

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the research introduction, encompassing the research background, research problem identification, research limitations, research problem, research objectives, and research significance.

1.1 Research Background

Rapid era changes occurred in several sectors from technology, social, economic, and of course the education sector as evidence of the 21st-century era. The concept of 21st-century learning has gained widespread recognition, being regarded as a mechanism to equip the current generation (Meilani, Dantes, & Tika, 2020; Sviangga, Sunardi, & Trapsilasiwi, 2018). Within the framework of 21st-century learning, there are four vital competencies that are essential for proficiency in today's educational landscape. These competencies encompass collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity.

Utilizing digital-based learning resources can assist both educators and students in facilitating the learning process. This is due to the fact that the integration of technology, such as computers, video games, mobile phones, and other digital devices, has become an integral part of our daily life (Sahin, 2009). The study revealed that incorporating technology in the classroom can aid teachers and students in accessing pertinent resources. Furthermore, Boholano (2017) asserts that 21st-century education promotes internationalization and globalization, emphasizing the necessity of utilizing technology in the classroom

to fulfill the objectives of modern education. One of the applications of technology in education

that should be implemented is face-to-face learning post the Covid-19 pandemic.

When distance learning was applied, the teaching method applied by the teacher was also different where the teacher uses several learning applications to assist in delivering material and also in giving assignments. In addition, Firman & According to Rahman (2020), online education can be conducted utilizing educational apps, as well as virtual classroom platforms accessible through web-based internet networks. The interaction between teachers and students also changes in the learning process. Handayani (2020) stated that interaction in distance learning is influenced by the character of each student, so teachers and students are equally satisfied only if they meet in distance learning. In addition, this change in interaction is also supported by Purwanto in Handayani (2020) stated that the shortcomings of online learning are the delivery of unclear material, the emergence of boredom in learning, and limited teacher-student interaction. However, the learning process is still carried out despite the many changes that occur. Despite the pandemic, educators must ensure the continuity of teaching and learning activities (Atsani, 2020). As the pandemic situation gradually improves, schools have started reintroducing face-to-face learning.

The start of face-to-face learning in schools presented a new problem. The start of face-to-face learning requires teachers to restore students' mental readiness by building character and fun for students (Wati, Rikza, & Rahmawati, 2021). Febriani, Maison, Kurniawan, Masovia (2021) explain that in face-to-face learning students must adapt again to the learning process that previously could be done by

students relaxed at home but now must be more disciplined and focused because, in previous online learning, the quality of learning was very low. Another problem is the difficulty for students to adjust to face-to-face learning. Wati, Rikza, & According to Rahmawati (2021), the teacher's role plays a crucial part in initiating face-to-face instruction as students need to readjust to this latest policy in education during the pandemic. In addition to that, face-to-face learning requires teachers to be more inventive and resourceful in order to facilitate a more efficient learning process. These problems occur because previously learning was carried out online by utilizing supporting applications, online messaging, video conferencing, or a blend of online messaging and video conferencing. This makes students passive and difficult to learn due to limited learning and most teachers who teach using learning methods that focus on teacher explanations or teacher-centered. Febriani, Maison, Kurniawan, Masovia (2021) explain that at the time of distance learning students are more likely to be lazy in participating in learning. As a result, the potential for student engagement in learning is diminished. The implementation of distance learning makes students activity less active, less active during discussions, late in collecting assignments, and looks passive in learning (Fitria, 2020). This is the problem for teachers during face-to-face learning after the pandemic, as they must facilitate learning that offers students opportunities for active engagement and independent knowledge expansion or better known as student-centered learning.

Student-centered learning necessitated increased student participation in the educational journey. The concept of student-centered learning aimed to foster an interactive environment between the class and students where in this case the

teacher acts as a guide for students to be able to achieve common goals between teachers and students (Overby, 2011). This means that learning could be more meaningful because the role of students was more active so that learning becomes effective. Student-focused learning provides opportunities for students to be more involved in the classroom. This means that teachers were not the main focus of learning but students who can explore learning further. They no longer need a lot of explanations from the teacher regarding the learning material, but they must better understand and seek material from many sources that are in line with what the teacher or textbook provides. This provided a big change in achieving the 21st-century learning goals where students can develop collaboration skills by studying together with friends, improve their communication skills, critical thinking, and foster creativity, as they were encouraged to take a more active role in the learning process. This aligns with the overarching aim of education, which is to prepare the younger generation to effectively address challenges and actively participate in the global era (Santosa, 2019). Implementation of 21st-century learning requires preparation and planning, especially when face-to-face learning begins after the pandemic. The preparation can start with the design and learning media that can help the face-to-face learning process. The development and utilization of instructional materials must be adapted to 21st-century learning, which can attract students' learning desires and be effective for use in the classroom. In addition, educators are anticipated to design post-pandemic instruction by engaging students in authentic contexts aligned with the principles of 21st-century learning. That was supported by the opinion of Santosa (2019) states that from an educational perspective preparing the younger generation for

the world was not an easy thing so it becomes a task for every teacher. This means that teachers need a good strategy in learning to be able to make learning alive and maximal. In addition, teachers were advised to be able to use technology that supports activities that can provoke students to think critically and a problem-based approach. A teacher should be able to create classroom learning that supports and advances learning in the 21st century (Chai, Koh, & Teo, 2019). This was a tough task for a teacher because at this time many teachers were still carrying out teacher-centered learning. Hence, teacher ingenuity becomes imperative in actively engaging students and shifting towards student-centered learning.

Teachers must be able to teach creatively so that they can increase students' motivation and curiosity. Teaching creativity involves employing innovative concepts and imaginative techniques to make the learning process captivating and efficient. Moreover, teaching creativity serves as a means to enhance students' creative thinking abilities (Cayirdag, 2017). This means that creativity in teaching has a lot of influence on learning and also creativity can help make learning more interesting, especially face-to-face learning.

In-person instruction proved to be highly suitable for post-Covid-19 pandemic implementation, as it allows teachers and students to convene directly in the classroom. This facilitates direct interaction and fosters an engaging classroom environment. A stimulating learning environment serves as a pivotal aspect of the face-to-face learning model, with its suitability generating a learning-driven atmosphere that positively impacts educational outcomes (Anggrawan, 2019). Consequently, teachers undertaking face-to-face instruction

must strive to establish an active and captivating classroom ambiance to enhance students' learning achievements. Moreover, in face-to-face learning, both students and teachers are obliged to adhere to health protocols, even though the pandemic has subsided. The prerequisites for in-person instruction, aside from vaccination, encompass the 5M guidelines: wearing masks, maintaining hand hygiene, observing physical distancing, avoiding crowded areas, and minimizing mobility (Suryani, Tuteh, Nduru, & Pedy, 2022). This signifies that students no longer learn independently from home without clear directions; instead, they can safely return to school, adhering to protocols and experiencing an improved learning environment.

Clear and effective learning greatly determines student learning outcomes so learning in schools where students and teachers meet face-to-face can make it easier to convey learning. While the face-to-face learning model is suitable post-pandemic, it presents teachers with the challenge of guiding students unfamiliar with this approach. Teachers must employ their creativity to facilitate student learning within the classroom. Teaching creativity encompasses more than imparting knowledge; it also plays a vital role in fostering 21st-century learning. Creative teaching involves devising unique methods, employing diverse strategies, exhibiting unwavering dedication, and employing approaches that lead to students' success in learning (Arifani & Suryanti, 2019). To ensure a comfortable classroom learning environment, both teachers and students must make adequate preparations in advance, leading to positive outcomes. As previously mentioned, teachers are expected to showcase creativity in the classroom, designing engaging activities, leveraging technology, promoting

group-based learning, and delivering content relevant to real-life situations. This is following the development of student-centered learning in learning in the 21st century. The term creativity can be interpreted as the implementation of new and interesting ways of teaching to achieve effective learning outcomes (Khodabakhshzadeh, Hosseinnia, Abedi Moghadam, & Ahmadi, 2018). When teachers apply creativity in teaching, it was made learning more effective, and interesting and promoting active student engagement in the teaching and learning process. However, creativity in teaching before and during the transition period allows for differences.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers' perceptions of creativity focused on developing subject matter and being able to create an interesting and calm classroom atmosphere, and being able to modify lessons (Pentury, 2017). This means that teachers' perceptions of creativity in teaching can be seen from the way they expand their understanding of learning material, then the way they organize the class to create a peaceful and interesting classroom atmosphere and can vary the lessons carried out in the classroom. However, in the transition period, the teacher's teaching creativity cannot be known only from this, that was due to different situations and student learning methods that must be adjusted. There might have been differences in the way of developing subject matter by teachers where during the transition period the development of subject matter does not only come from the teacher but the activeness of students to explore lessons, one of which was through online media. Then in carrying out the learning process, the teacher does not only carry it out in the classroom but also through online classes which aim to send additional material and send student

assignments. This opportunity arises to optimize the learning experience, particularly for English education at the junior high school level. Throughout the pandemic, all educational activities were conducted online, and now, during the transition period, face-to-face learning has been adopted while still accommodating the circumstances and student learning preferences. In addition, learning English at the junior high school level has just officially begun, there is a pressing demand for English teachers to employ special strategies and innovative approaches in both online and face-to-face settings. The urgent need for designing inventive learning methods arises, encompassing character education aligned with the core competencies outlined in the 2013 curriculum (Artini & Padmadewi, 2017). Learning English in SMP/MTs had a target to reach the functional level, namely being able to communicate orally or in writing in solving daily problems (Supriyono & Sugirin, 2014). Therefore, English teachers were expected to be able to maximize their creativity in designing English learning.

Based on the explanation above, in transitional face-to-face learning, it was important for teachers to apply creativity in the teaching and learning journey. The purpose of this study was to investigate English teachers' self-perception of their creativity and to observe how they manifest this creativity in the context of face-to-face learning during the transitional period. Discrepancies are anticipated due to the nature of the data collection, which involves examining teachers' self-perceived creativity and its practical implementation in the classroom setting after the pandemic, specifically during face-to-face learning. Therefore, the researcher researched the creativity of English teachers at SMP N 1 Sukasada. Following the results of observations, this school was chosen because

this school has facilities that were quite complete to support learning, especially learning English. However, the English teacher at this school does not take advantage of the use of the facilities provided, such as the computer lab and internet network that should be able to support language learning by utilizing technology. In addition, the learning activities that were carried out were less to captivate students' attention and engage them fully in the learning process.

1.2 Problem Identification

Creativity was important for teachers to have, especially in the transition period. In the transition period where previously students carried out online learning which made students' enthusiasm for learning decrease with all the limitations in carrying out learning, transitioning to face-to-face instruction posed a challenge for English teachers at the junior high school level. It became imperative for these teachers to introduce innovative approaches that would reignite students' enthusiasm and engagement in the classroom. The teacher's creativity was instrumental in designing effective strategies, utilizing innovative instructional media, and fostering an engaging learning environment. However, it was observed that a majority of teachers lacked creativity in implementing face-to-face learning. Furthermore, many teachers struggled to keep pace with the technological advancements of the 21st century, which was particularly crucial in the post-pandemic context where face-to-face learning aimed to facilitate student enjoyment and interest in the learning process.

Considering the problem above, the researcher undertook a study focusing on the creative aspects of teachers during face-to-face learning in the transitional phase. The purpose of this research was to examine the manifestation of teachers'

creativity in the context of face-to-face instruction and provide an opportunity for teachers to evaluate their own creative abilities.

1.3 Research Limitation

The objective of this study was to examine the alignment between teachers' perception of their own creativity and its implementation in the context of transitional face-to-face learning. The researcher employed a self-rated questionnaire, classroom observations, and in-depth interviews as research instruments. This investigation took place during the academic year 2022/2023 at SMP N 1 Sukasada. Two English teachers from SMP N 1 Sukasada were observed to assess their creativity in the face-to-face learning process following the pandemic.

1.4 Research Questions

Considering the limitations of the research, the research inquiries can be formulated as follows:

1. How do English teachers at SMP N 1 Sukasada perceive themselves with regard to teaching creativity in transitional face to face learning?
2. How do English teachers at SMP N 1 Sukasada implement their teaching creativity in the transitional face-to-face learning?
3. Is there any consistency between how the English teacher perceive about their teaching creativity and how their implementation of teaching creativity in the classroom?

1.5 Research Objective

Considering the previous research questions, the objectives of the study can be outlined as follows:

1. To examine the perception of English teachers at SMP N 1 Sukasada regarding their creativity in the context of transitional face-to-face learning.
2. To illustrate the implementation of teaching creativity by English teachers at SMP N 1 Sukasada during the transitional face-to-face learning process.
3. To describe the consistency between how English teachers perceive their teaching creativity and how their implementation of creativity in the classroom.

1.6 Research Significance

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

This research can serve as supplementary information regarding teachers' creativity, specifically focusing on how English teachers perceive and apply their creativity in face-to-face learning settings, with the aim of enhancing 21st-century learning practices.

1.6.2 Practical Significance

1.6.2.1 Teacher

This study can serve as a valuable resource for teachers, providing guidance on incorporating creativity in the classroom and offering insights into effective implementation strategies.

1.6.2.2 Policy Maker

This research can be utilized as an informative reference for education stakeholders, including policy makers, to recognize the significance of creativity in the instructional process and consider its inclusion in the curriculum.