

## **THE CHALLENGES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING SPEAKING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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**Abstract:** Speaking is the ability to express oneself in the situation or the activity. To provide a meaningful communication, students need to master speaking skill. COVID-19 pandemic forces the teaching and learning activities carrying out online which become a new challenge for teachers and students all over the world. This paper focuses on the challenges in teaching and learning speaking during COVID-19 pandemic and the possible solution to overcome those challenges. Several related literature are used to describe and analyze what are the online learning challenges and how teachers deal with the challenges especially speaking. The findings revealed various challenges from the general problem related to the internet connection and devices to the specified one such as students' readiness to learn speaking which leads to lack of speaking skills, do not know what to speak because of unable to elaborate the materials given. The use of integrated technology as the learning media and teachers' strategies and creativity to build a good environment in class is one of the solutions to encourage and to improve students' speaking skill in online learning during the pandemic.

**Keywords:** *COVID-19 pandemic, learning medias for speaking, online learning challenges, speaking skills, teaching and learning speaking challenges.*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The novel corona virus found in 2019 which cause corona virus disease (COVID-19) had been a pandemic to all over the world, and kept increasing since 2020. All sectors of society got the effect of this pandemic situation, not only health and economics sectors but also education sector. UNESCO presents the data about the impact of COVID-19 in education which stated that almost a billion learners are infected, 55.2% of the learners enrolled in all level of education. Schools and higher education institutions are closed in several countries that have high numbers of infected people.

Indonesia is one of the countries that has been getting impact of this pandemic. According to Woldometers, a web which shows live statistics and coronavirus news all over the world, Indonesia had the most active cases of COVID-19 in Asia in 2021. It means that Indonesia also became one of the countries that has been getting impact of this pandemic, so did education.

Nadiem Makarim (2020) as the Minister of Education and Culture of Indonesia issued a regulation that schools should conduct online learning for COVID-19 affected areas. After that regulation issued, he continued to state that all education units have to carry out online learning due to the increasing spread of COVID-19 that can harm the health of students, teachers, and educational staff (Mendikbud, 2020). Because of that, online learning suddenly became a new challenge for students and teachers.

Based on Indonesian Government Regulation No. 32, 2013, article 70, English is stated as a compulsory subject that has been taught and has been included as one of the subjects that is tested in national final exam in junior and senior high schools. English includes the four language skills. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. According to Harmer (2007), the skills are divided into two. They are productive skills and receptive skills. The productive skills are speaking and writing while the receptive skills are listening and reading. Speaking and writing are productive because learners need to articulate words and write to produce language while listening and reading are receptive because the learners receive language by listening to conversation, music, and video and also by reading comprehension, poem, newspaper, poetry, book, etc.

According to Orwig (1999), when students learn foreign language, first they should be taught how to speak. Therefore, it means that speaking is one of the important skills in English that should be mastered by students beside writing, reading and listening. It is such an active skill and one of the ways for students to share their ideas, feelings, and opinion.

According to Nunan (1991), mastering speaking skill is the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language, because of that reason, speaking skill is believed as the most influential part in language learning because if the students want to master a language, they have to master the speaking skill too. To provide a meaningful communication, one of the skills that the students need to master is speaking skill.

This paper presents an analysis of empirical literature which focuses on the challenges in teaching and learning speaking during COVID-19 pandemic and how to cope with the challenges.

## **METHODOLOGY**

An interpretive synthesis of the literature related to the challenges and solutions in teaching and learning speaking during pandemic. Empirical studies were included to understand what has already been done in the teaching and learning process. There are criteria set to limit the field. The focus of the studies had to be on online learning challenges, teaching and learning speaking challenges, and the solutions. The year of the publication should be from 2020-2021, when COVID-19 pandemic happened.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***The Challenges in Teaching and Learning Speaking***

COVID-19 pandemic suddenly makes teaching and learning activity implementing online which become a challenge for students and teachers (Atmojo and Nugroho, 2020). Online learning is a method of education that takes place over the internet, so that internet connection is really important to do this learning, problems in the internet really can influence the teaching and learning activities (Khatoony & Nezhadmehr 2020) and Aliyyah et al (2020) state that the success of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic was determined by the readiness of technology in line with the national curriculum, support and collaboration from all stakeholders, including government, schools, teachers, parents and the community.

Speaking is described as the activity as the ability to express oneself in the situation or the activity to report acts, or situation in precise words or the ability to converse or to express a sequence of ideas fluently (Ladouse, 1991). In communicating, speaking plays an important role because speakers not only can utter the words but also able to convey the meaning of the speech so that the listeners can understand the purpose of the communication. It becomes one of the difficulties in speaking.

According to Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) the problems of learning speaking are (1) understanding the conversation; (2) less of vocabularies, (3) pronunciation; (4) shy; (5) worrying for making grammatical errors, (6) lack of technology, and (7) lack of motivation. Their research also found that shy and lack of vocabularies influence their willingness to speak, supported by Azher, Anwar and Naz (2010) fear of speaking in front of each other has the higher presentage that can influence the performance of the students. Arianto (2021) state that using an application that requires a strong internet connection and needs to pay to get full access can hinder the learning activities.

### ***The Solutions for The Challenges in Teaching and Learning Speaking***

According to Nurwahyuni (2020) learning medias and technology can be a solution for teaching and learning speaking, but it has its own advantages and disadvantages, teacher should have the competencies to use and choose the suitable medias, such as students prefer to learn English by using online platform and social media then video recorder and voice note because it looks like a face-to-face learning, although they felt more anxious to use it, supported by Puspitasari, Nofianto and Huda (2021) students were more confident if they have time to speak and practice their speaking. They were not embarrassed to express their idea if they were voice called one by one by the teacher in speaking class (Fitriani, Bandung and Kadri, 2020). Students also said that online speaking assignment improved their speaking skill, videotaping task allowed them to edit and improve their quality (Alzamil, 2021). Al-Jarf (2021) state that teacher can give marks for students assignment, each week to motivate them to be more active in learning.

According to Fitri, Hermansyah, Pratiwi, and Aswadijaya (2021) flexibility of learning implementation can influence the performance of the students because they were not pressured by time and they could determine for themselves the place where they want to take part in the learning. They also state that teacher has an important role to guide and motivate the students to learn, make a good environment for learning so that students can follow the process well and teacher also should have a good teaching strategies that makes the students were not bored and capture the material taught by the teacher properly.

All the solution for the challenges are from the teacher. All has to do with the teacher. If the school or institution has a good and competent teacher or instruction designer, the challenges can be faced easier and can be minimalized.

Taking an example of Indonesian teacher, the ministry of education and arts mentioned that minimum UKG score that teacher should have is 55, but according to the data in 2020 teacher's UKG score was 53,02 means it is still lower than the target score. Actually government has found a solution which issued a regulation that before being a legal teacher, graduated students from teacher training and education faculty should join a program called PPG, this aims to prepare and improve the teaching skills and competencies (Zulfitri, Setiawati, and Ismaini, 2019). The fact that the teacher's skills and competencies is considered as low, the government should not only prepare the future teachers but also the teachers who have already been taught (Leonard, 2015).

## **CONCLUSION**

Teaching and learning speaking has been a challenge in EFL classroom, moreover in the pandemic situation, the challenges can be from teachers or from the students. They cannot ignore the challenges but overcome the challenges. The main challenges of online learning is the internet connection, because online learning needs internet. The speaking challenges that often showed in the articles are shyness (the anxiety of the students), lack of vocabulary and do not know what to speak. Several articles suggested that teacher should use suitable learning medias and technology are really helpful in implementing online learning and solve the problems in online learning especially speaking, not only medias and technology but also teacher role to guide and motivate the students to learn, make a good environment for learning so that students can follow the process well and teacher also should have a good teaching strategies that makes the students were not bored and capture the material taught by the teacher properly.

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