

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the background, research question, purpose, significance, framework, and previous studies.

A. Research Background

This research explores the students' perceptions while studying English in an online class. Despite huge studies on online learning challenges in various contexts and at all levels of education, there has been little exploration of students' perspectives and experiences in online English learning. As a result, this research aims to bridge this gap by using narrative inquiry to allow students to speak and reflect on their experiences learning English online. The students provide a snapshot of their lived experiences with English online learning.

In this pandemic, Covid-19, the Indonesian government implements a policy to implement online learning. This pandemic has led to a worldwide education system where almost all schools, universities and colleges are turning learning into online learning. Online learning is a teaching and learning process carried out in and with the help of internet networks. Online learning is often synonymous with other terms such as e-learning, internet learning, web-based learning, distributed learning, and others (Ally, 2008). In recent years, online learning has also been frequently associated and used as an equivalent to mobile learning or m-learning, online learning through mobile communication devices such as computers, tablets, and smartphones.

Moreover, online learning has become popular and challenging during the Covid-19 pandemic. The advantage of online learning is that teachers and students do not need to meet face-to-face and simply use digital media in virtual learning. Schools and teachers have provided many online learning management systems to support the smooth learning process, such

as learning applications, virtual tutorials, and conference tools (Setyowati & Madkur, 2021a). Therefore, the use of technology is one of requirements to achieve success in online learning.

Despite several advantages in online learning, there are still some weaknesses faced by students or teachers in carrying out learning. Many students learn to experience frustration when faced with subject assignments that must solve difficulties in learning independently. Students cannot ask the teacher about material that they master directly by learning online. Maybe students can ask questions, but it is challenging to understand the material if not explained directly-likewise, a teacher has difficulty knowing whether his students understand.

Based on a preliminary study at MA Mu'min Ma'shum showed that the teacher and student are unprepared for online learning. The transfer of conventional learning systems to online systems was very sudden, without proper preparation. It causes several obstacles, such as unfamiliar e-learning, decreased enthusiasm for learning, and difficulty accessing the Internet because of slow internet connection and limited internet packages. As a result, some students cannot follow the learning process.

This research is galvanized by some works, including Octaberlina and Muslimin, (2020) and (Agung and Surtikanti, (2020). Those studies focus on the challenge of students during online learning. The result of those studies showed the students' barriers during online learning, including unfamiliarity of e-learning, slow internet connection, and physical condition such as eye strain. In particular, Sudewi, (2021) discovered students' perception of E-Learning. The result showed that the students' perceptions of e-learning were got positive perception because it is flexible and effective. Furthermore, this research is conducted to dig more information about the learning experience of Indonesian students studying English in an online class. This research using the narrative inquiry method to find out the students' reflection, the students' support, and the barriers during online learning.

B. Research Questions

This research is guided through the following three questions:

1. How do the students reflect on their English online learning?
2. What support do the students get during their English online learning?
3. What barriers do the students have during their English online learning?

C. Research Purpose

From the research questions above, this study is aimed at obtaining these three following purposes:

1. To discover the students' reflection on their English online learning.
2. To discover the support that the students get during their English online learning.
3. To investigate the barriers that the students have during their English online learning.

D. Research Significances

This research is expected to provide theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, this research can be helpful as information about students' responses to learning English in an online class, and teachers can find out how students experience online class. Practically, teachers can determine suitable methods or media in online learning.

E. Rationale

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language that is only learned in formal education. English as Foreign Language refers to learning and using English as an additional language in a non-English speaking country. It means that learning and teaching English occurs mainly in classrooms rather than during daily communication. Berns (1990) defined foreign language

learning as learning a target language in a country that does not use it as a speech community (cited in Sulistiyo, (2016))

Sulistiyo, (2016) points out several factors creating difficulties for teaching EFL in Indonesia. First, EFL teachers must teach students in large classes, often with more than 50 students. This number is not ideal for a language classroom. Second, not all students who attend English classes are motivated. Third, at both school and university, the English-teaching focus is mainly on reading skills with less emphasis on English grammar and vocabulary.

In this pandemic, Covid-19, the Indonesian government implements a policy to implement online learning. The distance learning system is a system that has existed since the 18th century. Since its inception, distance learning has always used technology to implement its learning, from the most straightforward techniques to the latest. In brief, the history of the development of distance learning can be grouped based on the dominant technology it uses. Taylor (2000), for example, classifying the generation of distance learning into five eras, namely: (1) correspondence model, (2) multi-media model, (3) tele-learning model, (4) flexible learning model, and (5) the Intelligent Flexible Learning Model. Online classrooms were born from the fourth generation after the internet. Thus, an online classroom is a learning system that uses digital networks to interact, learn and discuss that allow teachers and students to connect either synchronously (at the same time) or asynchronously (time delay); students and teachers are generally separated by location.

Online learning needs to be carefully prepared. Although learning is essentially the same for both face-to-face and online contexts, certain aspects must be considered when planning for online learning. J. Anderson & McCormick, (2005) state that ten main principles must be considered in planning and implementing online learning: 1) compliance with curriculum; 2) inclusiveness; 3) learner involvement; 4) innovative; 5) practical learning; 6) formative assessment; 7) summative assessment; 8) intact,

consistent and transparent; 9) easy to follow, and 10) practical and cost-efficient.

In online learning, teachers must pay more attention to the role and influence of teachers' emotional support on students. The teacher is like a helmsman, with a wealth of experience leading his students through the oceans of knowledge the key to the implementation of education lies in the teacher (Qin, (2020)). Teachers' emotional support behavior has a significant effect on the effect of students learning. The more positive the teacher's dynamic behaviour, the higher the student's positive emotions such as interest in learning, and self-esteem in learning. Teachers' emotional support is an essential aspect in the smooth running of online learning.

Furthermore, the learning environment is one factor that comes from external factors that affect learner learning outcomes. A comfortable and practical learning environment will support learning activities to run conducive. The creation of an effective learning environment is one of the most critical aspects of success in learning. According to the research conducted by Realyvásquez-Vargas et al., (2020), temperature, lighting, and noise have a significant direct effect on student achievement. Lighting can affect students' concentration. Maximum lighting also affects the smoothness of the learning process. It is better not to be too dim or vice versa, which is too bright, because it can risk making the eyes tired when studying. The temperature has an impact on student academic performance. Learning in hot or cold conditions can make it uncomfortable and difficult to concentrate. Besides temperature and lighting, another environmental factor that affects students' online learning is noise. Studying in a noisy place will reduce students' concentration so that students cannot focus on learning.

In online learning, learners may face difficulties they may not have encountered in traditional teaching and learning environments. This difficulty can harm their learning performance. This difficulty can be classified into four primary challenges: cognition, metacognition, technical

anxiety, and learning styles and preferences (Kuama & Intharaksa, 2016). In the cognitive challenge, learners need higher cognitive abilities to handle more multi-dimensional learning tasks. In the metacognitive challenges, learners have the freedom to learn because there is no specific class schedule. Learners need to monitor and organize their learning by arranging learning schedules to complete all the lessons. The third challenge is computer and internet anxiety. Learners feel frustrated and feel anxious when the computer system or network system is down. Because the network system is down, they may not be able to follow the lesson. The latest learning styles and preferences, Lee (2001) argues that learners need time to adapt to some of the unique challenges they will face in a new learning environment. Learners must adapt to use technology when learning and must adapt to learn independently without teachers and peers.

F. Previous Study

Such studies present the students' perception of various online learning toward student level. Octaberlina and Muslimin (2020) examined the students' barriers during online learning. This research focuses on students' perception towards online learning barriers and alternatives using Moodle or Google Classroom during Covid-19 Pandemic. The participants in this research were 25 students from the English Education Department. The results showed that students experienced three obstacles during online learning: unfamiliarity e-learning, slow internet connection, and physical conditions such as eye strain (Octaberlina & Muslimin, 2020a)

Agung and Surtikanti (2020) investigated the students' perception of online learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The research method used is a collective case study consisting of a survey analysis of students' perception of their online learning during the pandemic. The participants in this research were sixty-six students of the English Language Education Study Program at Pamane Talino College of Education (STKIP Pamane

Talino). The study identified three major obstacles: the first is availability and sustainability of internet connection, the second is the accessibility of the teaching media, and the last is the compatibility of tools to access the media. The results of this study indicate that accessibility is still the main factor affecting the success of online learning. (Agung & Surtikanti, 2020)

Sudewi (2021) discovered students' perception of E-Learning. This research aims to find out the students' perceptions of E-Learning during the Covid-19 pandemic at Sulawesi Barat University. The technique of collecting data using a questionnaire, with samples of students' batch of 2020 randomly selected. The result show that the students' perceptions of e-learning were positive because it is flexible and effective. Meanwhile, its flexibility motivated some students, but some were lazy in doing it and chose to suspend the assignment (Sudewi, 2021)

Ning Setyowati and Ahmad Madkur (2021) explore the Indonesian elementary students' experience in English online learning during Covid-19. This research aims to offer a snapshot of students lived experiences related to English online learning. This study uses a narrative design. The findings show that the difficulties faced by elementary school students when learning English online via digital media are due to individual factors, such as differences in students' family backgrounds and their willingness to participate actively in verbal communication. (Setyowati & Madkur, 2021)

Widya, Fatimah, and Santiana (2020) focused on examining the experience of one of the pre-service teachers during a three months teaching practicum. This study uses a narrative inquiry design. The data were obtained from the diary written by the participant after teaching and getting feedback from six students in one of the vocational schools in Tasikmalaya. The findings show that students' feedback becomes a valuable tool encouraging the pre-service teacher to reflect and evaluate what she did in the classroom frequently (Widya et al., 2020)

For Nasution and Ahmad (2020), student perception is one of the determinants of the success of the learning that is carried out. The purpose

of this study is to determine how students' perceptions of online learning have been implemented and the factors that influence these perceptions. The participants in this research were 216 students from 7 study programs in the Tarbiyah department at IAIN Takengon. The research method used is an online survey using Google form. The result showed that students' perceptions of online learning were not very good. It was caused by several factors, such as poor internet access, burdensome internet quota, difficulty communicating with lectures, so that learners are not ready to use applications when doing online learning (Kurnia Putra Nasution & Qomariah Ahmad, n.d.)

To differ from the previous studies, which discuss students' challenges of online learning during Pandemic Covid-19, this study aims to dig more information about the learning experience of Indonesian students studying English in an online class. This research uses the narrative inquiry method to discover the students' reflections, support, and barriers during online learning

