



Honing ECOMates English Skill Through UKM ECO UINSI Samarinda in COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

English Community Organization (ECO) UINSI Samarinda is a Student Activity Unit (UKM) that has a vision and mission to increase English interests and talents students UINSI Samarinda. ECOMates is the name for students who join this Organization. ECO has many work programs. Some of them have a focus to improve the English knowledge and skill of ECOMates. In a pandemic situation, some agendas are held virtually, because some of the ECOMates are not in Samarinda. However, sometimes those activities are done offline in the campus environment with the note look the condition and situation. Students who joined this unit are not only those who have skills with English already but also students who are not skillful in it. The researcher was interested to take a look at how far the developments of ECOMates whose routine followed ECO's Programs during the pandemic. The research conducted by the researcher has aimed to assessing and gathering information about the development of ECOMates capabilities with the programs owned by ECO UINSI Samarinda during the Covid-19 pandemic. The method used is a qualitative research method with a focus on the subject of ECOMates 2020 generation. The purpose of the researcher takes the subjects of the ECOMates 2020 generation because they are involved with ECO Programs during the pandemic. This study found that several aspects affect the success of the performance of ECO programs, such as methods, materials, and environment. Some ECOMates who regularly participate in the ECO program during the pandemic have improved their English skills quite well. Research data shows that some ECOMates are quite satisfied with the programs run by ECO. The results of this study are used not only for the benefit of ECOMates but will be applied to all students of UINSI Samarinda who are interested in developing their English.

KEYWORDS: *Interests and talents; Programs; English; ECOMates; COVID-19 Pandemic.*

INTRODUCTION

Some people have noticed that different pandemics are endangering the world. It is difficult to observe during the phase, because the enemy is facing an invisible virus. This virus is the COVID19 coronavirus. Corona viruses are a family of viruses that cause mild to severe illness, and these coronaviruses can cause severe symptoms such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) which are known to cause illness. This rapidly spreading virus is thought to have originated in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, and is currently spreading to almost all corners of the world. According to Yuliana (2020), On the 11th of March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared this to be a global pandemic

The impact of COVID-19 is significant for the growth and development of a country. According to Sanjaya (2020), this topic is constantly becoming a global hot topic, and television news show that continues to circulate to the public. Other forms of education are also facing challenges to remember the anniversary of Covid-19 and to understand the government's policies, Teacher and all educators must work together. This situation does not appear to be causing concern or distress among all parties. There are other differences in the conditions of each district and even each city.

According to Sanjaya (2020), Covid-19 has also had a significant impact on the activities and organizational structures of the governing Covid-19 has also had a significant impact on the activities and organizational programs. Due to the presence of covid-19 all activities and programs of organization in every collage have been disrupted and are undergoing changes. This is experienced by one of the student activity units (UKM) of IAIN Samarinda, which has now become **State Islamic University of Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris (UINSI Samarinda)**, namely the English Community Organization (ECO).

UKM ECO is an Organization that focuses on providing a place for students to enhance their English interests and talents. Mr. Rudi Purnomo founded this UKM on August 27, 2007 while still working at STAIN Samarinda. ECO arose from a group of people who wanted to learn English together and share their experiences, which eventually led to the formation of the ECO organization. ECO has been in operation for ten years. On June 10,

2014, ECO was legally established as a UKM. ECOMates is the name for students who join this Organization.

UKM ECO offers a variety of programs. Weekly, Monthly, English Training Leadership (ETL), English Training Mentor (ETM), and E-fest are the most regularly run programs. Weekly is a once-a-week English language study activity. Unlike weekly, monthly is a once-a-month exercise that is nearly identical to weekly but for the methods or teachers utilized. ETL and ETM are activities that help ECOMates develop leadership skills and become good mentors by forming a cadre of ECOMates. Then E-fest is an activity in which ECOMates can demonstrate their abilities in any field while remaining in the context of English.

In a pandemic situation, some agendas are held virtually, because some of the ECOMates are not in Samarinda. However, sometimes those activities are done offline in the campus environment with the note look the condition and situation. Of course, it will have an impact on the effectiveness of the Programs operated by UKM ECO. But according to Saifulloh& Darwis, 2020 Organizational management in time the Covid-19 pandemic is very much needed to keep the organization moving.

This Reasearch has some aim. First, The Reaserch has aimed to assessing and gathering information about the development of ECOMates capabilities with the program owned by ECO UINSI Samarinda during the covid-19 pandemic. Researchers are interested in learning what ecomates think about the Programs run provided by ECO. At the same time, this is tracking the impact of the ECO Program on ECOMatesEnglish skill during the covid pandemic. By exploring this, researchers can identify the factors that support and inhibit the effectiveness ECO's Programs.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design. According to Creswell (2012), qualitative research explores phenomena from the participants' point of view. A descriptive qualitative investigation is used in this study. Furthermore, Moleong (2007: 6) said that qualitative research tries to comprehend the phenomena experienced by study subjects. It is more suited and suitable for researching things connected to the subject's behavior,

attitudes, motivations, perceptions, and actions. In other words, quantitative approaches cannot be used in this type of research.

RESEARCH SUBJECT

The researcher selected of Studernts who joined ECO in 2020, State Islamic University of Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris as the research object as it is located in the East Borneo (Samarinda), and it has various backgrounds of the students.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

In this research, the instruments that the researcher used was Interviews.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Interview Results. This study's data was gathered through interviews with a total of seven participants.

3.1.1 ECOMates Capabilities Development before and after joining the UKM ECO.

Based on the interview results to questions, "How were your skills in Speaking, Writing, Listening, and Reading before joining UKM ECO?" Some participants stated that their skills before entering ECO were quite limited because some of them were not interested in English, thus what they studied in class was just the theory. Additionally, there is an argument that participant just has one of a lack from those 4 skills. on the side of the participants. There is also said that the four skills are very good. It can be concluded that some of the ECOMates talents were still basic before entering ECO and have not progressed due to a lack of direct exercise. However, some ECOMates are already quite proficient in English and enroll in ECO to enhance their English once more.

Based on the responses of the interviews to the questions "How were your skills in Speaking, Writing, Listening, and Reading after joining UKM ECO?" many participants said that several skills such as Speaking, Writing, Listening, and Reading have improved. Participants understand several things better, and there are many new things that participants know about

English. Participants also learn to build confidence in speaking English. From all of the answer, it may be concluded that after participating in ECO, many ECOMate felt that some of their skills had improved. It is because they gain knowledge that they did not previously get in class. Apart from language skills, ECOMate can train their self-confidence so that they can be brave in practical matters such as speaking.

3.1.2 Conditions of methods, teaching materials, media and environment in the UKM ECO

Based on the interview results with the question "How the Conditions of the methods, instructional materials, media, and environment in the UKM ECO program during the covid-19 pandemic?" Some respondents stated that the methods employed differed. Such as weekly and monthly meetings that include lectures, question and answer sessions, group discussions, and games when they hold a seminar, they turn it online, for example, using Zoom or Google Meet. The instructional materials provided are quite diverse, and the administrators/teachers have good control over the existing environment. Although there are not always a large number of supporters for the agendas created, the current conditions are sufficient to make the agenda a reality. From this, the researcher can conclude that the conditions of the four aspects, namely methods, teaching materials, media and environment in each program run by ECO during the pandemic, are quite varied. This is because of the conditions in which the administrators must be smart and creative in taking advantage of the existing circumstances and situations. Although sometimes there is a lack of interest, this does not prevent the UKM ECO program from running.

3.1.3 Factors that impact the UKM ECO Program During the Pandemic COVID-19

Based on the interview with the question "In your opinion, what are the limiting factors for the UKM ECO program during the COVID-19 pandemic?", participants said that due to network and distance constraints, many ECOMates are not participating in many ECO

activities. Some ECOMates believe that because the agenda is always do online, some ECOMates are too lazy to support and follow the program held by UKM ECO. This leads to the conclusion that network, distance, and a lack of initiative on the part of members are all issues that can hinder the ECO program.

Based on the interview with the question "In your opinion, what are the supporting factors for the UINSI Samarinda ECO UKM program during the covid-19 pandemic?", participants said that the supporting factors for the UKM ECO programs include having a lot of support from coaches, seniors, members, etc. They use very good social media so that it can support online activities, as well as a good learning system and good teachers. convey the material. Thus, it can be concluded that with the existing supporting factors, the implementation of ECO activities can still run, although it is not the same as before, where we can still meet face to face. They use good media to support online activities, as well as an excellent learning system and good mentors.

Based on those factors it can be conclude that the The ECO's program that Ecomates participated in during the pandemic was quite good. Although there are various obstacles, during the pandemic ECO can still run their program and is enough to help ecomates continue to hone their English skills.

3.1.4 ECOMates Satisfaction with UKM ECO's Program During the Pandemic COVID-19

Based on the results of the interview with the question "Are you satisfied with the UKM ECO program? What is your reason?" Respondents stated that they were satisfied with the activities of the UKM ECO program even during the pandemic. They think that the ECO program, especially weekly and monthly, can share knowledge about English well by utilizing existing media. In other head, some said they are not satisfied because they are limited by distance. Our activities do not always go as planned. when there is an agenda that is held offline, those of us who live outside of Samarinda are unable to

participate. From these perspectives, it is possible to infer that ECOMates are currently quite satisfied with the existing programs. The programs use a variety of creative methods, such as media, to make it easier for us, although we are separated by distance. However, due to the distance meter, several ECOMates are also dissatisfied with the current program

CONCLUSION

Based on the results above, the result shown that Some ECOMates who regularly participate in the ECO program during the pandemic have improved their English skills quite well. This is since even in a Pandemic situation when not all ECOMates can gather, ECO can still take advantage of the prevailing settings and situations. ECO can effectively control the atmosphere amongst ECOMates by utilizing existing media, methodologies, and educational materials. It could be a feature that contributes to the success of ECO activities to retain its function as a forum for the ECOMates' knowledge, interests, and talents in English. ECO does not run out of ideas for projects to carry out with the existing supporting forces. ECO does not run out of ideas when it comes to carrying out its initiatives, due to the existing supporting components. However, there are conditions that encourage researchers to use the word "quitewell" in their findings. It was established as a result of data gathered by the researchers. It indicating that there were obstacles such as distance and network, as well as situations that made some ECOMates feel disinterested and rarely participated in current activities. This occasionally causes the software to run slowly, which does not satisfy all ECOMates. These types of impediments are inhibiting elements that can have an impact on the process of running activities at ECO.

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