

An Investigation of The Advantages and Challenges of Case-based Method in EFL Classroom

Sherly Agustiana¹, Hanif Nurcholish Adiantika², Dila Charisma³

Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon¹²³

agustianasherly16@gmail.com¹, hanifadiantika@gmail.com², deela1985@gmail.com³

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Abstract

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This research aims to investigate the implementation of the case-based method and its advantages and challenges in the EFL classroom. This research used case study design under qualitative research. The participants in this research were an English teacher and four students who were in the twelfth grade in senior high school. The instruments in this research were interview. Interview was used to investigate the implementation of the case-based method in the EFL classroom and to examine the advantages and challenges of the case-based method. The findings showed that teacher implemented case-based method in EFL classroom on discussion text learning by conducting a debate between two teams to conclude a case. The results of interview revealed that learning with case-based methods had several advantages, namely students' confidence, speaking skill, creativity, collaboration and critical thinking. In addition, the method also had challenges that teachers and students go through. The teacher and students have the same perspective on the advantages and challenges in used case-based method. Therefore, the case-based method was indeed the right teaching method to be implemented in the classroom because there were several advantages that can improve students' abilities, despite the challenges that exist.

✉ Correspondence Address (author1):

E-mail (author 1):

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INTRODUCTION

From the past until now, the teacher expects their students to have a broad mentality and understanding learning both in theory and practice in the real world they will face. However, all schools face the complexities of preparing students to 'diagnose, define and act' with the real world. Then, the gap between theory and practice exists because there may be too much

learning in theory and too little practice. Therefore, nowadays teachers must use appropriate learning methods, thus, there can be no gap between theory and practice in the learning process. Appropriate learning methods are needed in the classroom because of the high and quality student learning outcomes that can be produced from a quality learning process, while the mismatch of learning methods applied can

reduce the quality of the learning process itself (Nasution, 2017). The selection of the right learning method is very important in learning because it can have a good impact on the learning process for students. A good learning method is a learning method that can build the enthusiasm of students thus they can receive learning materials easily and can be understood well. According to (Munawaroh, 2020) the learning method is a way of presenting subject matter carried out by teacher to students thus the learning process achieves goals. The learning method can be said to be a method or stage used in the interaction between students and teacher to achieve the learning objectives that have been set in accordance with the material and mechanism of the learning method.

In solving a problem that students will face, of course the teacher must have an appropriate method for material and learning in the classroom. The method used must certainly be able to hone the thinking skills of students in dealing with a problem. Therefore, the case-based method is the right method to be used in the learning process and the method can also make and improve students' ability to think critically. According to (Koivisto and Hamari, 2019) as cited in (Huang et al., 2021) the case method is considered as a teaching method, in authentic situations and through case analysis, discussion, understanding, and reflection, to increase the effectiveness of learning. The case method is a learning method in which a person learns by thinking, planning and acting something in analysing a case. Cases are complex problems with real situations and can stimulate discussion in classroom. According to (Mu & Hatch, 2020) the case method can be used as a way for students to have an underlying mentality with cognitive and affective abilities, skills and behaviour. With cognitive abilities, students can train their logical thinking skills and are very affective, such as emotional responses to cases in learning.

(Puri, 2022) states that most school suggest and use the case method, which

allows to bridge between practice and theory in a way that encourages and stimulates engaging and deep learning, helping students to gain a deeper understanding of complexity. Real-life situations, and empower teachers and learners to apply their skills and theoretical knowledge to a variety of problems. But in reality, there are still many teachers who do not use the case method in the learning process and they use more old methods. Whereas (Efremenko et al., 2020) state that the case method encourages analytical thinking, encourages students to analyse topics independently and find solutions, and increases their capacity for communication, debate, and personal accountability. It can consolidate knowledge learned through cases and prepare for independent practical work and minimize the gap between theory and practice. In addition, by generating causal relationships and making these relationships the object of study, the case method aims to teach students not only facts but also the relationships that exist between them. Learning by using the case method is also beneficial hence students can interact and collaborate by producing critical and structured thinking. Based on the result of preliminary observations, the teacher did not realize how to use the case method in the learning process. This can happen because of a lack of knowledge about the latest learning methods and students are not accustomed to being involved in the learning process such as solving a problem in a discussion. But students are given a case in the form of a text called a discussion text and put it into written form. And then, everyone must have their own opinion about this method because there are some students who feel embarrassed to express their opinion. There are even students who are unwilling to interact in the discussion and sometimes there are students who do not give good feedback as long as learning processes in classroom. However, there are also students who are very enthusiastic when learning using the case method.

This study aims to see whether learning using the case method is a good strategy for students based on students' perception. In addition, case method is considered as an effective method that can be applied in EFL classroom. Consequently, learning English will be more active, responsive and creative in discussing or collaborating for students and teachers. Therefore, based on the above phenomenon, the present study tries to fill the gap by examining the implementation of case-based methods used by teachers and observe students' feedback involved in learning in EFL classroom at senior high school level.

The learning method is a systematic and regular process carried out by educators in delivering material to their students. According to (Aryanti, 2017), teaching method is a method used for teaching. The method is a path that is traversed to provide understanding or understanding to students (Halik, 2012). The learning method is a decision made by educators in managing the ways of implementing the learning process or how technically a lesson material will be given to students. According to (Anjani et al., 2020), the learning method is a systematic way of working, meaning that it can facilitate implementation thus it is conducive to achieving predetermined goals. Therefore, with a specific goal method, it will run more structured and easier to implement. Teaching method which is used by the teacher should be varies in accordance to the purposes and taught materials. By using various teaching methods, the teacher does not only use one method but also other relevant methods in turns. With this method, it is hoped that the teaching and learning process can run well. Therefore, educators must be able to learn learning methods.

The case method is a discussion-based learning to solve a case or problem. The application of this method will greatly hone and improve students' critical thinking skills to solve problems, but it can also improve communication, collaboration, and creativity skills. The case method could be a

shape of learning in which understudies more than once encounter playing the role of a decision-maker. A case may be a depiction of an occasion or arrangement of occasions that lead to the require for a choice (Mu & Hatch, 2020). This case method could be a sort of problem-based learning. Understudies have a primary part in issue understanding, whereas teachers act as facilitators who are in charge of watching, inquiring questions, and coordinating discourses, and observation. (Puri, 2022) also mentions that the case method is a perfect way, the most perfect way to get ready understudies for the challenges of leadership' and 'through the energetic prepare of trading viewpoints, countering and protecting focuses, and building on each other's thoughts, understudies gotten to be proficient at analysing issues, working out judgment, and making troublesome decisions. The case method gives basic administration aptitudes and certainty and instructs understudies to stand their ground and impact others through talk.

Case method is a teaching method used in various fields of science. In general, a case is a description of an actual or hypothetical situation in the real world where a person or persons face a problem or challenge, although the specific definition of a case may vary. In education, the case method is a motivating, student-centre approach that models theoretical concepts and illustrates them through their application to a situation. Involvement in the case method encourages students to be active, participate, and think critically among other students. The case method can be used in any context when teachers want students to explore how and what they have learned that applies to real-world situations and ask students to answer questions freely or develop solutions to solve some problems. Basically, students learn by doing, and develop their thinking skills to engage in theory or cases with strong reasoning.

METHOD

This research employs case study design under qualitative research. According to (Creswell, 2018), a case study as employed in this research uses an in-depth analysis of a case (can be several cases) that occurs over a certain period of time through in-depth and detailed data from various sources of information whose testimony is believed to be true. According to (Rebolj & Possibilities, 2017), case studies are comprehensive descriptions of individual cases and their analysis; namely the characterization of cases and events, as well as an overview of the process of finding these characteristics which is the research process itself. The purpose of a case study is to identify the variables, structure, form, and sequence of interactions between participants in a situation (theoretical goal), or, to assess work performance or progress in the development of a case (practical goal) because a case study is a description and analysis of a problem or individual case. According to (Malik, 2013), “qualitative research is exploratory in nature because its purpose is to discover new ideas and insights or even generate new theories”.

The participant in this research was an English teacher who implements the case-based method in an EFL classroom to teach discussion text in particular. Furthermore, the students were also involved as participants in this research. The selection of the students-participants was based on their achievement suggested by the teacher namely low achiever, medium achiever, and high achiever. The data in this research were obtained through an interview. A form of dialog conducted by researchers to obtain information from respondents is called an interview (Sandu Siyoto & Sodik, 2015). The interview technique is to meet directly with the student and teacher and they can answer the best interview according to their own opinion. In this research, semi-structured interviews were used to gain the data. The data were in the forms of utterances, sentences, phrases, and words related to the implementation of case-based method and also about its advantages and challenges. In this research, sources triangulation was used. Therefore, source triangulation is used to check the correctness of data obtained by this research

from various different points of view with used the same technique. In this research, the data analysis process is carried out through stages; data transcription, data reduction, data display and conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This research reveals that the teacher as the participant is not familiar with the case-based method. The teacher has also never attended training on the case-based method therefore she lacks knowledge of the method. However, she has already implemented case-based method to teach discussion text in her EFL classroom despite her unfamiliarity towards this sort of method. The teacher uses a case to be debated between student teams. The teaching process can be said to have used the case-based method. Especially teachers who have been teaching for a long time, they only know conventional methods. However, actually most of the teachers have used new methods such as this case-based method, it is just a lack of knowledge about the name of the new learning method. Therefore, there are several aspects that will be analysed based on the results of the research that has been done, there is the advantages and challenges of case-based method.

The Advantages of Case-based Method in EFL Classroom

Learning methods that are implemented in the classroom certainly have advantages. The advantages of a learning method can improve several abilities. This is also in line with the case-based learning methods. After conducting research, the case-based method has several advantages. Some of the advantages are as follows.

Enhancing Students' Confidence

Based on the results of the interview, the advantages of learning discussion texts using the case-based method can enhance students' self-confidence. What is meant by increasing self-confidence is to increase students' confidence in expressing their opinions. As said by several students below.

“Kelebihannya itu bisa melatih kita untuk berani beragumen. Mungkin banyak

kelebihannya dan tidak ada kekurangannya.”(Student 1)
 (The advantage is that it can train us to dare to argue. Maybe there are many advantages and no disadvantages)

“Banyak kelebihanannya, yaitu melatih berpendapat dan melatih percaya diri”
 (Student 2)
 (There are many advantages, namely that it can train us to have an opinion and increase self-confidence)

From the statements of some of these students, the advantages of this case-based method can train them to increase their confidence to have an opinion. Then, in increasing self-confidence for students it is very important especially in terms of conveying their thoughts, because in learning discussion texts they have to be in groups and conduct debates that are required to give their opinions.

Improving Students’ Speaking Skill and Communication

The second advantage when learning using the case method is that it can improve students' speaking skills and their communication. Students' speaking skills will improve because the method used by the teacher can encourage students to speak, for example, as done in twelve classrooms, namely arguing between two teams. This is stated by the teacher and students listed below.

“Bisa meningkatkan speaking untuk beragumen, untuk memberikan ide atau gagasan ketika menghadapi kasus-kasus tersebut.” (Teacher)
 (Can improve speaking to argue, to provide ideas when facing these cases)

“Bisa banget. Skill untuk berani berbicara, berani beragumen dan melatih speaking kita menggunakan Bahasa Inggris.” (Student 1)

(It can really, skills to dare to speak, dare to argue and train our speaking using English)

From the statement above, the advantages of improving speaking skills are felt by teachers and students in the learning process. In EFL classroom, of course, they are encouraged to use English in expressing their opinions. But because of the different abilities of children there are some who do not use English when speaking and the teacher teaches it. At the time of learning they should use English but by looking at the ability of the students, the teacher allows bilingual language. Because if they are required to use full English, they will not be brave in expressing their opinions and the class will become inactive. And they will definitely not be happy to be in class because they feel they are lacking in vocabulary. On the other hand, children who have a talent for public speaking must feel enthusiastic about this debate because in addition to being good at speaking, they have also mastered the topic.

Promoting Students’ Critical Thinking Skill

Learning to use case-based methods in discussion texts can create critical thinking in students, because students are required to think about clear and accurate opinions to get a conclusion from a case discussed. As what the teacher says in the interview below.

“Kelebihannya bisa meningkatkan speaking skill, berpikir kritis, bisa berkolaborasi sama teman dan meningkatkan kreativitas siswa yaitu dengan mencari sebuah isu dan memikirkan opini mereka.” (Teacher)

(The advantages are that it can improve speaking skills, critical thinking, can collaborate with friends and increase student creativity by finding an issue and thinking about their opinions)

Students' ability to think critically is different and cannot be generalized. Seen during the lesson when the teacher asks about the material to be taught, there are several students who answer enthusiastically and it is seen when conducting interviews with some of these students. Especially during the debate, in addition to thinking about the opinions that must be issued, students also need to think critically to speak using English. Consequently, they will be very trained in critical thinking. Critical thinking is needed in learning discussion text for problem solving in EFL classroom. Therefore, learning using case-based method is very good to be applied in EFL classroom.

Encouraging Students' Creativity

The next advantage in implementing learning with a case is that it can enhance students' creativity. In learning the discussion text, students are encouraged to think creatively. For example, in finding a case, they are told by the teacher to be as creative as possible to find an interesting case and that they can develop an opinion on the case. As in the student interview below.

"Kita bisa belajar menyiapkan materi-materi atau solusi dari kasus yang akan kita bicarakan nanti dan bisa menambah vocab dari kita mencari solusi itu."
(Student 1)

(We can learn to prepare materials or a solution to the case that we will talk about later and can increase our vocab from finding the solution)

According to the transcription of the student interview above, finding a solution to a case can enhance creativity. They are very creative in looking for material that will be debated. Then, in thinking of an opinion they also need creative things or sentences in order to defend their opinion. Therefore, in learning using the case method, in addition to enhance students' creativity, it can also improve students' vocab in EFL classroom.

Creating Students' Collaboration

In the EFL classroom used as the research site, learning by using a case can also make students become trained to collaborate. Since the lesson is about discussion texts, the students are asked by the teacher to get into groups and discuss a case. This can be seen in the interviews with teachers and students below.

"Metode pembelajaran dengan kasus itu bagus karena bisa membuat siswa menjadi berkembang pemikirannya. Apalagi dilakukan secara berkelompok, bisa membuat pembelajaran lebih efektif."
(Teacher)

(The learning method with cases is good because can makes students develop their thinking. Moreover, done in groups, it can make learning more effective)

According to what the teacher above, learning that requires them to discuss can actually make them accustomed to learning by collaborating with friends and can make learning more effective. This collaboration certainly has its own advantages for students because they can exchange ideas with their group mates if they are confused in thinking or do not find a solution. Learning by discussing can also make students close to their classmates, thus it can increase the sense of socialization in the classroom. By collaborating students can be enthusiastic and focused during learning, because there are students who feel happy when learning by discussing, but sometimes it depends on the learning situation or learning. As in the interview below with students.

"Tergantung situasinya, tetapi kalau belajar lebih enak diskusi dengan teman karena kalau ada yang tidak paham jadi bisa bertanya ke teman dan bisa saling bantu satu sama lain." (Student 1)

(It depends on the situation, but when studying it is better to

discuss with friends because if we don't understand something we can ask our friends and help each other)

“Jika pelajarannya itu mudah dipahami, belajar individu mungkin bisa. Tapi, kalau pelajarannya itu sulit dipahami lebih enak sama temen untuk berdiskusi agar lebih paham materi.” (Student 2)

(If the lesson is easy to understand, individual study might be possible. But, if the lesson is difficult to understand, it is better with friends to discuss in order to better understand the material)

As the student above state, learning using cases by collaborating can indeed make learning easy. It can be easy to receive material because there are several friends who can be used as material for exchanging ideas. However, they also look at the situation, if the lesson is easy then they can learn by themselves, while if the lesson is difficult, they will be happy learning in groups. Then, sometimes the thing that cannot make them comfortable in groups is if their friends are noisy, thus they will not focus on learning. But based on the answers of some students, they prefer to be in a group when learning this discussion text.

The Challenges of Case-based Method in EFL Classroom

In addition to having very useful advantages, all learning methods have their own challenges. The challenges that arise will be different for each method. One of them is the case-based learning method. This method has challenges experienced by teachers and classroom that has been observe in this study. There are several challenges that exist when learning using case-based methods in EFL classroom. Some of the challenges are as follows.

Students' Reluctance to Express an Opinion

Every learning method must have some challenges and this research revealed challenges that exist in learning using case-based methods. In learning discussion texts whose material is debating, sometimes students also feel embarrassed to express their opinions. They are embarrassed because they are afraid that their opinions cannot be understood by their friends and teachers. As the teacher said in the interview below.

“Kekurangannya ada beberapa siswa yang masih malu untuk mengeluarkan opini dan berbicara karena dituntut untuk menggunakan bahasa inggris, jadi ada yang merasa malu dan bingung. Kadang ada yang bisa berpendapat tapi tidak bisa mengucapkan karena gugup. Ada yang harus ngomong A dia malah ngomong B. Lalu, sulit untuk menyuruh siswa untuk beropini menggunakan bahasa inggris. Jika ada waktu seharusnya sering diadakan berdialog menggunakan isu-isu pendek sehingga lancar untuk beragumen.”

(Teacher)

(The disadvantage is that some students are still shy to express their opinions and speak because they are required to use English, so some feel embarrassed and confused. Sometimes there are those who can argue but can't say it because they are nervous. There are those who are supposed to speak A they speak B instead. Then, it is difficult to tell children to have an opinion using English. If there is time, we should often hold dialogues using short issues thus they are fluent in arguing)

Based on the transcript of the interview with the teacher above, because the teacher tells the students to express their opinions using English, thus they feel embarrassed. The teacher also feels challenged because the students were difficult to tell to use English, thus the teacher allows them to be bilingual. Because if not, the learning of discussion text material will not be conveyed and the class becomes inactive. And in the minds of students become unfocused, thus that what is thought and spoken will be different. This is evidenced by the interview with the student below.

“Tantangannya itu pada saat ingin menyampaikan pendapat atau argument itu ada rasa grogi dan pikirannya jadi nggak focus. Merasa malu karena takut tidak diterima argumennya yang udah disampaikan.” (Student 1)

(The challenge is when you want to convey your opinion or argument, you feel nervous and your mind becomes unfocused. Feeling embarrassed for fear of not accepting the arguments that have been presented.)

“Tantangannya karena saya merasa nervous. Susah untuk mengeluarkan pendapat atau tidak bisa berkata-kata.” (Student 4)

(The challenges because I feel nervous. Difficulty expressing opinions or speechlessness)

According to the results of interviews from several students above, the most common challenge experienced by some students is that they experience nervousness, and they become unfocused in expressing their opinions. In addition, they also find it difficult to convey their opinions because they are afraid that people in the class will not understand their opinions, especially when they use English. Therefore, the challenge they face is that they still feel shy to express their opinions.

Demand for Students to Think Quickly and Critically

In learning this discussion text, students are required to think quickly and critically. Because they are in a debate session between teams, thus they must have answers or opinions that think quickly and critically in order to defend their arguments. But sometimes the obstacle is that students take a very long time to think about all of that especially during case building. As said in the interview with the teacher below.

“Kendalanya ada pada saat case building, para siswa membutuhkan waktu yang lama karena mereka ingin mengutarakan argument yang lebih dari satu dan bisa mendukung untuk kasus yang di dapatnya.” (Teacher)

(The obstacle is that during case building, the students take a long time because they want to express more than one argument that can support the case they get)

The obstacle that teachers experience when learning by using the case method is because students during case building ask for a long time, thus the teacher feels chased by time. But it is very reasonable because the students need a long time thus that they can collect more opinions that they will issue during the debate against the opposing team and think of the right vocabulary in English. Consequently, they need speed and critical thinking. But indeed, the obstacle for students is thinking quickly and critically, as students said in the interview below.

“Kesulitannya itu harus berpikir kritis dan berpikir cepat jika ada lawan yang menyerang dengan argument dari sebuah kasus yang di debatkan.” (Student 3)

(The difficulty is having to think critically and quickly if there are opponents who continue to attack with arguments from a case that is being debated)

The result of the interview data transcript above is that the difficulty in thinking quickly and critically is experienced by the students. Because in the debate, the opposing team continue to submit arguments that made them feel pressured to think of other arguments to counterattack the opposing team. It was not felt by just one student, because several students who researchers interviewed also said if they had difficulty in thinking quickly and critically, it was a form of challenge using case-based methods in EFL classroom.

Different Students' Proficiency Level

In the classroom, of course, there are smarter and less intelligent students. Teachers should not generalize the ability of students in the classroom because the ability and character of each student is different. This can be seen during the learning of discussion texts in EFL classroom. Moreover, the learning at that time was to conduct a debate, where students is requiring to express their opinions about a case and also requiring to think quickly and critically. This is the same as what the teacher says during the interview below.

"Pasti ada, karena kemampuan anak berbeda-beda. Ada siswa yang menyukai beropini, ada yang merasa tertekan. Siswa yang mempunyai bakat public speaking pasti merasa antusias. Kalau siswa yang kurang senang itu karena mereka merasa kurang dalam kosa kata untuk menyampaikan argument." (Teacher)

(There must be, because children have different abilities. There are students who like to give opinions, while others feel pressured. Students who have a talent for public speaking must feel enthusiastic. If the students are not happy, it is because they feel they lack the vocabulary to convey their arguments)

Based on the results of the interview data transcript above, the teacher realizes that the ability of each student is different. In learning by using the case-based method, there are students

who feel enthusiastic because basically they feel they can do public speaking and like giving opinions. However, there are also students who feel pressure in this method because they are not confident and shy or unable to absorb the material taught thus, they cannot convey an opinion.

DISCUSSION

Learning using the case-based method has several advantages and challenges. According to teachers and students who have been interviewed by researchers, they are interrelated and have the same views on this case-based method. The advantage of learning using the case-based method is that it can make students become confident. Confidence in terms of expressing opinions during learning. Increasing self-confidence is not only for when learning, but in their daily lives can also be influential if their self-confidence increases. Another advantage is that it can improve 4C, namely critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. Students can improve critical thinking because they are required to find cases to be used as debate material. Not only critical, but students can also improve fast and creative thinking. This is because during case selection and case building, they have to think of opinions that they must issue creatively, quickly and critically for a case. Then in learning this case-based method, students are trained to create or train students in collaboration. It can add to their social knowledge and can exchange ideas with their group friends to make it easier to do learning in EFL classroom. Things that can be improved are also in the communication that is done in the classroom. Communicating is very important in case method learning, because in communicating the students can also practice speaking skills. Because during the debate they are asked by the teacher to use English and if they can't then they use bilingual. What the students say also in that case can even increase their vocab because of the use of English in class during the debate. Of course, it is very beneficial for students. The advantages are the same as according to Andayani et al., (2022), the case method is participatory learning to solve cases or problems. The application of this method enhances and improves critical thinking in problem solving, communication skills, collaboration and creativity, thus that learning is

more meaningful and students can benefit from learning because the problems solved are directly related to real life and students are more independent and mature, able to express and accept opinions from others and instill positive social attitudes in students.

However, learning using the case-based method also has challenges faced by teachers and students. The challenge is that sometimes students feel embarrassed to express their opinions for several reasons. First, the students are embarrassed because they are not good at and do not know how to express their opinions in English. Secondly, they are embarrassed because they are afraid that the people around them will not understand what they say. Another challenge is that students have difficulty in thinking critically and quickly because in the material being taught, students are required to think quickly and critically in finding opinions and concluding a case. The teacher also felt that there were challenges caused by the students' lack of quick and critical thinking, as a result the teacher needed a lot of time in the discussion text material. This is the same as according to Roell (2019), in the case method, reading and analyzing a case can be time-consuming. This cannot be denied, that learning using case-based methods also has challenges or shortcomings such as it can take longer and the teacher also has to spend his time in group division and other activities carried out in the learning process using case-based methods.

CONCLUSION

Learning using the case-based method has several advantages and challenges. The advantage of learning using the case-based method is that it can make students become confident. Confidence in terms of expressing opinions during learning. Another advantage is that it can improve 4C, namely critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. The application of this case-based method can improve critical thinking in solving or concluding a problem, can improve communication or speaking skills, collaboration and creativity. From this learning can make students to benefit because the problems solved are directly related to everyday life and can make students become more independent and mature in dealing with a problem. Then, being able to express and accept

opinions from others and instill positive social attitudes for the student environment.

Not only are there advantages, but implementing case-based methods to classroom learning can also have its challenges. The challenge is that sometimes students feel shy when expressing an opinion for a case, thus they feel less confident and their words do not match what they think. The students also feel shy because they are not good at English, thus they are afraid that what they say will not be understood by their friends and teachers in the classroom. Then, in using the case method, the teacher needs a lot of time and the teacher must spare his time. The time used is to divide the group, do case building and during the learning of debate material. These are the challenges or shortcomings in using case-based methods in EFL classroom.

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