

The Implementation of HOTS-Based English Learning in Junior High School During Online Classes

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to learn the implementation of teaching and learning as well as the issue of the activities based on higher order thinking skills in English learning. This study was a descriptive qualitative study. The participants of this study were three English teachers in Junior High School 3 of Singaraja, Bali. The data were gathered using observation and direct interviews. The result of data analysis showed that the implementation of English learning during online classes had covered all the cognitive levels of Taxonomy Bloom, LOTS (lower order thinking skills), and HOTS (higher order thinking skills). However, the lack of training regarding HOTS-based learning caused teachers to have limited information about implementing the proper high-order thinking skills in the learning process. Thus, it has an impact on the problems that arise in implementing HOTS-based learning in online classes. This finding is intended to discover more about the implementation of junior high school English learning in HOTS-based online classes.

Keywords: *HOTS-based Learning, Teaching Implementation, Teacher's Knowledge, Teaching Problem*

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic that has hit almost all parts of the world has significantly impacted various sectors. One of the sectors most affected by this pandemic is the education sector. As is well known, the education sector plays an important role in this life, which is a place for children or people to learn and develop their horizons. However, with the impact of this pandemic, all people that involved in this field must face big challenges. The Ministry of Education and Culture, the main stakeholder in the field of education, provides various solutions so that the teaching and learning process can still be carried out during this pandemic. According to Sitohang (2020), referring to the "Surat Edaran Kemdikbud Nomor 4 of 2020" by Kemendikbud in 2020 regarding the Implementation of education policies in the emergency Period for the spread of Coronavirus Disease (covid-19). Within the statement it contains several discussion points, including the learning process is being replaced as a remote or online mode (learn from home) by keeping provide a meaningful learning experience for students so that learning outcomes can be achieved. In addition, online learning activities and assignments can be adjusted and varied according to the conditions of each student. Therefore, the online learning is carried out by using some

technological tools like WhatsApp, Google Meet, Zoom, and Google classroom. Thus, Wahyono, et.al, (2020) state that the teacher plays an important role in this matter. They continued that teachers should be able to provide learning that does not burden students but can develop the cognitive aspects of students. Since, learning English in Indonesia requires more attention considering that English is taught as a foreign language. Especially for junior high school students where they do not use English as their native language so many are still not familiar.

Since the current education in Indonesia, especially at the junior high school level, implemented the 2013 curriculum, English has become the main subject taught. This is in line with the 21st-century learning concept, which requires human resources to be able to master various skills, especially critical or high-level thinking. This level of skill is well known as HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills). In addition, Ahmad (2014) emphasized that the 2013 curriculum, which includes several new education policies including higher order thinking skills (HOTS) as the most significant policy, is being implemented to incorporate 21st century skills into the context of classroom learning. Thus, learning English is greatly influenced, so in junior high school, students are taught English from grade seventh to grade ninth. In order to conduct the learning activities that can improve students' high order thinking skills, Feronica, et.al, (2021) mentioned that the role of teacher is very important as the learning guide and facilitator for students.

Teaching English at junior high school is challenging, especially in an online learning situation. That is because learning English includes complex aspects, (Wandyra, 2020). It expects students to be able to master the four basic language skills: speaking, reading, listening, and writing. As well as their comprehension, to be able to produce something is also very necessary. Thus, Warmadewi, et.al, (2019) mentioned that learning English must also be able to develop students' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). Therefore, teachers need to provide learning activities that can train students critically.

Higher order thinking skills (HOTS) become one of the essential aspect in current teaching and learning process. Its due to, HOTS define as the higher level of cognitive that involves the capacity to critically examine, analyze, and draw conclusions from new concepts when they have been fully grasped, (Aisah, et.al, 2020). Moreover, In the learning contexts HOTS is aim to improve the student's have a cognitive level in more critical, so they able to solve the problem in higher way, (Giri, 2021; Yuliati & Lestari, 2018). Moreover, it can direct student become more creative and innovative, (Surya, et.al, 2021). The more students have critical thinking abilities, the more they are ready to face the global situation, (Margana & Widyanoro, 2017).

According to Purwaningsih, et.al (2021) the online learning that have been implemented in this current situation, give an significant effects for both students and teacher. Especially for teachers, their role in providing learning to students in this situation is highly tested. It is because teachers are expected to determine the appropriate learning strategies that adaptable for students during the online classes. Therefore, Setyowati, et.al, (2021) explained that teachers must be able to set up lessons so that they are simple to access when studying online and, of course, can help students' cognitive abilities. However, in the real-practice, there are some problem that teacher faced during implementing the learning especially that based on HOTS. Some previous studies have mentioned caused of the challenges while conducting the learning process that based on

HOTS. Yoke & Hashim (2021) the lack of understanding toward HOTS-based learning become one of the significant factors. Moreover, Fatimahtuzzahroh, Mustadi, & Wangid (2021) mentioned that the lack ability using the online tools that support the learning process become the struggle faced by teacher. Whereas teachers must be able to be more creative in packaging learning so that students' abilities, especially HOTS can be developed properly according to the targets to be achieved.

Based on the explanation above, this study is indented to find out the implementation of HOTS-based learning in English classes during the online learning situation. The research will focus on three aspects related to the main topic. They are the implementation of HOTS-based learning in online classes, the knowledge of English teachers toward HOTS-based learning, and the issue of implementing the learning activities based on HOTS.

Method

- *Research Design*

This study was belongs to the Descriptive Qualitative approach. The purpose of this method is show up an explanation of a social problem that is happen in the society. Moreover, qualitive research according to Creswell (2009), is a method of comprehending a social problem by by establishing a complex, analyzing language, and relaying specific perspectives of an informant throughout original form. So, it emphasizes the experience felt by the people and how they perceive it. Therefore, a descriptive qualitive method entails a in-depth assessment of current events and situations.

- *Samples/Participants*

The participants of the study were three English language teacher at Junior High School 3 of Singaraja, Bali. The participants are the teacher who teaches in the seventh grade. They were selected as they are licensed educators who teach English lessons for a total of twenty-four hours per week. So they may be confident that they have sufficient teaching experience. Moreover, T1, T2, and T3 were allocated to each participant as a codename in this study.

- *Instruments*

To collect the data for the present study, the researcher used an observation sheet and interview to find out the data regarding the implementation of HOTS-based learning at the current school during the online classes. The researcher will utilize the observation sheet to observe learning activities based on High Order Thinking Skills provided by teachers during the online classes. Meanwhile, the interview guide is used to support finding the data about teachers' knowledge or perception of HOTS-based learning and the challenges that the teachers faced.

- *Data analysis*

The data that gathered were come from the information of class observation and direct interviews with the English teacher. In addition, the researcher used convenience sampling model, where it was depended upon the availability of participants and the simplicity of acquiring them. In analyzing the data of the study, the model that was designed by Miles et al. (2014) was used by the researcher. There are the four stages in this model namely, data collection, data display, data

reduction, and drawing the conclusion. According to Miles et al. (2014), data collection is defined as the process of selecting the suitable data source, as well as the appropriate instruments used. The data display is a condensed, structured collection of data that allows for conclusions to be drawn and actions to be taken. The next step after data display is data reduction. Data reduction refers to the process of highlighting, clarifying, abstracting, and transforming facts found in textual transcriptions. The last step is drawing conclusions. In this stage, all the result was drawn and compiled based on the research problem.

Findings

The findings of this study are divided into three main sections namely, the knowledge of teachers about HOTS-based learning, the implementation of HOTS-based learning during online classes, and the problem that is faced during its implementation.

- ***The implementation of HOTS-based learning during online classes***

Based on the observation, the reseacher found out the implementation of HOTS-based learning during the online classess in Junior High School 3 Singaraja, can be seen in the following table below:

Table 1. The Implementation of HOTS-based Learning in Online Classes

No	Activities	T1	T2	T3
1	The learning acivities are full fill the LOTS cognitive level. C1 – Remembering C2 – Understanding C3 – Applying	✓	✓	✓
2	The learning acivities are full fill the HOTS cognitive level. C4 – Analyzing C5 – Evaluating C6 – Creating	✓	✓	✓
3	The use of online learning media (online picture, textbook, YouTube, etc) and platform (Zoom, Google Meet, WhatsApp, etc.) supports the implementation of HOTS-based learning during online learning.	✓	✓	✓

The result of the observation in table 1. displays that all the English learning activities in the online classes are oriented into six cognitive levels of Bloom Taxonomy. They are remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Likewise, the existence of the supporting learning media and platform facilitates the application of HOTS-based

learning in online classrooms. Therefore, it can be concluded that the implementation of learning activities done by three English teachers in Junior High School 3 Singaraja are categorized as well-implemented and oriented to HOTS-based learning.

- ***Teacher's knowledge about HOTS-based learning***

In implementing the HOTS-based learning the teacher's knowledge stand as the important point. It is because, it will help them conducting the learning activities both in online or offline classes that oriented to HOTS-based learning. In this study, the researcher find out the information regarding to teacher's knowledge of HOTS-based learning. The result of the interview are described below.

Teacher 1

Interview question : ***"Are you familiar with the term HOTS-based learning?"***

T1 : "Yes. I have read some information from internet about HOTS. Besides that, the current curriculum (K13) and syllabus used by our school is emphasized with HOTS-based learning in the learning process. Also, I think the existence of HOTS-based learning here is very important. Since it can help and train students to have a high order thinking skills."

Teacher 2

Interview question : ***"Are you familiar with the term HOTS-based learning?"***

T2 : "Yes. I know that HOTS is the cognitive thinking level from Taxonomy Bloom. Beside that, the syllabus, LKS (textbook) are mention about HOTS. However, my information about HOTS-based learning are still not enough to implement a learning activities that oriented to it."

Teacher 3

Interview question : ***"Are you familiar with the term HOTS-based learning?"***

T3 : "Yes, I know the term of HOTS-based learning. But, I still have limited information about it. I know the HOTS-based learning is direct students being able to meet the 21st century learning skills and trains them to have a thinking skills in the higher level. However, I still get confused in its implementation because I never attend some kind of seminars or training about HOTS-based learning."

Based on the result above, it can be concluded that the understanding of HOTS-based learning by the English teacher at Junior High School 3 Singaraja is still in the lower to middle level. It is due to the limited information in-depth and training about HOTS-based learning and its implementation that caused some of them have a misunderstanding.

- ***The problem of implementing HOTS-based learning in the online classes***

Through the interview session done by the researcher with three participants, it showed that all the teachers at Junior High School 3 Singaraja have faced some problems while implementing HOTS-based learning, especially during the online classes. There are some factors that come from both from the student's condition and the teacher itself become one of the reasons. The findings of the interview with the English teacher are reported in the following section below.

Teacher 1

Interview question : ***“What are the obstacles you face when implementing HOTS-based learning in online classes?”***

T1 : “During the implementation of HOTS, there are two factors that affects to its implementing it. First is from the abilities of students. Since they are still in grade seventh, their knowledge about English is not good enough. They often having lack of motivation. For example, students didn't have enough vocabulary that makes them difficult to understand some word or even sentences well. By that as it required me to conduct the learning activity that teacher-centered to help them understand the basic skills in English at first. The second factor is the online learning itself. Honestly, I don't really able to use some online learning platform like Google Meet, or Google Classroom. Therefore, I tend to use WhatsApp group to conduct the learning and informing the task for students. I think the HOTS is not well-implemented in my English class.”

Teacher 2

Interview question : ***“What are the obstacles you face when implementing HOTS-based learning in online classes?”***

T2 : “My problem in implementing HOTS is the lack of facilities and knowledge in using some technological tools. The facilities here refer to the I have limited access and connection while teaching at my home. Also, I didn't know well to use a laptop, so I need someone to guide me using laptop. Since I do not have enough experience and knowledge in using online learning platform like google classroom, PowerPoint, etc., it hinders me in designing the learning material well. So it takes a lot of time to adapt and run it.”

Teacher 3

Interview question : ***“What are the obstacles you face when implementing HOTS-based learning in online classes?”***

T3 : “The struggle that I have faced is I don't have enough information about HOTS-based learning. I have read few information about it on LKS or other sources but I still get confused about it. Especially in assessing the listening and reading skills of students that HOTS-based oriented, I am still not sure

what kind of category that can be labeled as low thinking skills or high thinking skills. It is also related to the learning material that I need to prepare and share. Also, the student's situation where they are not capable enough in using ICT tool caused the implementation of HOTS during online learning is not structured well."

Referring to the result of the interview above, it showed some problem in implementing HOTS-based learning during the online classes. Some of them are the low cognitive level from the students, lack abilities in using supporting facilities like Google classroom, zoom, etc., and designing the learning material that oriented to HOTS-based learning.

According to the result above, there are three point that that have been analyzed and discussed. Those are the implementation of HOTS-based learning during the online classes, the teacher's knowledge of HOTS-based learning, and last is the problem that the teacher's at Junior High School 3 Singaraja in implementing HOTS-based learning in the online classes.

The observation findings in the implementation of HOTS-based learning during the online classes indicated that the learning activities conducted by the teacher have oriented to HOTS. Here means that the teachers have applied all the learning skills revealed in the Bloom Taxonomy. Those skills are both in the LOTS (Low Order Thinking Skills) and HOTS (High Order Thinking Skills) namely, remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating, (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Since this study is focusing on the implementation of HOTS-based learning in online classes, the use of technology became the main tool in the learning activities. WhatsApp, Google Meet and Google Classroom are the most used application during the online classes conducted. In addition, to support the learning activities the teacher inserted some online videos, pictures, or other online resources. This is also in line with the finding stated by Fatimahtuzzahroh et al., (2021) where the used of supporting material in the form of image, audio or video can promoting the learning process based on HOTS. Beside that, Feronica et al. (2021) mentioned on their research finding that visual and audio material stands as an attractive learning material in teaching English since it can attract students' interest. Thus, the students will be able to enhance their high-order thinking skills. Moreover, the use of this kind of supporting materials is very helpful for teachers in delivering learning materials to students in the case of online learning.

In order to be able to implement the learning activities that emphasize on HOTS-based learning, they need to have an understanding of it. Judging from the teacher's answers, their knowledge regarding to HOTS-based learning is still lacking which make them often misunderstood. Hence, it needs to be fleshed out further. The same cases in other research have revealed that most of the teachers are still having lack information on HOTS-based learning. Retnawati et al. (2018) mentioned that, teachers' understanding of HOTS-based learning remains insufficient. It was also confirmed by the findings of Driana & Ernawati (2019) research, which found that the teachers still hold the basic information about HOTS. This happened due to some factors. As already mentioned by T3 where the HOTS-based learning training and workshops are still rarely offered by either the school or the government. Thus, according to Seman et al. (2017) it is necessary to provide intensive training for teachers with the goal of deepening and broadening

their expertise in HOTS-based learning. As this has a significant influence on the learning process in the future, both online and offline modes.

Since the participants have shown their understanding of HOTS-based learning and experience in implementing it in the classroom, there are still some difficulties they encountered in its implementation, notably during the online learning. Those obstacles are come from both the students and the teacher itself. The lack motivation of students, lack of supporting learning facilities (internet connection, technological tool), as well as teachers struggle in using online learning tools and their lack competencies in integrating the learning material with HOTS-based learning. These obstacles in this study were comparable to those found in Yoke & Hashim (2021) where the low learning abilities of students supports the low motivation during the online classes. As a result, they have no inclination to ask or answer the teacher any questions about the material that been taught. In line with that, Parimaladevi & Ahmad (2019) and Feronica et al. (2021) mention that the lack skills of teacher in designing and elaborating the learning method and material based on HOTS. It also supported with the limited knowledge and time of preparation owned by the teacher in the learning process, so they tend to just duplicate the material from the textbook without explore them in-depth. Aligning with the circumstances discussed in this study is very closely related because the online mode of learning is still new, and teachers need time to adapt to everything.

Taking into considerations all of the information previously provided, the findings of this study may be applied as guidance and an example for teachers to help them become better at facilitating learning both offline and online mode. As a result, teachers may encourage student learning motivation in a variety of ways depending on their skills and choices of effective strategies. Additionally, teachers should focus more on the advantages that HOTS-based learning offers students, which can assist in their cognitive development, particularly in terms of critical and creative thinking.

Conclusions and Suggestion

Based on the result above, there are some conclusion that can be drawn by the researcher. First, the implementation of HOTS-based English learning at junior high school 3 Singaraja, during the online classes is already applied the all cognitive level from Taxonomy Bloom. They are remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Second, the teacher's understanding toward HOTS-based learning still in the low level since training related to it is still rarely conducted. Last, the problem of implementing HOTS-based learning during online classes are come from both students and teacher aspects. The problems are in the form of limited of learning time preparation, lack learning motivation, lack of connection, and limited teaching strategies. Moreover, by this study it can be used as the reference for the next researcher to conduct the further analysis. Therefore, the findings can be used by the government to improve the quality of education, especially in English learning.

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