



“It’s Challenging”: Pre-Service Teachers in Teaching Students at Islamic Elementary Level Post Covid-19 Pandemic

Herman Khunaivi, Syarifatul Fitri Hidayah

STAI Al-Anwar Sarang, Rembang, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

Email: khunaivipgmi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, swift changes in the mode of instruction have caused teachers to face new challenges and situations in the classroom. These changes have resulted in new experiences for teachers to deal with. The purposes of this study were to explore how pre-service teachers prepared themselves in the teaching and learning process in the classroom and what made them challenging in teaching students at the Islamic elementary level. Through joining teaching practice at the Islamic elementary level directly, it made pre-service teachers challenged in doing such kinds of teaching and learning processes in handling the students in the classroom. To overcome these problems, the pre-service teachers employed such kinds of strategies for example Discovery Learning strategies, Contextual Teaching-Learning strategies, and utilizing the “Snake and ladder” and also “Beberan” Game Board as creative media in their teaching and learning process. The implication of this study was as pre-service teachers needed to develop an awareness of the teaching strategies for teaching students at the Islamic elementary level. Culling the appropriate strategies and media were needed in teaching the students at the Islamic elementary level to engage the students to activate joining in the classroom.

Keywords: Pre-Service Teachers, Teaching Strategies, Islamic Elementary Students, Post Covid-19 Pandemic

First Receive:

08 November 2022

Revised:

03 June 2023

Accepted:

15 August 2023

Final Proof Received:

20 October 2023

Published:

01 December 2023

How to cite (in APA style):

Khunaivi, Herman & Hidayah, S.F. (2023). “It’s Challenging”: Pre-Service Teachers in Teaching Students at Islamic Elementary Level Post Covid-19 Pandemic. *ELITE Journal*, 5(4), 841-848

INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic is not only a serious public health emergency, but also a political, economic, social, and educational crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic raises awareness of childcare as an important economic component, education as well as the value of the often undervalued and underappreciated work of early childhood educators (Shin & Puig, 2021). In the coming years, research will be conducted across a wide range of disciplines to investigate the medical, political, economic, social, and educational factors that define our current situation. Many of these issues will be of interest to strategies in teaching and learning, media, and technology readers (Scully et al., 2021). It is believed that the transition to online and digital education formats, as well as the rise of remote forms of teaching and learning as a result of mass closures of schools, colleges, and universities, can and should make a more direct contribution to knowledge and practice during the COVID-19 pandemic (Williamson et al., 2020). Demand for online learning is expected to grow steadily in the near future, and the unpredictable aftermath of COVID-19 may, at least temporarily, replace land-based learning with online learning (Lei & So, 2021).

Furthermore, due to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, global school closures occurred, forcing teachers to create virtual learning environments or online education for their teaching and learning process during the pandemic (Ortogero & Ray, 2021). In other cases, parents who have not been prepared or trained in education and pedagogy are filling in for their children's teachers and attempting to teach their children concepts about which they may be unfamiliar (Gerber & Leong, 2021). Online education is often a poor substitute for instruction. Teaching and learning are embodied socially irreducible activities. Online interactions, even when using a reliable and well-functioning internet connection, are much less intricate, nuanced, and multi-dimensional. This is semaphore teaching rather than dialogue pedagogy (Yandell, 2020).

During online class in the teaching and learning process, the government commanded lockdown. The lockdown has revealed a properly complicated - social - understanding of what schools are for and it is far more than simply transmitting knowledge. This does not imply that schools are important socialization sites (Yandell, 2020). Though this is true, one of the challenges that teachers will face when schools reopen is resocializing entire cohorts of children and young learners. It means that learning and development occur in and through the interactions that comprise the schooling experience. Given the potential of online education especially in the teaching and learning process, understanding current users' (i.e., teachers' and students') experiences and perceptions is important for future planning and development.

Available online at <https://www.elitejournal.org/index.php/ELITE>

Although online learning has been a popular research topic that has received a lot of attention, the experiences of teaching and learning online can vary depending on the subject (Lei & So, 2021).

Teachers face numerous challenges when it comes to delivering the teaching and learning process. For example, selecting strategies, methods, and media during the teaching and learning process. One of the difficulties is that pre-service teachers have the opportunity to visit the school directly after pandemic. Pre-service teachers frequently engage their students in meaningful and collaborative activities (Jones, 2017). Improving teaching practices and teacher education programs require an understanding of teachers' beliefs (Nafissi & Shafiee, 2020).

Numerous international studies on pre-service teachers of university students have been conducted, covering various aspects of pre-service teachers. A study by (Tour & Barnes, 2022) for instance, reported that the pre-service teachers agreed that digital multimodal composing was beneficial to language learners, but they struggled to identify more specific literacy benefits provided by digital multimodal composing. The main challenge for all participants in this study was students' engagement with digital interfaces, but they had few concerns about other aspects of digital multimodal composing. Another study also found by Dressler et al., (2021) showed that pre-service teachers frequently found themselves learning firsthand about the benefits and drawbacks of language learning. They used blogs to reflect on the knowledge, skills, and characteristics required for language teaching. These findings show that learning while studying abroad can help to advance the teaching skills required to work with diverse learners in future classrooms. (Ma & Luo, 2021) findings of their research that although there are some misconceptions, Chinese pre-service teachers understand the concept of critical thinking and are willing to incorporate it into TEFL despite the many challenges.

By contrast, in the Indonesian context, much research on pre-service teachers, for example (Triastuti, 2020) findings revealed that, despite the pre-service teachers' overall good test score average and generally positive self-rating perceptions, the pre-service teachers' limited and descriptive reflections did not adequately depict their actual implementation of the teacher knowledge base of teaching in their microteaching practices. (Maharani et al., 2022) discovered that positioning oneself could influence preservice teachers' identity development. However, the unexpected circumstance that forced them to teach online made them feel less than a teacher and forced them to try to establish an identity in the school context by positioning themselves. Multimedia learning involves the formation of mental representations through the use of words

and images (Mayer, 2014); the depth of learning increases with the use of words and images as opposed to words alone. A learner-centered approach should be used in multimedia learning.

Based on the problem stated, some studies of pre-service teachers' challenges are still limited. Pre-service teachers have a challenge in teaching students in the classroom while pandemic and after the pandemic. The most serious thing in teaching in the pandemic era was engaging the students in the classroom. By implementing various teaching strategies, utilize media even multimedia learning. Multimedia learning involves the formation of mental representations through the use of words and images (Mayer, 2014). The depth of learning increases with the use of words and images as opposed to words alone. A learner-centered approach should be used in multimedia learning (Ortogero & Ray, 2021). It is believed the students are going to engage joining in the classroom. When the students enjoy our classroom, it is believed that the teaching and learning process will run as well as the teacher expected. Besides, teaching after the pandemic also has serious problems when the students are in their own home longer. Making the students active in the classroom is hard enough as if it is the starting point to teach the students. The challenges of pre-service teacher are highly tended to increase. Creativity of teachers after the pandemic is really needed to build the students' involvement in the teaching and learning process.

METHODS

This study used the descriptive qualitative method. First and foremost, the goal of this qualitative study was to investigate and describe a phenomenon that occurred in a real-life context (Sa'adah, 2019). Heidi Dulay et al. Issac and Michael (1997:46) stated that the descriptive study has a purpose namely to describe systematically the fact and the characteristics of the given population or area of interest factually and accurately. Furthermore, McMillan & Schumacher, (2014) stated that the descriptive study aimed to examine events or phenomena. Therefore, it was very important to get the most accurate data because it determined the quality of the study. The instruments of the study were observation, interview and documentations. The subjects of this study were seven students of pre-service teachers during joining teacher teaching practice at school especially teaching English to young learners.

RESULTS, FINDINGS, AND DISCUSSION

The researchers found many things based on the data acquired through the instruments of the study, which were observation, interview, and documentation. The observation did the researcher to know the condition of the subject of the study, the subjects of this study were

Available online at <https://www.elitejournal.org/index.php/ELITE>

seven pre-service teachers teaching English to young learners at the Islamic elementary level. Based on the findings, the researchers divided the observation into two categories those were in teaching strategies and the utilization of media in the teaching and learning process post-pandemic covid-19. The researchers found in the teaching strategies of Pre-service teachers were good at formulating learning objectives according to the material prepared.

Besides, Pre-service teachers were very good at presenting the material according to the conditions and development of students, because the students were joining the class through an online class, after the pandemic covid-19 the teachers had challenges making the classroom attractive. Pre-service teachers were very good at determining the learning method that attracts students' attention. Pre-service teachers were good at using various learning resources. The learning media designed by Pre-service teachers were very good varied and effective to use, it could make the students engage and activate during the lesson. Pre-service teachers were challenged in doing such kinds of teaching strategies in handling the students in the classroom. To overcome these problems, the pre-service teachers employed such kinds of teaching strategies for instance Discovery Learning and Contextual Teaching-Learning in their teaching and learning process

The researchers found that in the utilization of media in the teaching and learning process, according to the findings, it showed the relevance of the learning media used with teaching materials was very good. The ability of pre-service teachers to use media in learning was very good. The simplicity of using media in learning for pre-service teachers and students was good. The Availability of media used in teaching and learning in the classroom was good. The benefits of using media in teaching and learning for improving the learning process were very good and utilizing the “Snake and Ladder” and also designing the “Beberan” Game Board as creative media to cope the problem in the teaching and learning process post-pandemic covid-19.

Based on the results of the interview with the pre-service teachers in teaching strategies and utilizing of media used in the teaching and learning process post-pandemic covid-19, it indicated that in teaching strategies most of the pre-service teachers formulated the learning objective according to the materials given in the teaching and learning process. They presented the material according to the conditions and development of the students in the classroom, it depended on the class they taught. The pre-service teachers determined the learning method that

attracted students' attention in the classroom. They used various learning resources during a teaching in the classroom. They design varied and effective learning media.

In utilizing media used in the teaching and learning process, the pre-service teachers used media in the teaching and learning process in the classroom were relevant based on the conditions of the students. Their ability to design and use media in learning was very good because they could design some media based on the students' needs. The use of media in the teaching and learning process made the teaching and learning process easier for pre-service teachers and students during the lesson. The availability of media used in teaching and learning in the classroom was relatively easy because they prepared to design the media to utilize things around them. The usefulness of media in the teaching and learning process was to improve the students' involvement during the lesson. Using the media in the classroom in teaching young learners at the elementary level made the students active and involve during the lesson. By activating and involving them directly in the classroom, it was believed that the learning outcomes would be achieved very well.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it could be stated that to overcome these problems, the pre-service teachers employed such kinds of strategies for instance Discovery Learning, Contextual Teaching-Learning, and utilizing the "Snake and Ladder" "Beberan" Game Board as creative media in their teaching and learning process post pandemic covid-19. Those strategies and media were use by the pre-service teachers in their classroom. The implication of this study was as pre-service teachers needed to develop an awareness of the teaching strategies for teaching English to young learners at the Islamic elementary level or primary school. Culling the appropriate strategies and media were needed in teaching the students at the primary level to engage the students and to activate them joining in the classroom.

REFERENCES

Dressler, R., Crossman, K., & Kawalilak, C. (2021). Pre-Service Teachers' Learning about Language Learning and Teaching: A Nexus Analysis of Study Abroad Blogging. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 00(00), 1–13.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2021.1938573>

Gerber, H. R., & Leong, P. (2021). Education in times of crises: the dilemmas of digital teaching

Available online at <https://www.elitejournal.org/index.php/ELITE>

- and learning in primary and secondary schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Educational Media International*, 58(2), 99–101. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523987.2021.1930480>
- Jones, J. (2017). Teaching English to young learners. Critical issues in language teaching with 3–12 years olds . Edited by Jean Bland . In *British Journal of Educational Studies* (Vol. 65, Issue 1, pp. 130–132). <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2017.1282092>
- Lei, S. I., & So, A. S. I. (2021). Online Teaching and Learning Experiences During the COVID-19 Pandemic—A Comparison of Teacher and Student Perceptions. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, 33(3), 148–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10963758.2021.1907196>
- Ma, L., & Luo, H. (2021). Chinese pre-service teachers' cognitions about cultivating critical thinking in teaching English as a foreign language. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 41(3), 543–557. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2020.1793733>
- Maharani, Y., Asih, Y. U., & Suhatmady, B. (2022). *E F L P r e - S e r v i c e T e a c h e r s ' I d e n t i t y a n d P o s i t i o n D u r i n g T e a c h i n g P r a c t i c e*. 7(1).
- Mayer, R. E. (2014). Introduction to multimedia learning. *The Cambridge Handbook of Multimedia Learning, Second Edition*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139547369.002>
- McMillan, J., & Schumacher, S. (2014). Research in Education: Evidence-Based Inquiry. In *Pearson*. <https://eric.ed.gov/id=ED577250>
- Nafissi, Z., & Shafiee, Z. (2020). Teachers' roles in early childhood English language pedagogy: beliefs of kindergarten English language teachers. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 41(3), 306–324. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10901027.2019.1647479>
- Ortogero, S. P., & Ray, A. B. (2021). Overrepresentation of English Learners in Special Education Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Educational Media International*, 58(2), 161–180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09523987.2021.1930485>

Available online at <https://www.elitejournal.org/index.php/ELITE>

- Sa'adah, L. (2019). Oral Corrective Feedback: Exploring The Relationship Between Teacher's Strategy and Student's Willingness to Communicate. *JSSH (Jurnal Sains Sosial Dan Humaniora)*, 2(2), 251. <https://doi.org/10.30595/jssh.v2i2.2953>
- Scully, D., Lehane, P., & Scully, C. (2021). 'It is no longer scary': digital learning before and during the Covid-19 pandemic in Irish secondary schools. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 30(1), 159–181. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2020.1854844>
- Shin, M., & Puig, V. I. (2021). 'Feeling a bit like a tsunami wave': an exploratory study of early childhood professionals' experiences during the COVID-19 crisis in the USA. *Education 3-13*, 0(0), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2021.1960408>
- Tour, E., & Barnes, M. (2022). Engaging English language learners in digital multimodal composing: Pre-service teachers' perspectives and experiences. *Language and Education*, 36(3), 243–258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2021.1912083>
- Triastuti, A. (2020). Assessing english pre-service teachers' knowledge base of teaching: Linking knowledge and self-portrayal. *Teflin Journal*, 31(1), 108–138. <https://doi.org/10.15639/teflinjournal.v31i1/108-138>
- Williamson, B., Eynon, R., & Potter, J. (2020). Pandemic politics, pedagogies and practices: digital technologies and distance education during the coronavirus emergency. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 45(2), 107–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2020.1761641>
- Yandell, J. (2020). Learning under Lockdown: English teaching in the time of Covid-19. *Changing English: Studies in Culture and Education*, 27(3), 262–269. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1358684X.2020.1779029>

