

Digital training for increasing English teachers' professionalism at junior high school

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to know the problems and the implementation of the training as the solution and evaluation of digital training that can increase the English teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu, Indonesia. This study used a descriptive qualitative method with the number of trainees were 10 English teachers. The procedures of collecting data were observation, documentation and interview. Then, the data analysis were done by comparing the result of the interview from the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu, Indonesia before they joined and after joining digital training provided by the researchers and finally concluded. The first research finding is the English teachers had problems in terms of knowledge, difficult to apply the application or technology, and never joining training. The second finding is the implementation of digital training had many benefits namely increased the English teachers' professionalism, experienced and innovated their knowledge and skills toward the use of digital learning, it brought a good quality for learning outcomes and it helped to be better in an advanced educational institution, particularly at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu, Indonesia. The last finding is that after implementation, the English teachers still got problems in using the application and need more training. The implication of this study is digital training can be an advanced way in educational development which needs good participation from the trainers, trainees and educational institution.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In industrial revolution 4.0 era, everyone is obligated to master Information Communication Technology (ICT). It is simply because nearly every activity in human beings served and organized by the use of technology. For examples of them are e-government, e-teaching, e-learning, e-shop, e-policy, go-food, e-transportation, and so on. This condition changes human life be competitive in all aspects. Nowadays, in educational aspect, the use of technology as the answer of joining and actualizing industrial revolution 4.0 is also booming. Either teachers or students in the process of learning are competitive in training their skills to be able to master science. The English teachers particularly, to transfer science and knowledge to the students' needs technology in the learning process. It is not only to make their students be diligent but also to build their professionalism. In teaching language, either as the first language or the second language, the use

of technology cannot be separated. The use of ICT can leverage learning and teaching the transaction process to achieve rich and productive learning environments [1]. In line with this, the professional teacher must be supported by ICT (Information and Communication Technology) to make developing pedagogy. Hennessy [2] emphasizes that ICT should be gathered with proper classroom dialogue and specific materials in the domains of subject teaching and learning. In addition, teachers as educators utilize ICT to promote democratic ideals in school settings [3]. ICT usage such as digital stories for EFL could outperform traditional language learning and improve listening comprehension [4]. Another usage of ICT like digital storytelling gives some advantages in education. Digital storytelling could be used as a pedagogical tool for teachers in teaching speaking skill [5]. Another researcher suggested that it needs the time to think about and discuss their digital literacy histories for both young teachers and student teachers in education [6]. The professional language teacher absolutely requires technology such as electronic portfolios, synchronous and asynchronous communication to develop the process of language learning and teaching [7]. The students enjoy actively and enthusiastically in the learning English process by the use of technology [8]. The use of technology in teaching English is also so enjoyable [8]. They said that it could make sense and arise mind to receive the English materials.

However, there are still many teachers who use traditional teaching in the classroom. This condition also was found at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. Based on pre-observation (7th August 2019), the researchers found that the English teachers used a traditional teaching in delivering the material in the classroom. They only utilized their teaching process with white board, board marker and eraser. The teachers had not tried to use ICT to increase their teaching performance and professionalism. After discussing with some English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu, it found that they had no comprehension to use ICT in the teaching and learning process in spite of actually they had desires to do so. The teachers also said that there was no trainer yet or such so who gave them training on ICT. That's why those teachers passive to be innovative in developing their professionalism. As the result of this condition, some students who had been interviewed by the researchers said that they were lazy to join English class because the teachers only gave them module and then though orally in the classroom (interview on 9th August 2019). The students said that they had difficulties to comprehend English grammar and all skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) of English with that condition.

The case above needs a solution to be overcome. As what Naidu, Linuma, Hennessy [1, 3, 2] as well as Thomas and Reinders above says that the teachers need ICT to develop their professionalism and to rich good learning and teaching outcomes. That is why the researchers provided digital training to the English teacher at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. Some previous researchers have implemented ICT in several needs and aims. They are such [9]. They studied about the fact of teachers after joining teacher professional training (PLPG) and Teacher Professional Education (PPG) in Indonesia. Another research focused on the effect of digital training on learning outcomes and learning motivation [10]. Ifanti, and Fotopoulou [11] searched the perception of teacher in Greece about professionalism and professional development. The other researchers such Chiew, Jafre & Saibon investigated learners' perceptions of the impact of using digital strorytelling to increase vocabulary (<http://www.tewtjournal.org>). The use of technology such a digital video data has advantages such to keep classroom lesson in more detail and it can be also used in a workshop [2]. From the studies of using technology in building teachers' professionalism above, the current study focuses on the training with using digital learning to increase English teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. Therefore, the researchers aimed to investigate digital training for increasing teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu".

This research is about digital training for increasing the English teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. Digital training is an activity to learn, train, motivate and innovate the trainees' skill and knowledge by the use of digital content. There are many experts and previous researchers who have studied the use of digital training or the use of digital content in several life aspects such as in education and other fields. Bemner [12] stated that in digital content includes distance education, computer-assisted instruction, internet in education, instructional systems design and can be military education [12]. In education for example, it is needed for the training for the teachers to support their skills [12]. Bemner [12] then suggested that the training which already has given to the teachers will imply a significant investment in time and resources. In addition, the previous researchers such Gegenfurtner, *et al.* when they applied webinar-based training about digital web conferencing found that webinar can serve the educational function of learning and teaching [13]. Shanley, *et al.* [13] also stated that webinar is important to increase digital training effectiveness. The use of digital resources allows the teachers to improve their skills [14].

From the explanation above, it is needed to increase English teachers' professionalism particularly at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu for advancing their comprehensions and skills in this digital era. The use of technology in learning English may build teachers' professionalism. The professional teachers are the teachers with professional knowledge about how to manage classroom teaching, provide the proper materials

for the students and adapt to the educational world changes with the use of educational technology [15]. The professional teachers by the use of technology in their teaching classroom, they have not moved the material files from the computer to other computers. They can work whenever and wherever by the use of an educational website [16]. The former researcher suggested that the professional teachers should participate in various training and special education to get high achieving teachers [9].

Furthermore, the professional English teachers require professional solution to create advanced learning and answer the problems they face in learning activities. To answer it, they need digital contents to develop interactive and multimedia-based material [17]. Dudeney and Hockly [17] then added that by often accessing to the internet, the English teachers can reach professionalism development without not pay for expensive courses and travels. From the explanations above, the significant of this research was to study about to what extend digital training increased the English teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the use of digital training for increasing teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. The qualitative method was used to investigate natural phenomenon as it exit by the purpose of finding the meaning in every phenomenon which appears [18]. Therefore, this method was used to study to the problems, what extend the benefits received by the English teachers in this junior high school after joining digital training which can be applied in their learning process in the future and its evaluation. This research was done at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu with the subject was 10 English teachers. The procedures of collecting data in this research were observation, training, documentation and interview. The Observation was done to identify the real problems faced by the teachers in applying teaching with technology in their classroom. Training was applied to introducing and transferring knowledge in what types of digital for teaching and how to operate and use them in teaching English. Documentation was done to record and take the pictures all event happened along with training activity. The last, interview was held by the researchers to describe and analyze to what extend the benefit of digital training could increase the English teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu.

When did interview to the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu, the researchers used interview guidances which contained several questions about teachers' problems in using a digital learning and the benefits of after joining digital training. The interview guidance and note taking were as the instrument in this research. Then, the procedures of data analysis were done by the researchers were transcription the result of interview from the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu, comparing the result of interview from the teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu before they joining and after joining digital training provided by the researchers, and then analyzed these data and finally drew a conclusion. In addition, to make sure the validity of the research, the researchers did a triangulation by collecting multiple sources of data namely from interview and note taking. This triangulation could also increase the trustworthiness of the research.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

Digital training was able to increase the English teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu which had been done by the researchers. As for the findings of this research based on the instruments as in the following.

3.1.1. Observation of the problems were faced by the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu in increasing their professionalism.

The result of observation or note taking as mentioned in the introduction of this paper showed that the majority of English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu had not yet used digital learning in their teaching activity. There were some problems faced by the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu in increasing their professionalism as shown by the following interview result.

Question 1: have you ever hear about digital learning? Mention it/them!. Have ever you used it/them in your learning activity? The answers to this question were responded by the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu as in the following excerpt 1.

"Yes, I had ever hear about it, but I don't know how to use it. I some time watching from you tube".
(AD)

"Not yet. It's difficult to use, moreover I had no knowledge how to use digital learning. I also only watching sport, entertainment and news. I have no idea about digital learning." (AW)

"I had ever heard about it, but I do not what it was and how to implement and display it the class." (SY)

"I do not know about it." (SA)

"It seems nicely to be tried, but I have no idea about it." (DI)

"I have ever heard it, but I have not ever tried to use it in my learning activity because I do not know about it." (WA)

Excerpt 1 shows that some English teachers had ever heard about application or program in digital training, such as YouTube and Google Classroom, but they did not know how to use the application. Moreover, they want to try to implement it.

Question 2: Is/are there any problem/s to use digital learning? Mention it/them!

The answers to this question were responded by the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu as in the following excerpt 2.

"Yes, I have ever heard about it, but I do not know how to use it. I'm hesitate to use it." (WA)

"The problem is difficult to try. I do not know how to make material with it as well as to display it to my students in the class." (SY)

"I'm the same with SY. I do not how to use it and try to input material for my learning classroom." (SA)

"It's right that it is digital era, but I myself have no knowledge, skill and comprehension in using digital learning. It so hard to me." (TI)

Excerpt 2 shows that the English teachers had problems in using some applications. They are hard to apply it because they never use it. Besides, they did not have enough knowledge about it.

Question 3: Have you ever joined digital training for increasing teacher's professionalism? What do you think about it? The answers to this question were responded by the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu as in the following excerpt 3.

"I have never joined it. It is a good activity to take a part in." (SA)

"I'm hopefully there is a trainer who teaches me how to use digital learning. It will be useful for increasing my professionalism and make my students become joy and happy." (SY)

"I have never. It would be enjoyable". I will pay my attention to join it." (TI)

"Not ever. I think it is a good idea. However, is there any volunteer who spares his time for it? I need it to improve my professionalism." (WA)

Based on the excerpt 3, English teachers in that school never joined digital training to enhance their professionalism.

3.1.2. Applying digital training to the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu in increasing their professionalism

Digital training was held on 26th until 27th August 2019 after getting permission from the Head of SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. This training was joined of 10 English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. Digital training can be seen in the Figure 1.



Figure 1. The researchers were training the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu about the use of digital in learning activities.

The Figure 1 shows digital training applied by the researchers to the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. The first day, on 26th August 2019 of serving digital training, the researchers applied some steps of the activity. First, set up the tools and equipments to connect to the internet such as using Wi-Fi, Local Area Network (LAN) or smartphone to access the internet. After those tools and equipments got ready, digital training was started to be applied. Second, introduced definition and scope of digital learning to the English teachers and mentioned them the types of digital learning which could be used by the English teachers for increasing their professionalism. Third, trained those teachers how to use and make learning material on digital application such Prezi or making power point, video learning for display the material of speaking, listening and reading and Google Classroom for presenting the all English materials in distance learning. Those digital training followed by the English teachers seriously and enthusiastically. The second day on 27th August 2019 was practicing to use and apply digital learning by the English teachers which they had got a day before. All digital training members practiced to use those online applications. One of them was to use a video learning, some teachers tried to use Prezi application to make power point of their English material and the rest used Google Classroom for increasing professionalism. Those activities ran well and made the English teachers had a new knowledge and comprehension on what and how to use digital learning for increasing their professionalism.

3.1.3. Evaluating the benefit of digital training for increasing professionalism of the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu.

After joining digital training, here was the responses of the English teacher at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu.

Question 4: What do you think or feel after joining this digital training? Could you insert or make your English material in one or some applications of digital training yesterday? Tell us!

The answers of this question were responded by the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu as in the following excerpt 4.

"This digital training is incredible, I'm sure my professionalism must increase after this." (SA)

"Wow, this is great training. Google Classroom is so important exactly to help me to apply distance learning. Today I have used digital learning in Google Classroom to input my English material for my class next week. For the first, I prepared speaking material in form of video. That video contained how to pronounce English. I divided into some parts. The first is introduction to suprasegmental tools or the places or positions of sound production, started from mouth or teeth, tongue, ceiling of the mouth, throat and diaphragm. The sound we can produce bilabial, labiodental, and so on. I try to practice every sound from suprasegmental tools in my video. I also introduce the types of syllable in English to my speaking class, the types of vowels and consonant. I completed them with some examples of word. I classified these words into minimal pairs or similar sounds. I mention to my students about diphthong in English, monophthong, stressed word and unstressed words. In every sub topic of the material, I ask my students to practice those sounds and repeated those sound until fluency and comprehend them. For this, I hope this digital training will be held to the next time. I really appreciated it. It gives me useful way and unlimited time and place to innovate and build my learning activity better than before, when I used traditional learning. So, I say many thanks to the researchers of this digital training." (SY)

"I hope this digital training is not the last time be provided to us. All the teachers in Indonesia absolutely need it. It is not only has benefit for increasing teacher's professionalism, but also to upgrade a good quality for education in our country, Indonesia." (DI)

"I am deal with DI. This digital training must be applied more than one time and for all teachers in our city, Bengkulu as well as in Indonesia". I myself before joining this training, have no knowledge about how to use video, Prezi and Google Classroom to make easy my English learning. Based on the material which had delivered by the researchers in this digital training, I can make the English material such reading with using Prezi." (WA)

Regarding to the excerpt 4, the English teachers believed that digital training could improve their professionalism because this training gave them many inputs. Many applications that had been learnt by them through the training add their knowledge. As result, those application can be implemented in their teaching. However, there was a critic from the English teacher about this training. One of the English teachers thought the training cannot be only 2 or three times, but also more than that.

3.2. Discussion

The findings above showed that there were some problems face the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu in building their professionalism in this digital era. First, they did not know about digital learning as what was happened at DI, WA dan SA. Before joining digital training, those English teachers had no comprehension about digital learning. Second, those English teachers had digital equipment such mobile phone, notebook and laptop completed with house spot area and Wi-Fi in their school, but they only use them for entertaining themselves and having fun as in AW above. Third, some English teachers had ever heard about digital learning, but they had no courage to use it. Fortunately, after joining this digital training, those teachers got new knowledge, skill and comprehension on digital learning as what DI and all English teachers said above. It is accordance with Bemner [12] who affirmed that digital training with the use of digital contents such Google Classroom, digital video and so on would develop the trainees' professionalism or the English teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu.

Then, Naidu [1] also supported that the digital revolution within teaching courses and multimedia programs may increase the quality of the teachers. What Naidu said had a logical proof as findings in this research above. Digital training has a positive impact on increasing professionalism of the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu because it can be helpful in their teaching English course such reading, listening, and speaking. It also can be applied to build other course such vocabulary, grammar, and others. This is in line with Ramadhani, *et al.* [19] investigated that the use of digital storytelling has positive impact on vocabulary learning. Furthermore, this is in line with Cote and Milliner [10] found that there were several benefits of digital training such as building motivation more than traditional learning. In short, digital training had a positive effects to increase the professionalism of the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu.

In line with that, English teachers got advantages by using digital technology, support their teaching both inside and outside the classroom and also developed their digital literacies and advanced their skills [11]. Bull and Bell [16] also found that with the use of technology in teaching such digital video, it could help the students more interesting with the material presented by the teachers, the students also could understand with difficult concept as presented in traditional learning and digital video could improve the students' long-term knowledge retention. In line with this, technology usage in this digital era, it is not only to build the teachers professionalism in learning in the classroom, but also it can innovate the teachers' ability to leverage the new skills to bring a positive impact on their students' learning [20]. What Bull and Bell as well as MaKinster, *et al.* found that there many benefits of using digital in learning activities. First, it can improve teachers' professionalism. Second, learning by using digital would upgrade the teachers' ability to display their teaching material in various ways. Third, the use of digital in learning also makes the students enjoyable in joining their class [20].

The students can solve their learning problems such hardly to comprehend such definition with joining traditional learning, it becomes easy to catch the material point displayed by their teachers. Furthermore, in line with this, digital video in micro-teaching enhanced EFL teacher education methodology courses who joined digital training in micro-teaching videos [21]. On the other hand, Beach [22] suggested that the teachers needed to identify the affordances of digital tools which could transform the learning through the use of digital tools. By following per under, the use or digital in learning such as poetry material could enhance the teachers' creativity, criticality and emerging classroom craft. The teachers also have developed their technology skills in digital and multimodal communication through the use of written, visual, and modes [23]. The use of digital such camera in learning can record experience and this is one of the technologies which permits the people to see the real word or in short, the use of digital technology may bring learn by doing [24].

In addition, the use of digital in learning, it brings many benefits. For example, by the use of Prezi, the learning outcome is better and makes the students more active during learning process [25]. Prezi upgrades knowledge in designing the learning medium effectively and enticing [26]. The use of other digital learning like Google Classroom also gives benefits, not only for the students and the teachers but also for education in general. Google Classroom gives a better quality in education [27]. Google Classroom provides good learning both outside and inside the classroom. It also makes the students felt motivated, enthusiastic and inspired to join the classroom [28-32].

What the researchers found from the applying of digital training toward the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu was also lined with those findings from the previous researchers above. After joining digital training, those teachers got many benefits. It is proved with what stated by WA in the findings of the research above. WA said that she had no knowledge and idea of using digital in her learning activities because she had not ever joined digital training for enhancing her professionalism before. However, after she joined digital training and practiced digital learning by using Prezi, she could make reading material for her students. She also might insert a good and brilliant material in Prezi by using the pictures to encourage her students' curiosity. She was sure that her students would enjoy and inspire for joining her reading class

by using Prezi. This fact also happened toward DI, one of the participants of digital training. He said that he had no comprehension and idea about the use of digital learning before joining digital training provided by the researcher.

After taking apart in digital training, he got more experiences and benefits which he could apply in his learning activities. As what the researchers described above, DI was able to make speaking material completed by the use of video in Google Classroom application. He had inserted and input speaking material in his Google Classroom account. DI was not only creative in presenting his speaking material in form of digital video in Google Classroom, but also was able to lead his students to make an account in Google Classroom. He said that he would apply digital learning as what he had got in digital training delivered by the researchers. From the explanation above shows that digital training has a positive impact on enhancing English teachers' professionalism at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu.

4. CONCLUSION

The teachers have several problems in their learning activity, as what the researchers found at the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. To overcome these, it needs digital training and trainers who could guide them to solve the problems, not only for increasing the teachers' professionalism, but also to upgrade good educational quality in Indonesia. The implementation of digital training has a large number of benefits. First is for the English teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. Those teachers can provide a good and lively material for their learning activities. By using digital learning, those teachers may enhance their professionalism. They are not limited with time and place to present their English material. Digital training helped the teachers in inhabiting distance learning as well as possible. Those English teachers can also build their English classroom more enjoyable and flexible.

Second is for the students. The students would receive knowledge from their teachers who had joined digital training. So, whatever the materials which had got by their teachers in digital training applied by the researchers, their students also will get it in their learning process. Consequently, the result of digital training implementation would enlarge their students' knowledge and comprehension on digital learning, particularly about digital video, Google Classroom and Prezi application. Third is for educational institution namely SMP Negeri 13 Bengkulu. Digital training will give a good effect on the achievement of students' outcomes at that institution, especially toward the achievement of the English materials. In short, digital training has many benefits which not only enhancing the teachers' professionalism, but also as the way of building innovation and creativity on learning outcomes in the digital era.

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