AN INVESTIGATION OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION IN USING GOOGLE CLASSROOM APPLICATION IN ELT TRAINING CLASSROOM

Indra Yoga Prawiro¹; Linda Yuliyah Ningrum²
¹,²Wiralodra University
indrayoga@unwir.ac.id; lindaningrum2019@gmail.com

Abstract

Nowadays, many lecturers use various tools to support the online learning process, such as Moodle, Schoology, Edmodo, and Google Classroom. This study focuses on exploring the undergraduate students’ perceptions of Google Classroom’s implementation in online English Learning. With the case study design, seven undergraduate students from English Education Department in Wiralodra University participated in this study. The questionnaire and interview were used to collect the data, and both of them were analyzed qualitatively. The study results revealed that in terms of implementation, the Google Classroom application is an application that is easy to use, less effective in material explanation, and effective in the technic of administration and material management. Then, this study showed some positive impacts of the Google Classroom application. First, Google Classroom can record an effort of learning, material and assignment. The second, it provides quick access to collect an assignment, and The last, it minimizes the cost of learning. However, this study also revealed some negative impacts, such as trouble with an internet connection speed and screen display of google classroom. So, from the result of the study, it can be concluded that Google Classroom can be one of the application choices in teaching undergraduate students.

Keywords: Online learning, Google Classroom, Perception.
INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, almost all countries globally, including Indonesia, are facing a virus outbreak problem called COVID-19. The government makes a policy to do social distancing. It advised their people to avoid the crowd, pray from home, and work from home. Almost all educational processes in every single level also apply online teaching and learning processes at the students’ own homes. Online learning is widely used as a medium that supports education, particularly in learning today. Tao et al. (2006) argued that this new environment for learning centralized on electronic networks had allowed learners in universities to learn individually. The primary constructs that have made e-learning the most promising educational technology include service, cost, quality, and speed. It shows that e-learning can empower students at higher educational levels to acquire their education while at the same time pursuing their objectives as well as maintaining their careers, with no need to attend to a rigid schedule (Borstorff & Lowe, 2007).

Therefore, many lecturers use various tools to support the online learning process, such as Google+, Google scholar, and Google Docs. These tools are really useful to support e-learning, especially for undergraduate students. Besides, Google also has an e-learning tool, Google Classroom. It is one of the social networks designed to connect teachers and students in the teaching and learning process. Google Classroom has an excellent advantage for teachers and students in the teaching and learning process (Al-Maroof & Al-Emran, 2018). The teacher does not have to spend time reviewing the students’ paper-based task to find out the students’ scores, but the system automatically provided it. Google Classroom application feature can also help the teacher to analyze which materials are not majority understood by the students in the meeting. The teacher can review this uncovered material at any time (Azhar & Iqbal, 2018). Therefore, the Google Classroom application can be a suitable online learning media for the students and teacher in the learning activity because it can be used individually and not in paper-based learning. So, both of the students or teachers can learn wherever and whenever they want.

Previous studies about the perception of using Google Classroom in learning. The first study was conducted by Azhar & Iqbal (2018) from Barrett Hodgson University, Pakistan. They found that teachers perceive Google Classroom as only a tool to record document
management and basic classroom management without significantly impacting teaching methodologies. In comparison, the second previous study was conducted by Khalil (2018) at Palestine Ahliya University in Bethlehem. The study focused on EFL Students’ Perceptions towards Using Google Docs and Google Classroom as Online Collaborative Tools in Learning Grammar. He found that Google Applications helped to establish a collaborative learning environment since students have supported teacher-to-student and student-to-student interactions. The majority of the participants preferred using such applications for future courses given that they can benefit from the availability of teacher-written feedback and the easy access to course materials. Furthermore, the third previous study was conducted by Islam (2019) which the research conducted among the students of Daffodil International University. He found some challenges in the first time of using Google Classroom application for learning English based on the students’ perceptions in that University. Therefore, this study differs in terms of perception in the implementation and the impact of using Google Classroom application as the learning media in learning English. The purpose of this study is to explore EFL students’ perception of the implementation and impact when they use the Google Classroom application as a tool in the English learning process. Furthermore, this study will hopefully enrich the theories of Google Classroom in teaching and learning English. Hopefully, this study can be helpful for students to find out more deeply of how their perception when using the Google Classroom application in the English learning process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perception

According to Schmidt (2002), perception is the recognition and understanding of events, objects, and stimuli through the use of senses (sight, hearing, touch, etc.). Several different types of perception are distinguished: visual perception, auditory perception, speech perception. The purpose of the perception itself is to help humans recognize and understand their conditions. If someone has a good perception of an object, it will affect his attitude toward those objects because perception can influence someone’s perspective of things in a different context.
E-learning

E-learning is being introduced at the beginning of the third millennium. It makes users can access course material everywhere via the internet. Using e-learning can encourage and improve students' interaction in the class. Based on Agarwal & Pandey (2012), e-learning focuses on the use of technology in learning and education. It refers to the use of information and communication technology in the learning process, consisting of electronic media. In our context nowadays, e-learning is divided into two types, synchronous and asynchronous. These two types have their pro and contra. The appropriate technique for students depends on how they absorb information. Based on Arisandhy (2010), synchronous is online conversation and video conference, while asynchronous learning can be done while the teachers and students are offline.

Google Classroom

Google Classroom is a tool that facilitates student and teacher collaboration; also, the teacher can create and distribute assignments for students in an online classroom for free (Beal, 2017). It makes teachers simply build groups to share assignments and announcements. Google Classroom can be a tool that makes learners become active participants. It has copious facilities which are beneficial for its users. A few of them are user-friendly, cost-free, cell phone friendly, and time-saving. Using Google Classroom is easy. Based on Janzen (2014), Google Classroom design purposefully simplifies the instructional interface and options used for delivering and tracking assignments; communication with the entire course or individuals is also simplified through announcements, email, and push notifications. It is free for anyone and does not need any cost. Although users have institutional Google Account, they can still use them for free. Anyone can use Google Classroom on any mobile device as long as there is an internet connection because it is designed to be a fast response. Despite various benefits, Google Classroom also has some limitations. As Pappas (2015) mentioned, some of them are difficult to account management, limited integration options, too “googlish”, no automated updates, difficult learner sharing, editing problems, no automated quizzes and tests impersonal.
METHOD

This study was conducted in a qualitative case study research method. Seven undergraduate students who have an online class using Google Classroom application were chosen by using purposive sampling. They were sixth semester-students in the English Education Department of Wiralodra University. In this study, the writer used a questionnaire and interview session to get the data. The questionnaire and interview were used to catch the information from the students related to their perception in implementing the Google Classroom application in the online learning process and the impact that the students got after implementing Google Classroom application in the online learning process.

DISCUSSION

The undergraduate students’ perception of the implementation of Google Classroom in the online English learning process

In this category, the writer investigated the students’ experience, students’ interaction, and the challenges students face when using the Google Classroom application as a tool for the online English learning process.

Students’ Experience

The first discussion in this category was the students’ perception of the implementation of Google Classroom application in the online English learning process in terms of experience. According to the data, in terms of experience, most of the participants agreed that the Google Classroom was an application that was easy to download, to follow and join the class, and to access lecture material as well as lecture assignments.

In terms of ease of use, Harjanto & Sumarni (2019) in their research finding, also agreed that the Google Classroom application platform was substantially ubiquitous in regards to their teaching activities since this application is accessible through their laptops or smartphones with different kinds of operation systems (OS). Furthermore, operating Google Classroom was relatively easy for them. They did not have any essential difficulties in operating the features. As supported by the theory from Janzen (2014), who said that Google
Classroom’s design purposefully simplified the instructional interface and options used for delivering and tracking assignments; communication with the entire course or individuals was also simplified through announcements, email, and push notifications.

However, most of the participants perceived that the Google Classroom application was less effective in explaining the material during the online learning because the Google Classroom application was only limited to a text typing system. In this case, some participants had the perception that the Google Classroom application was ineffective because the application could only be used maximally in skills such as writing and reading. This made most of the participants felt very limited when they learned English online using the Google Classroom application. As in the quote from one of the participants in the interview section, the participant stated that she felt an unpleasant experience when she used the Google Classroom application. Because this application only had a text-sharing system and could only exchange opinions through typing on the page Google Classroom application comments.

**Students’ Interaction**

The second discussion in this category was about how students or participants interact when they use the Google Classroom application as a tool for learning English online. Almost all participants (P1-P5) have the perception of using the Google Classroom application to learn English. The students felt very lacking in terms of interaction and communication. The statement from P1-P5 could be concluded that the interaction and communication using the Google Classroom application was not good, whether it’s fellow students or lecturers. Communication occurred smoothly if there was a class attendance check session. The rest of the communication had done when there were only essential needs, such as part-time presentations. The rest, they rarely communicated using the Google Classroom application during learning English online. This statement was supported by Sibuea (2018) in his research finding; he found that in terms of facilitating interactions, students were not very keen on using the Google Classroom application as a means to do the interaction and communication. Students viewed the Google Classroom application more like an app for educational purposes only, not for communication. As in his research finding, he revealed that the discussion between lecturer and students existed
solely when they wanted to ask a question or because the lecturer was going to score the discussion in the Google Classroom application.

However, some participants (P6 and P7) felt that they had improved communication with their lecturers if they used the Google Classroom application to learn English online. It could be seen from the statement during the interview session, one of the participants stated that her interaction increases when she used the Google Classroom application because the lecturers mention her name more often, which made her more enthusiastic. However, interaction with other students tended to decrease when she learned using the Google Classroom application. It assumed that interaction between lecturers and students increased, the interaction between students and other students decreased, and feedback from the lecturers was limited. This might happen because both lecturers and students did not feel familiar with online learning, especially using the Google Classroom application as a tool, and felt uncomfortable if conducted a learning process online. Furthermore, seen from the data, most of them have the perception that the Google Classroom application did not support them to learn cooperatively in groups. There was a lack of interaction when the students conducted a group discussion in the Google Classroom application.

In these situations, the students were strived for learning by themselves as autonomous learners through Google Classroom. Students are trained to have autonomous learning skills. For example, they were free to set up their time and place to download, search, read, and submit the tasks given to them. This aim was in line with Nagele (2019) who proposed that the Google Classroom was for creating active learning that was student-centered, collaborative, and meaningful. From the theory, it can be assumed that by using the Google Classroom application, students could be more active in conducting online learning through Google Classroom, such as commenting on column features of Google Classroom application and doing collaborative learning by using groups to enhance learning through working together. So, it made the educational process more meaningful. Accordingly, the role of Google Classroom as an effective tool in active learning could not be achieved as a result of this category.
Students’ Challenges

Furthermore, the third part of this category was about the challenges faced by participants when they used the Google Classroom application to learn English online. From all the statements of the participants (P1-P7), it could be revealed that the challenges they felt when they used the Google Classroom application. There were limited to text types (typing feature) that were not supported in having discussion or interaction, lack of feedback and material explanation from lecturers, must be on time if you use the Google Classroom application and also constrained by internet connection problems.

Then, in terms of the challenges of using the Google Classroom application, most of the participants felt challenged in learning English using the Google Classroom application because this application could make them learn and get to know technology. It became a special experience for students and lecturers. This statement was supported by Nur Alim, et.al. (2019) in their research; they found that the use of Google Classroom application could improve the attitude of students towards adopting new technologies because the development of technology was getting faster. So, if students could not adapt well, it was feared that there would be a lag in technology.

The positive and negative impact of Google Classroom on the undergraduate students’ activities in learning English

The second category was the positive and negative impact of Google Classroom on the undergraduate students’ learning English activities that had eleven statements from the questionnaire and two questions from the interview section.

Positive Impact

The first point in this second category was about positive impact, which had seven statements in the questionnaire and one question in the interview. From the result of the data, there were several positive impacts agreed upon by the participants. Google Classroom application provided a record of assignment; Google Classroom could save effort and time, Google Classroom application provided quick access to an assignment, and reduced cost of learning.

Participants agreed that the Google Classroom application provided the record of assignment because in Google Classroom application. There was a record of file assignments and lecture
materials that had been uploaded by the lecturers or the students when they conducted online learning. So, it made students easily access the file of assignment in the Google Classroom application. According to Iftakhar (2016), who stated that Google Classroom application integrates other Google apps, like, Docs, Slides, Drive, and Spreadsheets. Nevertheless, the whole process of administering assignments, grading, formative assessment, and feedback was simplified and streamlined.

Then, participants also agreed that the Google Classroom application could save effort and time. It means that by using the Google Classroom application, students were easy to study in a different place but they still connected each other when they conducted online learning using mobile access. As supported by the theory from Janzen (2014) who stated that mobile access to learn materials was attractive and easy to interact with. By using Google Classroom both teacher and student could save their time.

However, there were some participants’ perceptions that showed doubts about the positive impact of Google Classroom, such as Google Classroom application allows students to get feedback from the lecturer, Google Classroom gives them a chance to share their writing to lecturer and peers, and Google Classroom application can develop their autonomous learning skill. That statement refers to the aspect of interaction and communication, which is some students felt that Google Classroom application is lack interaction and communication also give feedback.

But, these statements collided with the theory from Anshari et al. (2017) who stated that in the Google Classroom application, lecturers could send notifications to their students to start an online discussion or tell them about certain online learning activities. On the other hand, students had the opportunity to give feedback to their friends by posting directly to the flow of discussions in Google Classroom. If some students felt a lack of interaction, it might have happened because they did not like the material course that they learned through the Google Classroom application.

**Negative Impact**

The second point was about negative impacts, it had four statements on the questionnaire and one question in the interview. From the data, it could be revealed that using the Google Classroom application to learn English online had negative impacts that agreed by
the participants, that was the trouble with internet connection. In terms of trouble with an internet connection, it might happen because of students’ location when they conducted online learning that could not reach the good signal of internet connection in their device that made learning process was not going well. Furthermore, because of the Internet connection problem, the students conveyed that they felt fearful of failing to submit the assignment when they were attaching the assignment. The other effect of the network problem was the difficulty in downloading the materials that made the students taking much time to learn the materials. These findings did not support the notion that the students had a high reliance on the use of Google Classroom due to the ease of use and usefulness (Al-Marooof & Al-Emran, 2018) and argued the statement that students were satisfied with Google Classrooms thus showed if it was effective as an active learning tool (Shaharanee, et al, 2016).

However, some participants’ perceptions show doubts about the negative impact of Google Classroom that was the problem with the screen display of the Google Classroom application. This situation might happen because they were using the Google Classroom application on their mobile phone. Then, another negative impact of Google Classroom application, such as requiring a long time to master Google Classroom application and learning some troubleshooting technology task. This perception means that students did not have a long time to master the Google Classroom application, and also no need to learn some troubleshooting tasks because this application was designed in simple settings. As Janzen (2014) stated, Google Classroom was designed to make the students easier to use. Its application purposefully simplifies the instructional interface and options used to deliver and track assignments.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed that in terms of implementation, the Google Classroom application is known as an application that is easy to use, less effective in material explanation, and effective in technic administration and material management. Then, from this study, some positive impacts of Google Classroom application, such as it records an effort of learning, material ,and assignment, provides quick access to collect an assignment, and minimizes the cost of learning. However, this
study revealed that this application also has negative impacts, such as trouble with an internet connection speed that made students frustrated when using Google Classroom application and screen display of google classroom. Then, due to this study’s weakness, which only investigates undergraduate students’ as the participants to explore their perception regarding the implementation and impact of Google Classroom application in the English learning process, especially in the English Education Department, not in other subjects or departments. Thus, it is recommended for another researcher to conduct a better study in terms of using various instruments, participants, and data.

References


