

EFL Students' Difficulties in Online Learning during Pandemic Covid-19

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Abstract:

This research aimed at describing the difficulties in online learning faced by the students during the first semester of Academic Year 2020/2021. The method of the research was descriptive quantitative by using online questionnaire with four indicators of learning obstacles for collecting the data. The sample of the research was 35 students of English Education Department of Faculty of Education and Teachers' Training of Universitas Lancang Kuning. After analyzing the data by using descriptive statistics, it is found that the major difficulty is about the students' physical constraints indicator. The score was about $M=3.11$ with "high" level. Then, non-social environment indicator was about $M=2.57$ with "high" level. In conclusion, online learning is better implemented in well preparation. It needs all the elements' readiness such as students, educators, institution, and also the government. It must include the mental and physical readiness. For organizing the online learning, both students and educator should be supported by facility such as qualified laptop or gadget and also fast internet connection. Besides that, lecturer should have qualified competence in organizing the online class so the students were motivated in following the class. The last is about the environment. Having well and comfortable environment basically increases the students and lecturer motivation in conducting the online class.

Keywords: Online Learning, Difficulties

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, Education is facing a new era. Pandemic covid-19 is requiring people to keep the distance. It makes all activities handled at home. Education as one of the sectors which should do the activity at home. Consequently, the process of teaching and learning is dramatically changed into distance or online learning in all education levels starting from Early Childhood Education to College Education.

Online learning can be stated as “a large collection of computers in networks that are tied together so that many users can share their vast resources” (Williams in Rusman: 2010). The definition of online learning involves the aspect of hardware such as a set of computer connected one another. Thus, online learning can be stated as a computer link connected to other around the world (Kitao, 1998). Riyana (2019) says that distance learning is a system which enables the students to learn more extensive and more variables. Through the facility provided by the system, students can easily learn anywhere and anytime without distance, space, and time limits. There are more various material provided in verbal, visual, audio, and motion.

Furthermore, online learning does not have any different with the face to face learning. Both of methods are the activity done consciously to reach the goal regarding to behavior change for instance knowledge or new competence, attitude, and value. In addition, online learning is an attractive learning model because it provides lot of features. It can motivate the students to access various available learning materials.

Universitas Lancang Kuning is running the government policy pertaining to the distance learning in academic year 2020/2021. The implementation of this learning policy is designed as well as possible using Blended Learning Platform.

Government or College Stakeholder tried to fulfill the requirements of implementing online learning by training the teachers and students maximally to use the platform so the process of distance teaching and learning can be easily handled and facility such as provide the internet quota for both teachers and students. Online learning is not an easy way to handle in sudden situation. It needs a particular scheming to be qualified implementation. As the researcher's preliminary study in the process of online teaching and learning, there were some constraints found during the online class. They were about the less of students' participation in the discussion session and students' did not submit the task or assignment.

In addition, distance learning during the pandemic covid-19 should accommodate students learning needs to develop their talent and interest based on the education level. However, it needs the teachers' qualification, learning sources availability, and facility such as hardware, software, and internet connectivity to implement this policy of distance learning. So, the communication between teachers and students runs effectively. The Commission of Child Protection (KPAI) has been accepting 213 complaints from parents and students relate to the distance learning implementation since March, 2020. This complaint discusses about the difficulties of task or assignment with short time submission. Second, there are a lot of summarizing and rewriting a learning material from books. Third is about inflexible learning time. Fourth, it is about limited internet quota for accessing online learning. Fifth, a lot of students do not have any gadget for accessing online tests.

Goes along with that, Arifa (2020) mentions that the constraints during online or distance learning is pertaining to the human resources regarding to teachers, students, and parents'

capability, the lack of local government policy regarding to the online learning implementation, uncertain curriculum, and limited facilities especially for technology and internet connection. This case, human resources is the main important factors in implementing the distance learning.

Based on the above phenomenon, the researcher was interested in conducting a research about the difficulties faced by the students of English Education Department of Education and Teachers Training Faculty of Universitas Lancang Kuning during the implementation of online learning in the first semester of 2020/2021. This study aimed at describing the students' constraints when accessing the online classes of EFL Learning.

Rohmalina Wahab (2018: 18) states that learning is a conscious activity done by a person that produces behavior changing either knowledge or skills and attitude and positive value. There is an interaction between students and learning sources, either facilitator such as teacher or media. Particularly, the changing of learning model caused by the changing of teacher's role in learning process. According to Barry Morris (in Rusman: 2010), learning model can be classified into four; traditional learning 1 model; traditional learning 2 model; Teachers and Media learning model; and media usage learning model.

Regarding to Regulation No. 14, 2005 about Teacher and lecturer describes that they must have a pedagogic competence. It enables the teachers to manage and organize the learning process. This ability requires the teachers to be able to organize the topics in logical order. In line with it, Mulyasa (2013) says that the capability of organizing the learning materials involves two steps. They are choosing and organizing the learning materials. Meanwhile, there would be an obstacle when the learning process is in online model. Teachers should choose the learning

material maximally to avoid misconception between the teachers and Students. Besides that, teachers should focus on the students' basic competence achievement. It makes the material development for online learning should be maximal. Practically, learning process often meets the difficulties. It means that learning has some constraints and problems. These phenomenon must influence students' learning achievement. This learning difficulty may come from several factors.

Mulyadi (2010) confirms that learning difficulty has some definitions:

1. Learning disorder. It is a condition when students' learning process is disturbed by a contrary response. It makes students' learning outcomes is lower than the students' potency.
2. Learning disability. It refers to the symptoms of inability to learn or learning avoidance so the learning achievement is under the intellectual potency.
3. Learning disfunction. It refers to the symptoms of learning process does not have any function even though it does not show any abnormal mental, senses, and psychology.
4. Under Achiever. It refers to the students with high intellectual potency but having low learning achievement.
5. Slow Learner. It refers to the students' slow learning process so they need more time than others with the same level intellectual capacity.

According to Dalyono (2012), student's success in learning is influenced by several factors. They are internal and external factors. Internal factors are coming from his/her own self such as health, intelligence and talent, interest and motivation, and learning strategy. While, external factors refers to the background of the family including parents' salary, parents' attention, situation and condition of home and the size of house, and learning facilities provided

at home. Then, the next external factor is about school, it concerns to the teacher's qualification, teaching method, curriculum, facility provided by school, room, numbers of students, and disciplinary. The last is about society and environment. It refers to the how people around acts, climate, traffic situation, atmosphere, and surrounding.

In conclusion, this study has discussed about some difficulties faced by the students during online or distance learning in pandemic covid-19 in the first semester of 2020/2021. They were about the physical and psychological constraints, teachers' capability, online learning facility, and learning environment. These factors were used as the indicators to get the data needed

2. METHOD

This study used descriptive quantitative with survey design. It aimed at finding the information regarding to the English Education Department of Faculty of Teachers Training and Education Faculty of Universitas Lancang Kuning students' difficulties in conducting the distance learning during the first semester of academic year 2020/2021.

a. Data Collection Technique

For collecting the data, the researcher used four likert-scale questionnaire with five indicators; physical and psychological constraints; teachers' capability; online learning facility; and learning environment.

b. Data Analyzing Technique

The data was analyzed by using SPSS application for finding the *sum of score*, *mean*, *mode*, *standard deviation*. After analyzing data by using Descriptive Statistics, the researcher was continue analyzing the data by categorizing them into Ridwan range likert scale (2013) as follow:

Table 1. Range Score and Categorization

Range	Category
1.00 – 1.75	Very Low
1.76 – 2.5	Low
2.6 – 3.25	High
3.26 – 4.00	Very High

This range level is importantly used to identify the category of the scores whether in "Very Low", or, "Low", or "High", or "Very High" in order to know the students' difficulty in online learning.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

After analyzing the data, the researcher presents the finding as follows.

a. Physical Indicator

This physical indicator refers to the students' physical constraints faced during the online course in the first semester of academic year 2020/2021. It can be seen in the following table.

Table 2. Physical Constraint Data

No	Statements	N	M	SD
1	I have eyestrain because accessing online class using smartphone in long time.	37	3.22	0.534
2	My body was tired because accessing online class with only short time rest.		2.95	0.705
3	I feel headache because accessing online class using smartphone too long.		3.16	0.688

Note: M and SD are calculated on likert scale (1-4)

The table above explain that "I have eyestrain because accessing online class using smartphone in long time" (M=3.22) is the highest score. Otherwise, "My body was tired

because accessing online class with only short time rest.” (M=2.95) is the lowest score regarding to the physical constraints during online class in first semester of academic year 2020/2021. It means that the difficulty faced by students during distance or online learning is about eyestrains. It caused by the long time seeing gadget for accessing the online class. The descriptive statistics of this indicator is in the following.

Sum	: 114.90
Mode	: 3.00
Median	: 3.00
Mean	: 3.11
Variance	: 242
Standard Deviation	: 491
Range	= Minimum 2.30 = Maximum 4.00

The data shows that the total score of questionnaire with indicator physical constraints is about 114.90, *mode* is about 3.00, *median* is about 3.00, the *variance score* is about 0.242, the *standard deviation* is about 0.491, and the *average score* is about 3.11.

b. Psychological Indicator

Psychological indicator refers to the students' mental and cognitive capability in following the online learning. This indicator has four statements for gathering the data about students' difficulties regarding to psychology.

Table 3. Psychological Constraints Data

NO	Statements	N	M	SD
4	My learning achievement is decreasing during the online learning.	37	2.00	.667
5	I can't remember all material in online learning.		2.00	.527
6	I don't really like following the online class.		2.05	5.75
7	I am not interested in accessing online class.		2.14	.585

Note: M and SD are calculated on likert scale (1-4)

The tables shows that “*I am not interested in accessing online class*”

(M=2.14) is the top option of the questionnaire and “*My learning achievement is decreasing during the online learning*” (M=2.00) and “*I can't remember all material in online learning*” (M=2.00) are the lowest score regarding to the psychological constraints during the online class in pandemic era. The result of descriptive statistical analysis by using SPSS version 18 can be seen in the following table.

Sum	: 76.70
Mode	: 2.00
Median	: 2.00
Mean	: 2.07
Variance	: 156
Standard Deviation	: .395
Range	= Minimum 1.30 = Maximum 3.00

The table shows that the total score of the indicator psychological constraints is about 76.70, mode is about 2.00, median is about 2.00, variance score is about 0.156, standard deviation score is about 0.395, and the average score is about 2.07.

c. Educator

Indicator of educator refers to the teachers' capability in online teaching management. This indicator has seven statements for gathering the data regarding to the students' problem in following the online class because the teachers.

Table 4. Problems from Educators Data

No	Statements	N	M	SD
8	There is no chance for practicing my English during online class.		2.27	.652
9	I can't practice my English during online class.	37	2.03	.552

10	Learning material in online class is hard to follow.	2.00	.577
11	Learning material in online class is unclear.	1.97	.600
12	The task given is easy to understand when face to face class.	1.97	.552
13	The task is easy to finish when face to face class.	2.30	.661
14	Teachers' explanation regarding to the assignment in online class is difficult to follow.	2.41	.498

Note: M and SD are calculated on likert scale (1-4)

The table shows that “Teachers’ explanation regarding to the assignment in online class is difficult to follow” (M=2.41) is the top option of the indicator “educator”, and “*Learning material in online class is unclear*” (M=1.97) and “*The task given is easy to understand when face to face class*” (M=1.97) were the lowest score of students’ options. On the other words, the students’ difficulty in indicator “educator” is about the difficult to follow the teachers’ explanation regarding to the assignments given.

Sum	: 78.90
Mode	: 2.00
Median	: 2.100
Mean	: 2.13
Variance	: .192
Standard Deviation	: 437
Range	= Minimum 1.10 = Maximum 3.10

The table above presents the analysis of questionnaire for indicator “educator”. The total score is about 78.90,

mode is about 2.00, median is about 2.100, variance score is about 0.192, standard deviation is about 0.437, and the average is about 2.13.

d. Indicator of Facility

It refers to the facilities provided to support the students in online learning process such as gadget or computer, internet quota, online references, and internet connectivity. It has nine statements for gathering the data needed.

Table 5. Indicator of Facility Data

NO	Statements	N	M	SD
15	I have sufficient internet quota for online learning.		2.22	.854
16	There is free internet quota from college.		3.27	.508
17	Internet quota form college support me in in online learning.		2.95	.575
18	I have gadget for online learning.		2.76	.548
19	There is no problem with my gadget for ling time online learning.	37	2.30	.618
20	The internet access is fast when online learning.		2.05	.743
21	My internet connection does not have trouble when online learning.		2.14	.713
22	I download learning material and upload assignment easily and fastly		2.16	.727
23	There is an easy access for references provided by teachers.		2.49	.731

Note: M and SD are calculated on likert scale (1-4)

The data above show us that “*There is free internet quota from college*” (M=3.27) is the top options for indicator of facility. Otherwise, Statement “*The internet access is fast when online learning*” (M=2.05) is the option with the lowest score. It means that the difficulty regarding to facility is concerning to the slow internet access. This

following table is the descriptive statistics of the indicator facility.

Sum	: 91.80
Mode	: 2.20
Median	: 2.60
Mean	: 2.48
Variance	: .168
Standard Deviation	: 410
Range	= Minimum 1.40 = Maximum 3.20

From the table, it can be seen that the total score of indicator facility is about 91.80, the mode is about 2.20, median is about 2.60, variance score is about 168, standard deviation is about 0.410, and the average score is about 2.48.

e. Environment

It refers to the non-social environment such as software provided for online learning. It can be the curriculum, school regulation, books, syllabus, and learning material. The researcher provided three statements for gathering the data.

Table 6. Environment Data

NO	Statements	N	M	SD
24	Online learning is Difficult because Limited learning references can be accessed.	37	2.41	762
25	References provided by teachers do not support my online learning		2.70	661
26	Teachers do not have time for face to face discussion when I have trouble in online learning.		2.62	794
Note: M and SD are calculated on likert scale (1-4)				

The table shows that "references provided by teachers supports my online learning" (M=2.70) is the top option of the questionnaire. Otherwise, "Online learning

is easy because various learning references can be accessed" (M=2.41) is the lowest score of the options. This following table is the descriptive statistics of the indicator environment.

Sum	: 95.20
Mode	: 2.30
Median	: 2.70
Mean	: 2.57
Variance	: .227
Standard Deviation	: 476
Range	= Minimum 1.00 = Maximum 3.30

The above table shows that the total score of the indicator is about 95.20, mode is about 2.30, median is about 2.70, the variance score is about 0.227, the standard deviation score is about 0.476, and the average score is about 2.57.

Overall, this research found that the English Education Department of Faculty of Teachers Training and Education of Universitas Lancang Kuning students' difficulty in online learning is categorized into moderate level. This following table presents the detail information about it.

Table 7. Students' Difficulty in Online Learning Data

No	Indicators	Mean	SD	Level
1	Physical constraints High	3.11	0.49	
2	Psychological constraints Low	0.39	2.07	
3	Educator	2.13	0.43	Low
4	Facility	2.48	0.41	Low
5	Environment	2.57	0.47	High
Total		2.4	0.43	Low

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the students' main difficulty in online learning is about physical constraints such as eyestrains and students' feel tired in following the online class. This difficulty is in moderate level with the score M= 3.11. Then, the difficulty is about environment. This case, students mention that

the references given by teachers during online learning is limited. It is in the level of moderate with score $M=2.57$. Third, the difficulty faced by students is the facility to support their learning process such as internet quota, qualified gadget or computer used, and sufficient network connection. In this indicator, the difficulty is in the level moderate with score $M=2.48$. Fourth, it is the difficulty from the teachers as educators such as learning material delivering, assignment instruction, and chance for practicing English given by teachers. This difficulty is in the level moderate with score $M=2.13$. The last is psychological constraints. This difficulty is the lowest score $M=2.07$ with moderate level. It refers to the students' capability and motivation in online learning.

In conclusion, students of English Education Department of Faculty of Teachers and Education of Universitas Lancang Kuning met various difficulty in online learning during first semester of academic year 2020/2021 such as physical and psychological constraints, difficulty come from teachers, facility to support the process of learning, and also environment. These difficulty in online learning is influencing each other. Based on the analysis of data, the level of difficulty is in moderate with mean score is about 2.4 and the score of standard deviation is about 0.43.

B. Discussion

This research finding shows that the implementation of online learning in Faculty of Education and Teachers Training faced some difficulties. The indicators of online learning difficulty in this research are the internal factors which come from the students' own selves such as physical and psychological constraints. Besides that, the other difficulties might come from the educators, facility, internet connection, and environment such as references availability and teachers' willingness for face to face

discussion for the certain topic. These difficulties are in the level moderate. It is supported by the finding of Budiaman research (2019) entitled "Factors Analysis of Problems' E-Learning Implementing in Learning Social science "He found that using internet as a learning media generally is able to motivate the students to follow the learning activity even though there were some problems in implementing it such as internet connection trouble and internet quota availability. Another problem is the lack of facility provided by school.

Physical and psychological constraints in online learning is about eyestrain and low motivation. Syah (2008) mentions that learning difficulty may come from the students' physical and psychological constraints. It means that the monitor radiance from gadget or computer influence the students eyes. When students got the problem then they will be lazy to involve in online class.

Then, the difficulty in online learning which come from teacher is about less information or instruction given by teachers regarding the learning material and assignment submission. In the indicator facility, students said that low internet access is very disturbing. And for environment, students said there was lack of references so it cannot support their online learning. Goes along with it, Arifa (2020) states that the obstacles in implementing the distance learning are human resources, uncertain policy and curriculum, and lack of ICT based facility with internet connection. She concludes that educators, students, and parents' capability are the most important thing in implementing the distance or online learning.

4. CONCLUSION

It can finally be concluded that online learning must be implemented based on the capability of the stakeholder or government, teachers, and also students. It should be well prepared-facility such as gadget or computer, sufficient internet connection, and internet quota. Besides that, the teachers' capability in organizing and managing online class should be considered.

So, college or government should pay attention to the implementation of online learning in this pandemic era. Government should facilitate the teachers and students with free internet quota and sufficient internet connection. The improvement of educators' quality should be the main consideration. Teachers and students should be trained to organize, manage, and using various fitur in online learning because the implementation of creative and innovative online learning model will motivate the students in online learning.

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