

Virtual Learning Program in the Midst of Covid19 Outbreak: EFL Learners' Perceptions

Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO
Email: meigaratihirtanawati@gmail.com

Submitted: December 26, 2020

Accepted: January 7, 2021

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has become a worldwide medical problem and has majorly affected education. Thus, half way through the indeed semester of the scholastic year 2019/2020, learning strategies were conveyed through online learning. This new condition where right now the instructors and understudies are grappling with the thought, advancement, critical thinking aptitudes to usage and adjustment. Google classroom and google meet as virtual learning platform are broadly utilized by instructors in educating and learning. Therefore, this study focused on exploring information related to undergraduate students' perspective of virtual learning program amidst covid19 break. The implementation of the research is approximately three months using online questionnaires and interview to be used as data collection. The study involved 50 students of English Department at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. The data obtained showed that the majority of participants considered the use of Google classroom and google meet and Application in teaching and learning is effective and efficient virtual learning program. It also indicates that one of the constructive outcomes of virtual learning program activities is that such activities could fabricate students' innovativeness. Moreover, it shows that the pandemic circumstance was not a boundary to contributing emphatically to society. In addition, the obstacles were slow-speed internet access and students' facilities during virtual learning.

Keywords: *Virtual Learning, Covid19, EFL Learners*

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic at present hitting the world is known as the Corona Virus Disease which started to show up in December 2019 which is abbreviated as COVID-19 beginning from the Chinese State of Wuhan City, Hubei Province and is spreading rapidly all through the world, including Indonesia. Seeing this condition, the World Health Organization WHO has stated that this condition is called a pandemic which is of concern to the world community. or health emergency.

These conditions encourage the Indonesian government to implement various policies to prevent the spread of the corona virus, including large-scale social restrictions (PSBB). The periodic PSBB by the Indonesian government raises various pros and cons in the community. So that in various ways the community responded to the policy, there were those who accepted and rejected them for various reasons. Another way that the government has taken to break the chain of the spread of COVID-19 is by temporarily closing places of worship, closing schools and campuses, dismissing offices by implementing work from home (WFH).

This situation certainly requires educational institutions to innovate in the learning process. One form of this innovation is by learning online or online (in a network). This was then responded to by the Ministry of Education and Culture by issuing several

Circular Letter (*Surat Edaran*) related to the prevention and handling of Covid-19. First, Circular Letter Number 2 of 2020 concerning the prevention and handling of Covid-19 in the Ministry of Education and Culture Environment. Second, Circular Letter Number 3 of 2020 concerning Prevention of Covid-19 in the Education Unit. Third, Circular Letter Number 4 of 2020 concerning Implementation of Education Policies in an Emergency for the Spread of Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19), which includes instructions on the learning and teaching process from home (Arifa, 2020).

Adjustments to educational policies during the corona pandemic also affect policies in universities. This can be seen in the circular letter regarding efforts to prevent the spread of Covid-19 (Corona) at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro environment, which stated that the leadership of institution conducts the diversion, face-to-face lectures become virtual learning started from 16 March 2020 and henceforth will be evaluated. Seeing the condition of the corona pandemic in Indonesia has not shown a decrease in the number of positive patients, then Rector of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro stated that the lecture process until the end of the even semester of the 2019/2020 academic year at every university, both public and private, is fully carried out in a virtual learning.

Virtual learning is now the main choice due to this pandemic. Virtual learning is a learning approach which in practice is not face to face in class but through information technology by using internet facilities. One form is the e-learning method. Virtual learning is an internet-based learning method. By integrating an internet connection, it is hoped that learning activities can facilitate the interaction between teachers and students even though they are not face to face. The learning system by integrating an internet connection with the teaching and learning process is known as an online learning system or virtual learning system (Bentley, Selassie, & Shegunshi, 2012).

According to Ade Kusuma, online lectures are a learning process that utilizes information technology, in this case utilizing the internet as a method of delivery, interaction and facilitation. It includes learning support services that can be used by learning participants. In addition, there is also a learning system design that can be learned and known by each learning participant (Saputro, Somantri, & Nugroho, 2017).

Online learning has advantages and disadvantages, as for the advantages of online learning, namely: it can interact between students and lecturers, learning can be done from anywhere and anytime, can reach an unlimited distance material can be stored online, (Darmawan, 2011; Kuntarto, 2017; Maudiarti, 2018; Waryanto, 2006; Wicaksono & Rachmadyanti, 2017). Online learning patterns using various platforms are carried out by utilizing technology in the learning process (Windhiyana, 2020; Zhang et al., 2004). While the shortcomings or weaknesses of online learning according to (Waryanto, 2006): the implementation of online learning requires adequate infrastructure including internet networks, laptops, computers, cellphones, and applications such as Google classrooms, schology, zoom, meet, whatsapp. All of these applications must be implemented online which require internet data packages and electricity networks.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was performed from July to November 2020. Study participants were English Dept students of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. The number of respondents was 50 English Department students of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. It consists of 68% female and 32% male. This research is a descriptive qualitative research with reference to the following books: (Agusta, 2003; Gibbs, 2018; Maxwell, 2008; Wahab, 2014); This study describes the symptoms or phenomena of online learning without making comparisons or

connecting variables with one another. The data collected is in the form of opinions and descriptions of the respondents by providing a research instrument in the form of a response questionnaire in the form of google form. The data that has been collected is then analyzed with a qualitative analysis scheme (Setyosari, 2016; Sugiyono, 2011). To check the validity of the research data, triangulation was carried out, namely checking data from various sources to obtain data from different sources with the same technique on different respondents.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The data obtained in the study can be divided into several parts, namely: Profile of respondents, Virtual learning implementation, Virtual learning class situation, Internet Access facilities, and students' suggestions for institutions and government related to further virtual learning. Data obtained through a questionnaire in the form of student perceptual responses to e-learning, percentage based on the observed aspects and descriptive qualitative exposure based on the responses submitted. The following result were obtained:

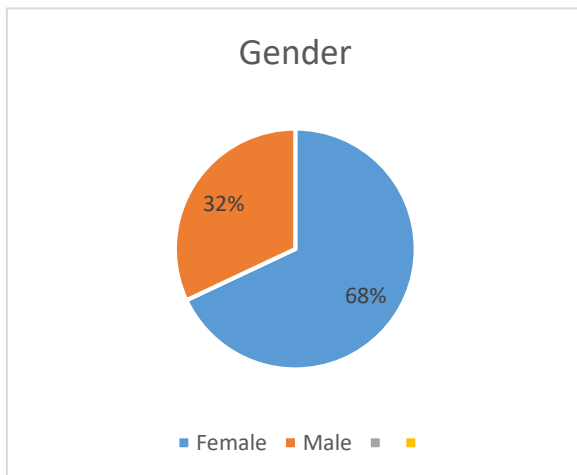


Figure 1. Gender

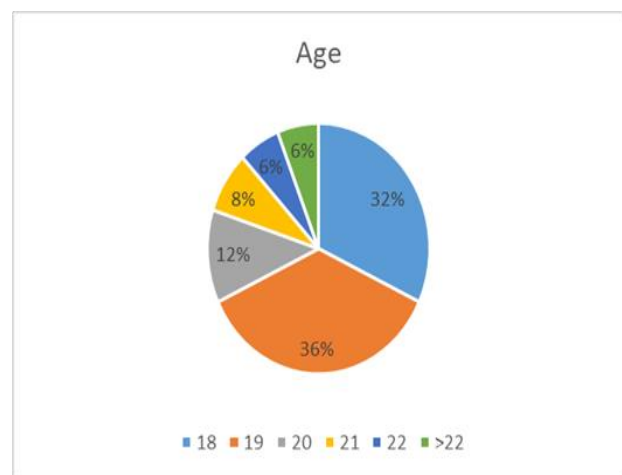


Figure 2. Age

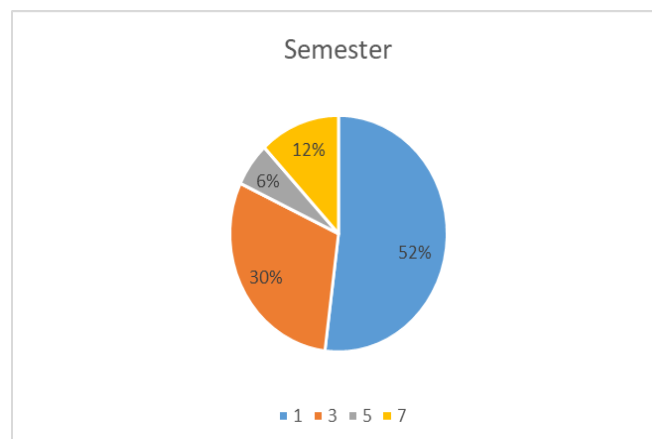


Figure 3. Semester

Figure 1, 2 and 3 are profile of respondents. The number of respondents was 50 English Department students of IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. It consists of 68% female and 32% male. Most of participants were 19 years old, the number is 36%, and the second is 18 years old, the number is 30%. It shows that the most respondents is first semester of English Departments students.

The second data we obtained is about virtual learning implementation. It is divided into 3 questions, which the respondents choose the answer and 3 statements which the students choose 4 options *Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree*. There are: 1) What electronic tools are often used for online learning?, 2) What virtual applications are often used for online learning?, 3) During the Covid-19 Emergency, what media were considered effective for online learning?, 4) During the Covid19 emergency, were all learning activities carried out well (structured, on schedule, coordinated), 5) The quality of the teaching / teaching materials presented in learning using virtual system is good, 6) The virtual explanation of the material from lecturer is easy to understand

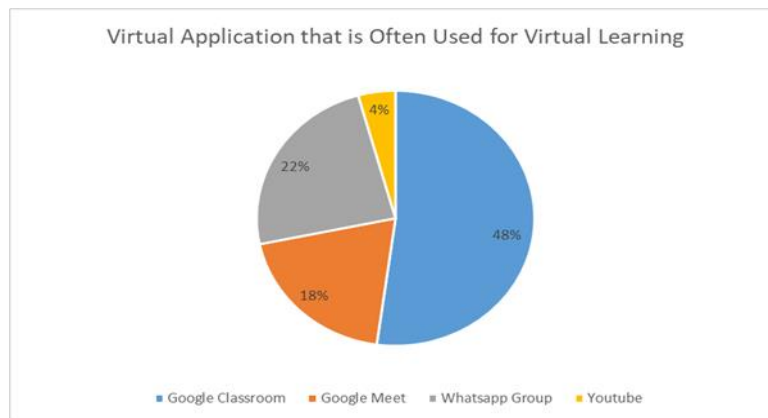


Figure 4. Google Classroom is Virtual Application which often used for virtual Learning

Based on this data, it showed that 48% the students chose Google classroom, 18% chose google meet, 22% chose whatsapp group, and 4% chose youtube. The highest percentage is Google Classroom. It means that most of lecturers used google classroom as media or application in virtual teaching. Using Google Classroom does not need any cost. It is free for anyone. Although users have institutional Google Account, they still can use it for free. Anyone can use Google classroom on any mobile device as long as there is internet connection, because it designs to be fast respond.

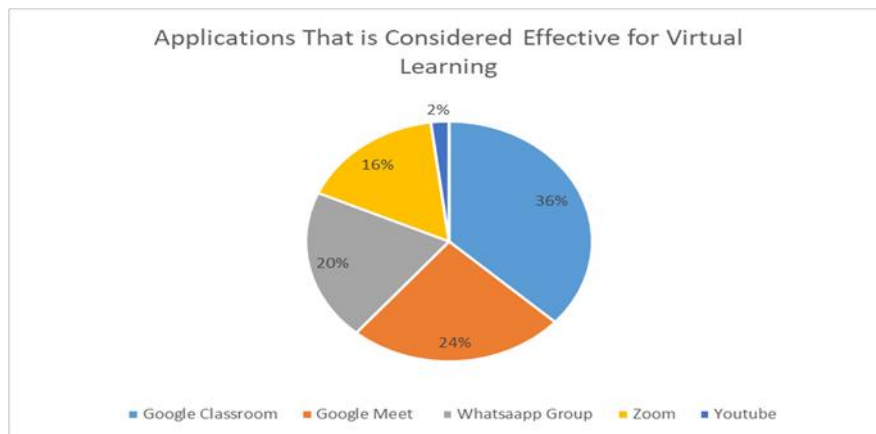


Figure 5. students perception of effective applications for virtual learning

Based on the data above, we know that 2% the students chose youtube, 20% chose whatsapp group, 16% chose zoom, 36% chose google classroom and 24% students chose google meet. The highest percentage is google classroom. It indicated that the most effective applications to be used is google classroom. This data is also related to figure 5, which google classroom is virtual applications that is often used in online learning. Using google classrom will create learning becomes more effective, even more teachers and students can each face to face through online google classroom. And also students later can learn, listen, read, send assignments remotely.

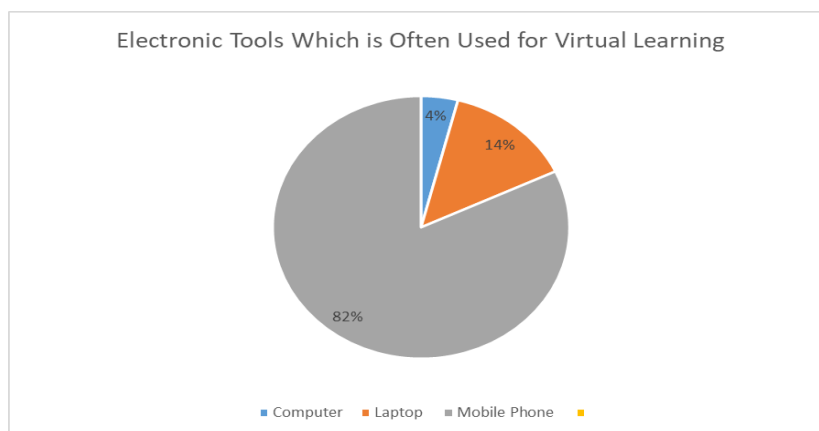


Figure 6. students perceptions of electronic tools for virtual learning

Based on figure 6, it showed that 4% students chose computer, 14% chose laptop, and 82% chose mobile phone. It means that the highest percentage of using mobile phone instead of laptop, indicated mobile phones are preferred because they are efficient, flexible and cheap. Now, mobile phones are becoming a gadget multifunction. Keep up with technological developments digital, now mobile phones are also equipped with a wide selection of features, such as being able to listen radio broadcasting and watching television, MP3 / MP4, digital cameras, games, and internet services (WAP, GPRS, 3G, HSDPA), to online shopping. Besides these features, now mobile phones are like mini computer that allows someone typing Microsoft Office applications on mobile phone. Therefore, it can make easier for students to take online classes and do assignments

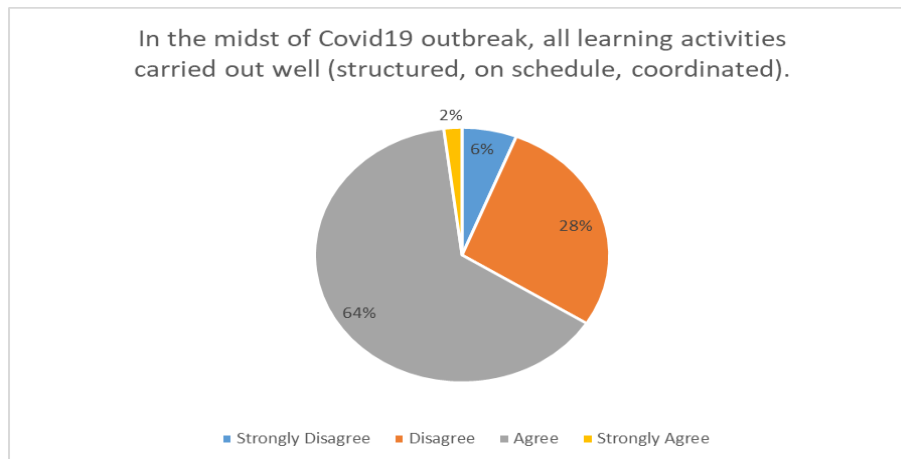


Figure 7. Students Perception of learning activities

Based on figure 7, it showed that 28% chose disagree, 6% chose strongly disagree, 64% chose agree and 2% chose strongly agree. Even though there are still negative statements towards virtual learning activities, but most of the students have positive response to it. It indicates that Planning and preparation inevitably be done for online learning since online learning requires more time than face-to-face class to be well-prepared and ready. The teachers has been trained and prepared with sufficient knowledge and skill to maximize their practices in carrying out the online learning. Also, students have familiarized with online learning to enhance their digital literacy and refine their misperceptions about online learning.

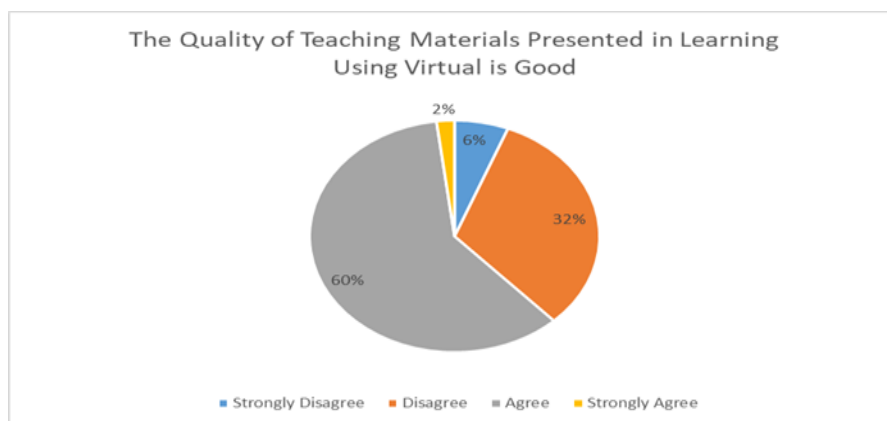


Figure 8. Students perception of teaching materials quality

Figure 8 showed 32% chose disagree, 2% chose strongly agree and 32% chose disagree. Meanwhile, 60% students agree that the quality of teaching materials presented in learning using virtual is good. A successful virtual school teacher uses a variety of ways to make sure that their students are engaged, and they see relevance in what they are being taught.

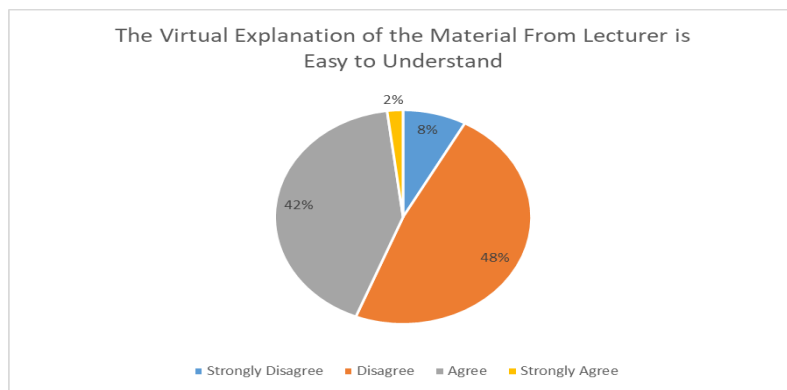


Figure 9. The students perception of material comprehension by virtual explanation

Based on figure 9, we know that 8% chose strongly disagree and 2% chose strongly agree. An almost balanced result appear on this data, which is 42% agree and 48% disagree about the virtual explanation of the material from lecturer is easy to understand. Both result indicates that the virtual explanation could be quite comprehended by students and could be difficult to understand. Therefore teachers should repeat some of the lessons they taught in class, especially for those students who are missing the classroom environment, this will probably help activate their memory of being part of a community and remind them that they are still part of one.

The following data we described was the third data analysis. It is about the situation of virtual learning class. It consists of 1) interaction between lecturers and students using the online system 2) the interaction among students using the online system 3) ease of using online learning applications 4) student interest in online learning. From the diagram below (figure 10 and 11) it showed that there is good interaction between lecturers and students, the percentage is 56% and good interaction among students, the percentage is 68%. Although some students chose disagree, but the fact is the situation of virtual class activity is exciting. Students are apt to enjoy this new technique of learning. The students became open to and excited about the idea of online learning because this new type of learning gives them a more creative approach towards studying. Online learning creates a flexible environment in the educational system that builds strong knowledge out of practical moves with critical thinking.

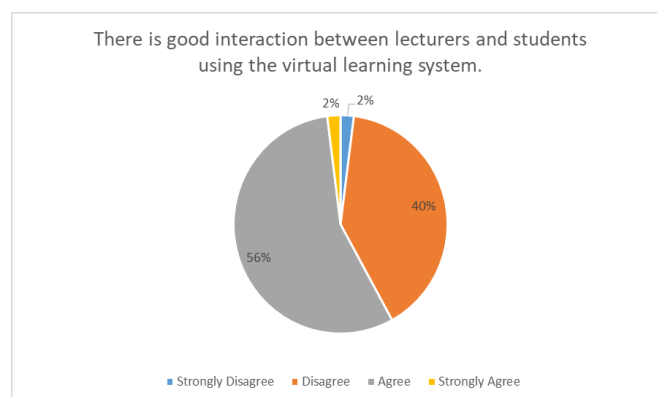


Figure 10. Students' perception of interaction between lecturer and students

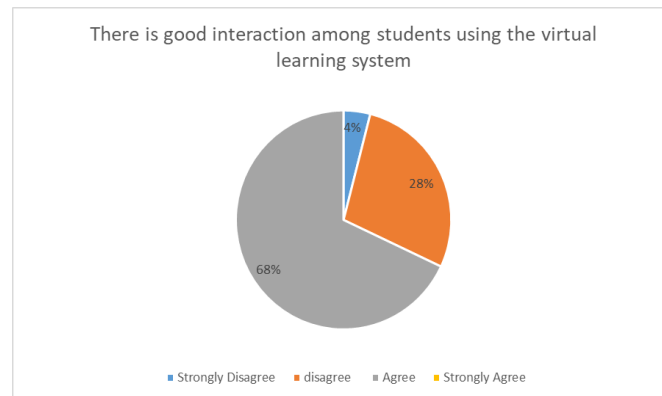


Figure 11. Students perception of interaction among students

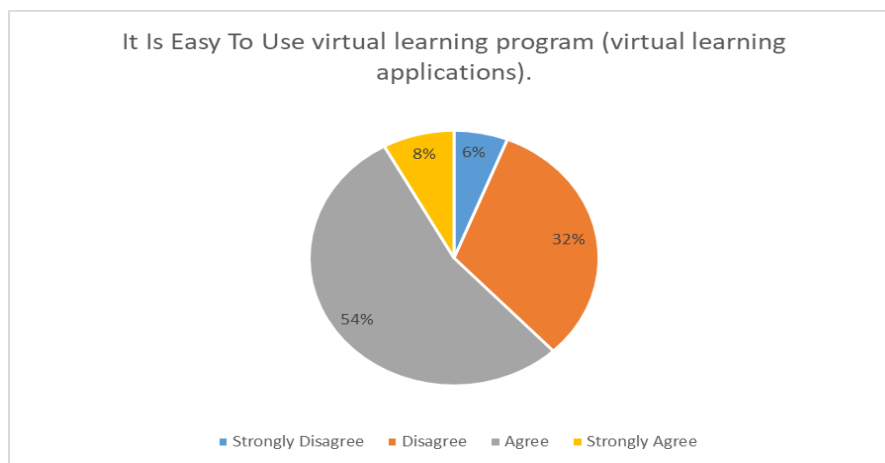


Figure 12. Ease of using online learning applications

Figure 12 showed that 54% students have familiar with virtual application, therefore there is no difficulties in using it for virtual learning. Eventhough, there are still 38% students feel that it is difficult to use virtual learning applications. The students will get used to using the application during online learning.

The fourth data we obtained is about Internet Access facilities. Three diagrams below are the result of students perception on the allocation of funds used to purchase internet quota, problems with internet signals and provision of internet quota fund by the government or institution. Figure 13 showed the results of allocation of funds used to purchase internet quota. 22% chose >200.000, 10% chose 50.000, 22% chose 100.000-200.000, 50% chose 50.000-100.000. based on figure 14 we know that the highest percentage, the number is 50% students chose *yes* of provision of internet quota fund by the government or institution. It indicates that the government facilitate students need in doing virtual learning. Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim said the School Operational Assistance (BOS) funds could be used by teachers and students to buy internet quotas as long as learning activities were carried out at home in the midst of the corona virus (Covid-19) pandemic.

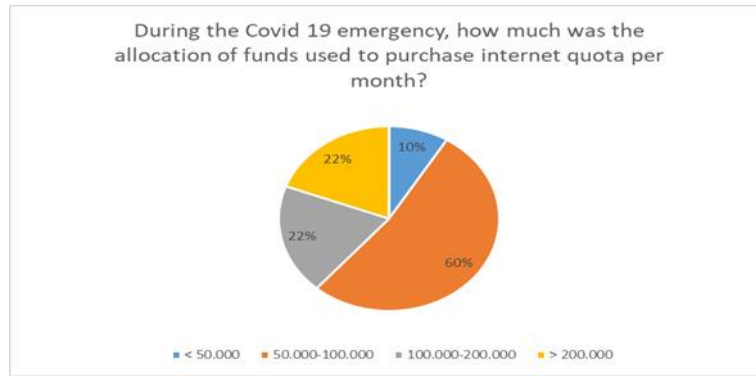


Figure 13. The allocation of funds used to purchase internet quota

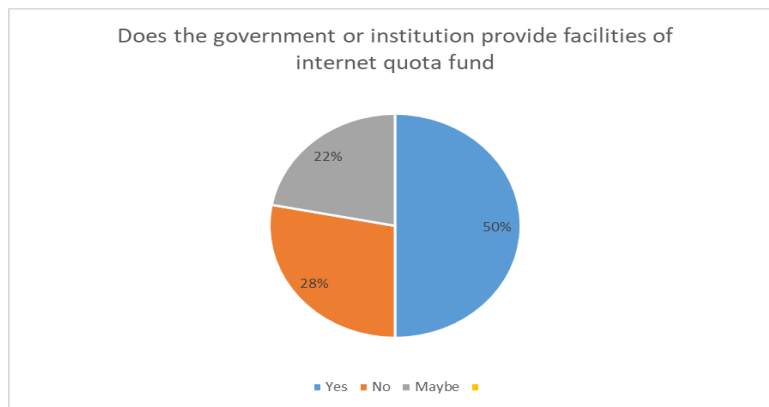
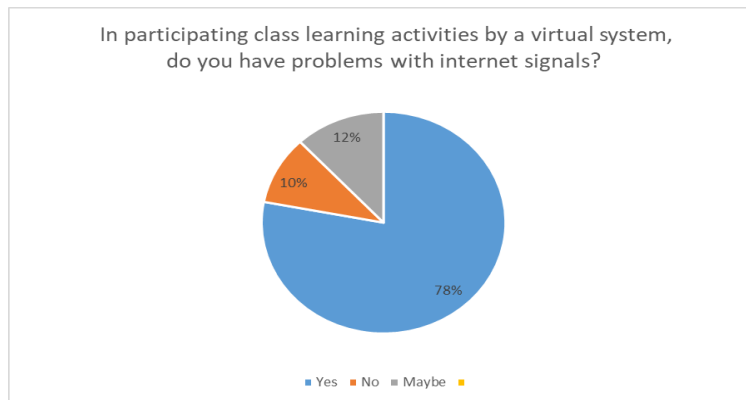


Figure 14. Provision of internet quota fund by the government or institution



The final data we obtained is the result of interview. The students were asked two questions, there are: suggestions for better virtual online program and suggestions for the government and institutions regarding further learning if the Covid19 epidemic is over.

No	Questions	Students' answers
1	What are your suggestions for better virtual learning program	Ss 1 "Use zoom / google meet application because not all of the material conveyed to students understand using google classroom or whatsapp group only"
		Ss 2 "My suggestions about virtual learning for all student is between lectures and student must be communication every topic or discuss in class:
		Ss 3 "In my opinion, it is better to use applications such as zoom and google meet so that lecturers can know which students are listening well and not when explaining"
		Ss 4 "For now, many lecture give a assignment so much. In reality, the assignment who has given still not understand. Why? Because, when we virtual learning many problem. Like a signal and etc. For my suggestion, pay attention the student and for explanation more better than before."
		Ss 5 "Use zoom please, do not give too many assignments with lil bit duration or deadline. for better virtual learning, we need supportive internet quota and signals. but considering the current weather which is often rainy, and causes the signal to disappear. so that, teaching activities become ineffective. and I suggest to use apps that not pay much internet quota"
2	What are your suggestions for the government and institutions regarding further learning if the Covid19 pandemic is over?	Ss1 "For government, better to school face to face with healthy protocol. Not only student but their parent hope the school will be open soon. Because the student will be more understand when class face to face. For institutions, almost same with for government. But, one thing in the pandemic many people has losed a job. Should the institutions must pay attention the student, don't pay attention self. Internet quota just can be one month. We are virtual learning almost one year. Pay of semester just discount 50k. It's not enough to back up internet quota. Better to pay attention the student!!"
		Ss 2 "if this pandemic is over, face-to-face learning will be more efficient"
		Ss 3 "it is enough to restore the previous learning system which is more effective by coming to school with a face-to-face system. because learning is currently very troublesome and unsettling for all students and parents who have to bother buying an internet quota"
		Ss 4 "continue to apply distance learning and conduct face to face learning with a predetermined time and still adhere to health protocols"
		Ss 5" to be more effective it is better to use face-to-face learning"

CONCLUSION

Google Classroom was the famous platform for virtual learning. Besides, zoom was used by a small proportion of teachers. Teachers and students have been facilitated by the institution in virtual learning in the form of internet bandwidth purchasing. Internet access, learning innovation and students' facilities becomes obstacles during virtual learning.

Student responses related to online lecture activities carried out on English Dept students at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro showed that the role of lecturers cannot be replaced by technological sophistication. It is illustrated that students are very bored with online lecture activities which are held for almost a year. Students hope that the lecture process carried out requires more creative and innovative lecturers in utilizing the platform as a learning medium. Therefore, the learning process through online patterns is more enjoyable and students are not bored. Face-to-face learning activities are highly expected

by students because no matter how sophisticated technology is, it will never replace the role of lecturers through face-to-face lectures, because direct interaction between lecturers and students, between students and students with friendship or meeting directly is expected by all students.

REFERENCES

- Agusta, I. (2003). *Teknik pengumpulan dan analisis data kualitatif*. Pusat Penelitian Sosial Ekonomi. Litbang Pertanian, Bogor, 27.
- Arifa, F. N. (2020). *Tantangan pelaksanaan kebijakan belajar dari rumah dalam masa darurat covid-19*. Info Singkat;Kajian Singkat Terhadap Isu Aktual Dan Strategis, XII(7/I), 6. Retrieved from http://berkas.dpr.go.id/puslit/files/info_singkat/Info_Singkat- XII-7-I-P3DI-April-2020-1953.pdf
- Bentley, Y., Selassie, H., & Shegunshi, A. (2012). Design and Evaluation of Student-Focused eLearning. *Electronic Journal of E-Learning*, 10(1), 1–2.
- CNN. (2020). “Kemendikbud Buat Skenario Belajar Di Rumah Sampai Akhir 2020.” CNN Indonesia. Retrieved May 25, 2020.
- Gibbs, G. R. (2018). *Analyzing qualitative data* (Vol. 6). Sage.
- Kumar, J. A., B. Bervell, and S. Osman. 2020. “Google Classroom: Insights from Malaysian Higher Education Students’ and Instructors’ Experiences.” *Education and Information Technologies*.
- Saputro, F. B., Somantri, M., & Nugroho, A. (2017). *Pengembangan sistem kuliah online universitas diponegoro untuk antar muka mahasiswa pada perangkat bergerak berbasis android. Pengembangan sistem kuliah online universitas diponegoro untuk antar muka mahasiswa pada perangkat bergerak berbasis android*, 19(1), 15–21. <https://doi.org/10.12777/transmisi.19.1.15-21>
- Setyosari, H. P. (2016). *Metode penelitian pendidikan & pengembangan*. Prenada Media
- Setiawan, Bramianto, and Vina Iasha. 2020. “Corona Virus Disease 2019: The Perspective Opinion From Pre- Service Elementary Education Teacher.” *Education, Sustainability & Society* 3(2):33–36.
- Sugiyono, P. (2011). *Metodologi penelitian kuantitatif kualitatif dan R&D*. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Windhiyana, E. (2020). Dampak COVID-19 terhadap kegiatan pembelajaran online di sebuah perguruan tinggi Kristen di Indonesia. *Perspektif Ilmu Pendidikan*, 34(1), 1–8.