- 19 era. There are some students' reasons for the change of the learning strategies implemented in Covid- 19 Pandemic era. Most of them such as, Basic knowledge or pre- knowledge, cognitive level, ability of students; Students' motivation, mood, feeling, interest, spirit; Students' attention, readiness, presence and activities; Teachers interaction; Mastery of teaching materials; Teaching strategies and method; Learning environment; Time allocation/ duration; Coronavirus; Fewer eye contacts; Less communication; Online learning; Learning activities; Internet network, communication signals, internet quota; Use social media; and Use mobile phone/ handphone.

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