AN EXAMINATION OF ENGLISH TEACHERS' METHODS IN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL EFL CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis strategi pengajaran yang diterapkan oleh guru Bahasa Inggris dalam kelas EFL (English as a Foreign Language) untuk siswa kelas VIII di salah satu pondok pesantren yang mengintegrasikan sistem pendidikan formal. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode pengumpulan data berupa wawancara dan observasi kelas guna memperoleh pemahaman mendalam mengenai penerapan strategi pengajaran oleh para guru. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa para guru menerapkan berbagai strategi, antara lain penjelasan tata bahasa, kegiatan English Club setiap hari Kamis, permainan daring seperti Skribbl, Stopots, kuis interaktif, dialog berpasangan, serta pemutaran video berbahasa Inggris. Strategi-strategi tersebut dinilai mampu membantu siswa dalam mempelajari Bahasa Inggris meskipun terdapat keterbatasan sumber daya, seperti bahan ajar dan buku panduan pembelajaran. Temuan dalam penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan kontribusi yang bermanfaat bagi guru, lembaga pendidikan, dan peneliti dalam mengembangkan strategi pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris yang lebih efektif di masa yang akan datang.

Kata kunci: Strategi Pengajaran, Guru Bahasa Inggris, EFL, Pondok Pesantren

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze English teachers' teaching strategies in EFL classes for 8th grade junior high school students in one of the pesantren huts that also has a formal school system. This study uses a qualitative method, including interviews and classroom observations, to understand how teachers apply their teaching strategies. The results show that teachers use various strategies, such as grammar explanations, English club activities every Thursday, online games such as skribbl, stopots, quizzes, dialogs and watching English videos. These strategies help students learn English despite the lack of resources such as teaching materials, guidebooks in learning. This study aims to provide useful insights for teachers, schools, and researchers in developing future learning strategies.

Keywords: Teaching Strategies, English Teacher, EFL, Islamic Boarding School

INTRODUCTION

In an age that has now developed rapidly. Various technologies, science and other sciences are also very much influencing world civilization. It is not the importance of education itself, because it is through education that the world will go to the gates of progress. Especially in English education. In today's fast-paced world, education is a very important aspect in building a civilization, especially the Islamic civilization itself, which the majority of the Indonesian State adheres to today.

Language is an important component in building education. English is now the universal language of mankind throughout the world, including among boarding schools, even though it has become a mandatory aspect that must be mastered, especially in the English speaking ability of the students. Proficiency in English speaking is a crucial component of learning English, particularly in the modern globalized world. Nonetheless, grammar and reading are still the main emphasis of English instruction in many Islamic boarding institutions. English is one of the

required topics in junior and senior high schools, according to law No. 21/2016 on standardized content.

English's prominence as a worldwide language places a burden on everyone, particularly educators. According to (Annisa Najiyah Aulia, 2021), Language is a bridge that allows people all over the world to communicate with one another. Language, including English, is employed in more than only education; it is also used for communication and other purposes.

English is an international language that is classified as a foreign language in Indonesia. In Indonesian schools, English is regarded as a tough subject to teach kids. There are many pupils who become idle or mute when learning English in and out of class. English has become the universal language that the majority of people all over the world want to study and perfect as a second or foreign language. Indonesia is one of the countries that speak English as a foreign language. English gradually attracts Indonesian society to use it on a variety of circumstances and serves as a means of self-expression. Speaking is an action that individuals undertake virtually every second in their everyday lives to explain what they feel, need, and think, therefore mastering speaking skills is very important, especially for English learners as a second or even a foreign language. Mastering speaking abilities involves great work because speaking requires not just a succession of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences, but also ideas, courage, self-confidence, and knowledge of who we are speaking to.

Speaking ability is seen as the primary indicator of whether or not someone understands and is fluent in one language (Achmad Baidawi, 2020). According to Siti Tholi'ah, (2023) in her paper, in teaching English, the teacher must be able to help students achieve the goal of teaching English to master the four skills in English. To help students master skills in English, teachers as educators who have a big role in schools need strategies to support the teaching and learning process. Teaching strategies have a strong relationship with learning objectives.

Islamic boarding schools are Islamic educational institutes where students can pursue knowledge. Islamic boarding schools also play a crucial role in language education, particularly English, which has four essential skills: speaking, reading, writing,

and listening. Speaking, particularly in Arabic, is the most common skill used at Islamic boarding schools (Muhajir, R., Jaelani, A., Syhabudin A., 2020). Speaking skills are a crucial component of learning and improving English. Students who already have the ability to talk will find it simpler to convey their ideas, emotions, and feelings, exchange information, and even create social relationships with others (Annisa Najiyah Aulia, 2021). Students in Islamic boarding schools, which mainly use traditional teaching methods, are frequently bored, which impedes involvement and learning. In this context, the usage of ICT can be extremely beneficial. LCD projectors and PowerPoint are two popular ICT tools for language learning (Alya Soiratul Hasanah, 2025).

This research was conducted at an Islamic boarding school that also implements a formal school system, located in Bogor Regency. The title of this study is "An Examination of English Teachers' Methods in Islamic Boarding School EFL Classrooms."

Problem Formulation
1. What teaching strategies are used by English teachers in the EFL classroom at the Islamic boarding school?
2. What are the challenges faced by English teachers in applying the strategies in the EFL classroom?

METHOD
This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was selected to allow an in-depth exploration of the English teacher's strategies in an EFL classroom setting within a boarding school that also implements a formal education system. The case study design enabled the researcher to investigate how these teaching strategies were implemented and how they influenced the learning process in the given context.

The research was conducted at an Islamic boarding school in Indonesia that integrates English Language Teaching (ELT) into its formal curriculum. The participants involved in this study included English teachers, Grade 8 junior high school students, and the head of curriculum or the deputy caretaker of the pesantren. These participants were selected to gain comprehensive

insights from multiple perspectives within the educational environment.

To collect the necessary data, the researcher used three main techniques. First, participatory observation was carried out, allowing the researcher to be directly involved in the English learning process and to observe how speaking and other English skills were developed in real-time classroom interactions. Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with both teachers and students to explore their experiences, perceptions, and engagement with the teaching strategies, both within and outside the classroom. Third, documentation was gathered, including syllabi, learning modules, video recordings of teaching activities, and assessment records, to support and enrich the observational and interview data.

The data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages. The first stage is data reduction, in which data from interviews and observations were simplified, categorized, and organized. The second stage is data presentation, where the information was arranged into descriptive narratives to facilitate understanding and interpretation. The final stage is conclusion drawing and verification, in which the researcher identifies patterns, relationships, and key findings related to the integration of ELT strategies in the boarding school context.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
English Teachers: Definition and Role
In the field of education, teachers occupy a central and unique role as primary facilitators of the learning process. According to Law No. 16 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers (Article 1), a teacher is a professional who is responsible for educating, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students in formal education, particularly in basic and secondary levels. English teachers not only serve as sources of knowledge but also act as classroom managers who influence the learning environment. As stated by Puan Suri Mira Annisa (2021), teachers bear greater responsibility than students, as they supervise all classroom activities while also imparting knowledge. During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers played a crucial role in maintaining students' motivation to learn, even through online platforms (Novrika Nartaningrum, 2020). This emphasizes the enduring importance of teachers in both physical and virtual classrooms.

Teaching Strategies: Definition, Importance, and Types
Teaching is a dynamic interaction between instruction and learning. As Cut Nana (2023) points out, teaching is primarily aimed at transferring knowledge and requires teachers to select from a variety of strategies. Mastery of these strategies is crucial, especially for English teachers, due to the complex and evolving nature of language learning. Effective teaching strategies not only enhance students' academic outcomes but also affect their attitudes, engagement, and motivation toward learning. According to Ali Akbar Khansir (2021), effective strategies help teachers tailor instruction based on students' individual abilities and foster a deeper understanding of the content. Furthermore, through techniques such as project-based learning, group discussions, and the integration of technology, students can develop communication skills in authentic settings (Nina Rosiana Putri, 2021). Ahmad Yudi Wahyudin (2021) found that students' academic success—particularly in speaking, reading, and writing—correlates positively with the quality of teaching strategies used.

There are several common teaching strategies employed in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classrooms. These include Task-Based Learning (TBL), which emphasizes real-world tasks and authentic language use (Muhammad Badrus Sholeh, 2021). Another approach is gamification, where game elements such as quizzes, points, and leaderboards—commonly implemented through platforms like Kahoot and Quizizz—are used to increase student motivation (Maria Jimenez-Sanchez, 2020). In addition, the use of movies and digital media has become popular for enhancing contextual understanding and improving speaking skills (Murshidi, 2020). The choice of strategy often depends on the learning objectives, students' proficiency levels, and available resources.

The EFL Classroom: Definition and Context
An EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom refers to a learning environment where English is taught in a country where it is not the primary or official language. As defined by the

British Council, EFL involves learning and using English as an additional language in a non-English-speaking country. In such contexts, materials are typically designed for learners studying English within their own countries or for those participating in short-term English courses abroad. EFL materials differ from ESL (English as a Second Language) materials, which often focus on practical or "survival English" for people living in English-speaking environments. In EFL classrooms, the emphasis is on structured, guided learning, often within school-based systems where exposure to the target language outside the classroom may be limited.

Islamic Boarding Schools: Definition, Types, and Challenges in English Teaching

Islamic boarding schools, or pesantren, are traditional religious educational institutions in Indonesia where students (santri) live and engage in both religious and general education. These schools place a strong emphasis on Islamic values and practices. In recent years, many pesantren have incorporated English into their curriculum to help students develop global competencies (Habiburrahim, 2022). This integration represents a growing recognition of the need for students to be equipped with skills relevant to both religious life and global communication.

Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia can be classified into two types: traditional and modern. Traditional pesantren focus primarily on religious education and the development of strong moral character, often using classical texts and conventional teaching methods (Uswatun Hasanah, 2023). In contrast, modern pesantren seek to integrate religious instruction with general education and emphasize academic achievement and non-academic skills, aiming to prepare students to adapt to contemporary societal challenges (Mawardi Muhammad Nur, 2021).

Despite these advancements, teaching English in Islamic boarding schools still presents several challenges. One major issue is resistance to change in methodologies. Teachers are now expected to adopt blended or fully online learning models, which can be overwhelming and discouraging, particularly when dealing with complex technology or unfamiliar digital tools. This shift challenges both pedagogical practices and professional identities (Lorimer). Another

pressing issue is limited access to resources, such as teaching materials and stable internet connections, which are essential for modern English instruction (Hafizah Rifiyanti, 2024). Classroom management and decreased student engagement are also significant obstacles. The constant exposure to digital distractions, such as smartphones and social media, has reduced students' attention spans and motivation. Many students in pesantren have limited time, resources, and opportunities to practice English, making it difficult for them to remain engaged. Roi Boy Jon (2021) argues that student motivation must be actively nurtured by English teachers to ensure effective learning. In this context, integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be highly beneficial. Tools like LCD projectors and PowerPoint presentations are often used to create more interactive and engaging language learning environments (Alya Soiratul Hasanah, 2025).

CONCLUSION

According to the study's findings, English teachers in pesantren environments—which also have official school systems—use innovative and diverse teaching techniques to make the most of their limited resources. Direct grammar explanations, regular Thursday English club events, the use of internet games like Skribbl and Stopots, quizzes, and English and Dialog films are some of the tactics that have been shown to be successful. Teachers are nevertheless able to create an engaging learning environment and motivate pupils to actively learn English despite the lack of instructional resources and manuals. These tactics highlight the value of creativity and flexibility in teaching English as a foreign language, particularly in a pesantren setting. This finding can serve as the foundation for creating more appropriate and contextualized teaching methods. It can also serve as motivation for other educators and researchers to keep investigating learning tactics that are pertinent to regional circumstances.

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