AN INVESTIGATION OF THE TEACHER'S CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN A RURAL AREA

(*A Narrative Study of an English teacher at SMA Negeri 1in Sebangki, Kabupaten Landak, Kalimantan Barat in Academic Year 2023/2024*)

A THESIS

Submitted to fulfil one of the requirements for thesis examination in English Language Education Study Program, Languages and Arts Education Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Universitas Tanjungpura, Pontianak

Submitted by:
SITI ZULAEHA
F1022171036

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
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A THESIS

Jurisdiction Responsibility by:
SITI ZULAEHA
F1022171036

Approved by:

Supervisor I	Supervisor II
Dr. Ikhsanudin, M. Hum.	Dwi Riyanti, M. A., Ph. D
NIP. 196611051992031003	NIP. 197908042005012005

Legalized by:

Dean of Teacher Training and Education Faculty
Universitas Tanjungpura

Dr. Ahmad Yani T, M.Pd.
NIP. 196604011991021001

Date of Pass: Wednesday, 13 December 2023

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Dr. Ikhsanudin, M. Hum.	Dwi Riyanti, M. A., Ph. D
NIP. 196611051992031003	NIP. 197908042005012005

Legalized by:

The Head of Language and Arts Education Department

Dr. Patriantoro, M.Hum.
NIP. 196208241989031003

Date of Pass: Wednesday, 13 December 2023

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Jurisdiction Responsibility by:
SITI ZULAEHA
F1022171036

Approved by:

Supervisor I

Dr. Ikhsanudin, M. Hum.
NIP. 196611051992031003

Supervisor II

Dwi Riyanti, M. A., Ph. D
NIP. 197908042005012005

Examiner I

Eusabinus Bunau, S. Pd., M. Si., Ph.D
NIP. 196812301998031001

Examiner II

Sumarni, S.Pd., M.TESOL.
NIP. 196905262000122001

Legalized by:

The Head of English Education Study Program

Yanti Sri Rezeki, M.Ed., Ph.D.
NIP. 197706192002122009

Date of Pass: Wednesday, 13 December 2023

SURAT PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN TULISAN

Saya yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini :

Nama	: Siti Zulaeha
NIM	: F1022171036
Fakultas	: Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan
Jurusan/Prodi	: Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni/Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris

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Pontianak, Maret 2024

Yang menyatakan,



Siti Zulaeha

NIM: F1022171036

ABSTRACT

Zulaeha, Siti (2023). An Investigation of the Teacher's Challenges and Strategies in Teaching English in a Rural Area (A Narrative Study of an English teacher at SMA in Sebangki, Kabupaten Landak, Kalimantan Barat in Academic Year 2023/2024)

Supervisor I : Dr. Ikhsanudin, M.Hum.
Supervisor II : Dwi Riyanti, M.A., Ph. D.

Being an English teacher is not an easy profession and can be challenging task, especially in rural areas. The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges faced by an English teacher and the strategies to solve the challenges in teaching English in a rural area, namely Sebangki. This narrative study used interview with an English teacher at SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki. The results of this study indicated that there are two main themes of challenges faced by teacher including from the teacher's side consists of distance to school, teaching other subjects, lack of teacher training, and students problems consists of lack of interest, lack of confidence, lack of vocabulary mastery and students' attendance. To overcome those challenges, the English teacher employed some strategies including using media and teaching strategies, giving motivation and even giving punishment to the students.

Keywords: *Rural education, Teacher Strategy, Teaching method*

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The researcher realized that this thesis is still far from perfect. For this reason, the criticism and suggestions are welcomed to the improvement of this thesis.

Pontianak, 13 December, 2023
The researcher,

Siti Zulaeha
F1022171036

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

English is an international language that can be used to communicate with people around the world. Consequently, English has become a very important subject for people to learn. Fandiño et al. (2019) argue that English is one of the most important languages, and being able to communicate in English has become a core competence that should be developed in all academic contexts. As a result, the demand for English teachers will increase as more students come from non-English-speaking countries.

English is taught as a foreign language in many non-English-speaking countries, including Indonesia. Mappiase and Sihes (2014)**,** argue that "English language has been seen as a good medium of communication in Indonesia." In addition, as stated in *Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia,* (2018, sec.11), English becomes a compulsory subject in secondary school. In some areas in Indonesia, English is taught and learned in urban and rural area.

However, in the process of teaching and learning English in Indonesia are different from urban and rural area. Teachers in urban areas are more competent to teach because, in addition to having adequate equipment, they

also have qualifications to teach more competently, such as having a background in English learning or being qualified in the field being taught (Pramesty et. al, 2022). On the other hand, teachers in rural area may face some challenges in teaching students. Endriyanti et. al. (2019) states that schools in rural areas are lack of facilities, such as the school building and IT equipment. In addition, due to a lack of teachers, teachers who are not qualified with their fields are eventually required to teach English (Febriana, et. al, 2018). Furthermore, parental support factors, such as a lack of parental knowledge about learning English and a lack of parental financial resources to support their children's English language learning, also have an impact on learning English in rural areas. It can be seen that less qualified teachers, limited educational facilities, and lack of parental support are the factors that are not available for students in rural areas (Pramesty, et. al. 2022)

SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki is one of the high schools, which is located in a rural area, at Sebangki, Kabupaten Landak, Kalimantan Barat. This school is also located in 3T (*Terdepan, Tertinggal dan Terluar*) areas, which does not have many facilities, including the lack of technology and also poor internet connection. The road access to go to this school is far from the students' and teachers house. Teachers and students may have to travel long distance to get to school. In addition, on the rainy seasons the road access to go to this school is damaged and not in a good condition. Moreover, there is only one teacher who teaches English subject in this school. For this reason, the researcher

intended to investigate the English teacher in order to find the challenges and the strategies that can be used by teacher to solve the challenges in teaching English in a rural area.

Regarding to the challenges that might be faced by the teachers in teaching English in rural areas, there are several studies have been conducted related to this research in Indonesia. Febriana et. al. (2018), conducted a study entitled "Teaching in Rural Indonesian Schools: Teacher Challenges." The participants of the study are teachers who attended SM-3T program and taught at different junior high schools in rural area in Indonesia. The finding showed that teachers who have taught in rural Indonesian schools have experienced several challenges, such as lack of infrastructure, source of learning, language barrier, parents mind-set, inadequacy of teachers, student competence and students mind-set.

Second researcher, Saiful and Triyono (2018) conducted a research entitled "EFL Teachers' Reflection in Teaching English to EFL Students of Rural Areas." The finding showed that lack of facilities and learning resources as well as students' low motivation and proficiency in English language are the main challenges faced by EFL teachers in rural area. Third researcher, Endriyati, et. al. (2019), with a research journal entitled "Challenges In Teaching English at Rural and Urban Schools and Their Solutions." The participants of the study were two English teachers from SMPN 3 Gantiwarno and an English teacher from SMPN 1 Prambanan. The findings indicated that

there are different challenges in teaching English at rural and urban schools. The challenges are related to the students such as vocabulary mastery, students' motivation, parents support and the students' activeness. The challenges related to the teachers, such as familiarity of IT, mastery of teaching method, teaching training and the facilities, such as lack of representative building, computer and LCD.

Another researcher which discusses the same problems with this research is Pramesty, et. al. (2022) with a research journal entitled "Teachers' Challenges in Teaching English to Young Learners in Rural Area at SDN 02 Sendang." The findings showed that learning English in remote areas was constrained by the status of English as a local content that created less supportive conditions for teachers to teach English; most of the teachers came from non-English educational backgrounds, which affected their competence; the learning curriculum was not in accordance with the existing learning conditions; and the socioeconomic status of parents had a significant effect on students' motivation and achievement in learning English. Based on those challenges, it can be concluded that education in rural Indonesian schools is still far from adequate, as the schools and teachers still face numerous obstacles in the process of teaching and learning.

The previous studies above have revealed the challenges faced by English teachers in teaching junior high school and elementary school in rural area, however, this present study focused on finding teachers' challenges in

teaching English in senior high school. The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges faced by English in teaching senior high school students in rural area, namely SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki, Kabupaten Landak, Kalimantan Barat. The school is located at Jalan Raya Sebangki, Kecamatan Sebangki, Kabupaten Landak, Kalimantan Barat. The reason why the researcher selected this school because of some reasons, such as this school is located in rural area, the distance to go to school is far from the city and the road is not good condition. Therefore, the researcher was interested to conduct research entitled: "An Investigation to the Teacher Challenges and Strategies in teaching English at Rural Area**."**

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, the research question can be elaborated as the following:

1. What are the challenges faced by a teacher in teaching English in the rural area at SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki?
2. What are the strategies used by the teacher to solve the challenges of teaching English in the rural area at SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki?

1.3. Research Purposes

Related to the research questions, the objectives of this research are:

1. To explore teachers' challenges in teaching English in the rural area at SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki.

2. To find teachers' strategies to overcome the challenges of teaching English in the rural area at SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki.

1.4. Research Significance

Based on the research purpose, this research is expected to be beneficial for the following parties, such as:

1. English Teachers

   This research can provide information for English teachers about the challenges in teaching English in a rural area and find a way to solve the challenges that they faced in teaching.

2. Other researchers

   This research can be used for other researchers to conduct a research with similar topic about the teachers' challenges and strategies in teaching English at rural area.

1.5. Scope of Research

This research focused on investigating the challenges and strategies of teaching English in the rural area. This research was conducted at one of high school in a rural area, namely SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki, which is located at Jalan Raya Sebangki, Kecamatan Sebangki, Kabupaten Landak, Kalimantan Barat. The subject of this research was an English teacher at SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki. The narrative interview guideline was used to collect the data. To analyse the data, the researcher used thematic analysis.

1.6 Terminology

In order to avoid misunderstanding, the researcher provides the terms of this research, such as:

1. Teacher challenges refer to a difficulty or problem faced by a teacher in the process of teaching. Teacher challenges are the barriers and obstacles that teachers face in teaching students in the classroom.
2. Teacher strategies are methods and technique that a teacher uses in teaching students. Teacher strategies is the methods used to facilitate student learning and a set of teaching forms used in a lesson in accordance with a lesson goal.
3. Teaching is the process by which one person instructs or teaches another person. Teaching is defined as the act of imparting knowledge to the learners or students in the classroom situation.
4. A rural area is a geographic area that is located outside towns and cities. Rural areas also can be defined as all territory, populations and housing units that are located outside of urban area. This research took place in one of the high school in a rural area namely, SMA Negeri 1 Sebangki, Kabupaten Landak, Kalimantan Barat.