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NAME

1. Ulil Amri*
2. Anne Pratiwi

AFFILIATION

1. Universitas Jambi
2. Universitas Andalas

EMAIL

1. ulil.ludostrait@unja.ac.id
2. annepratiwi@hum.unand.ac.id

*corresponding author

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STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON ENGLISH PROFICIENCY ONLINE CLASSES AT SMA DEK PADANG

ABSTRACT

This research discusses student perceptions of teacher learning methods in the English Proficiency subject at DEK Padang High School. The purpose of this research was to describe students' perceptions on English Proficiency classes at SMA DEK Padang during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This research is categorized as a descriptive research with qualitative approach by using case study design. The informants for this research were the grade XI students XI SMA DEK Padang 2021/2022 who had taken the English Proficiency classes for at least three semesters. In this study the researcher serves as a key instrument. The research instrument is a questionnaire and an interview guide. Time triangulation is used in order to test the validity of the data by comparing the results of the questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was distributed to 20 grade XI students who have taken the English Proficiency online classes for 3 semesters and 8 grade XI students as the informants on the interview. The results showed that the students of SMA DEK Padang had met the difficulty in digesting English Proficiency subject and considered the learning strategies employed by the teacher not to be in accordance with the expected targets, so a more effective technique is needed.

(201 Words)

KEYWORDS

students' perception, teacher's strategies, English Proficiency classes

INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, the world is being affected by a very deadly virus called the corona virus or COVID-19. The spread of the corona virus is establishing a global scale pandemic which constantly changing almost every aspect of human life. The pandemic hit nearly every country in the world including Indonesia. The COVID-19 pandemic defines the global health crisis of our time. Since its emergence, the corona virus has been infecting hundreds of countries in the world. Many countries are focusing on slowing the virus down through testing and treating patients, tracing the spreading contacts, restraining traveling regulation, quarantining people, and forbidding large gathering, e.g., the sporting events, music concerts, and school (United Nations, 2022) the pandemic is currently affecting nearly every single parts of human life including the education sector. Nearly all schools at the global scale have been forced to adopt the new way of learning.

One of many possible and applicable solutions to this matter is by conducting online learning. The online learning process, in this situation, could be more evenly distributed to students. The researcher discovered that there are many alternative media or applications can be used to support the online learning process since almost every student has a laptop or Smartphone. Applications such as *WhatsApp*, *Zoom Meeting*, *Google classroom*, *Edmodo*, *Quintal*, etc. are few out of many applications that can be utilized as the online learning media.

SMA DEK (Dedikasi, Edukasi, Kualiva) Padang, a private high school located in Ranah Parak Rumbio, Padang City, West Sumatra, came out with a solution in order to carry out the teaching and learning process at the school level by utilizing the internet based app, *Quintal*. The *Quintal* app is an online learning app where students and teachers can communicate through the app by sharing modules, assessment, discussion, and online sources. The app is available in mobile and desktop version so it would be easy for teachers and students of SMA DEK Padang to access them either by phone or by laptop/PC.

English Proficiency classes are the supplementary English classes taught at nearly every school in Yayasan Pendidikan DEK, i.e., at elementary school (SD), junior high (SMP), high school (SMA), and vocational school (SMK) except for the kindergarten and pre-school. The materials of English Proficiency classes are supplementary for students' English skills including speaking, listening, reading, writing, various competencies in English testing system, e.g., TOEFL and IELTS, various skills on English based competition, e.g., debate, storytelling, spelling-bee, and singing in English. This subject is endemic to Yayasan Pendidikan DEK Padang and is considered as one of the attracting values of Yayasan Pendidikan DEK Padang.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative research with case study approach. Sugiyono (2018) stated that qualitative research is an exploration used to do the investigation in natural condition where the researcher acts as the key instrument, by using the triangulation technique. The very definition is supported by Sukmadinata (2005) who mentioned that that qualitative research is describing

and analyzing phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, or individuals as an individual or in groups. Merriam (2019) emphasizes that qualitative researchers seek for the understanding on how people interpret experiences, how they construct them, and the meaning that attributed to the very experiences. Numerous qualitative researches were aimed at describing and revealing.

In relation with the case study research, Gay (2012) mentioned that a case study is an approach where the research is conducted on a unit of study or bounded system (e.g., an individual teacher, a classroom, or a school can be a case). Case study research is an all-encompassing method covering design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis. Here, the type of this research is a survey with a descriptive analytical method.

The subjects of this research are the XI grade students SMA DEK Padang because this group of students has taken the English Proficiency classes for at least three semesters and were on their fourth semester taking the subject during the research. The other reason was because the researchers were their English and English Proficiency teachers on their X grade so it will be easy for the researchers to get the information from the subjects. The subject consists of 10 students: 10 students of social (IPS) group and 10 of science (IPA) group about 56% of the total grade XI students of SMA DEK Padang (of the total 36 grade XI students) and about 21% of the total students of SMA DEK Padang (of the total 96 students).

The instruments of this research are the questionnaire and the interview thus the key instrument is the interview. In collecting information the researchers used structured interview by following the interview guides. This research used the closed-ended questionnaire. In close-ended questionnaire, possible answers are mentioned in the questionnaire or schedule and the respondent or investigator ticks the category which best describes the answer of the respondent (Ary et al., 2019)

This research also utilizes the Likert Scale. Likert scale is a psychometric scale commonly involved in research that employs questionnaires (Nemoto & Beglar, 2014). The scale 1 to 5 was assigned to the following criteria: Totally Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), and Totally Agree (5). Here, the interval scale is also used as the coding for the questions. The following Table 1 is the questionnaire adopted and modified from Ermawati (2020). The questionnaire is chosen because of the similarities and because it is relevant with this research.

Table 1: List of questionnaire

No.	Statements	TA	A	N	D	TD
1.	English Proficiency classes are easier online.					
2.	English Proficiency classes are more fun online.					

3.	English Proficiency online classes make the learning process more effective in achieving learning objectives.					
4.	English Proficiency online classes increase students' interest in learning.					
5.	English Proficiency online classes improve students' understanding.					
6.	English Proficiency online classes increase students' motivation in learning.					
7.	English Proficiency online classes make it easy to facilitate students in doing assignments.					
8.	Gadget, internet packages, and poor signal are not the problems in English Proficiency online classes.					
9.	English Proficiency online classes are difficult to do because students have difficulties in understanding the learning applications.					
10.	English Proficiency online classes can foster students' independent learning attitudes.					
11.	English Proficiency online classes utilize internet as the learning sources.					
12.	Through online classes, it is easy for students and teachers to discuss the English Proficiency subject anytime and anywhere.					
13.	English Proficiency online classes can save times in the learning process.					
14.	English Proficiency online classes are wasting internet data.					
15.	Based on the sophistication of technology in this modern era, English Proficiency online classes can be developed further.					

After, all the data are collected, the simple percentage formula is applied to find students' perceptions of English Proficiency online classes during the

COVID-19 pandemic. It was known that the highest score is 75 and the lowest score is 15, to find out the range of scores above, the following formula is used:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Note:

P : Percentage

F : Total responses on the statements

N : Total number of students as respondent

The interview in this research is used to gather data from informants about their opinions, beliefs, and feelings about English Proficiency online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic in their own words. Interview is used to understand their experiences and their point of view rather than to test hypotheses. Ari et al. (2010) expose that interview may provide information that cannot be obtained through observation, or they can be used to verify observations. Here, the researcher used structured interview. Sugiyono (2007) defined that structured interview is an interview where researchers use the interview guides that have been arranged in a systematic and complete collection.

FINDINGS

Based on result and the analysis of students' perception on English Proficiency classes at SMA DEK Padang during the COVID-19 pandemic, it can be summarized in the table below:

Table 2 Research Finding

No.	Statements	TA	A	N	D	TD	Total
1.	English Proficiency classes are easier online.	4 (20%)	8 (40%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	0 (0%)	20 (100%)
2.	English Proficiency classes are more fun online.	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	6 (30%)	4 (20%)	20 (100%)
3.	English Proficiency online classes make the earning process more effective in achieving learning objectives.	5 (25%)	5 (25%)	2 (10%)	5 (25%)	3 (15%)	20 (100%)
4.	English Proficiency online classes increase students' interest in learning.	2 (10%)	3 (15%)	7 (35%)	2 (10%)	6 (30%)	20 (100%)
5.	English Proficiency online classes improve students' understanding.	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	6 (30%)	2 (10%)	3 (15%)	20 (100%)
6.	English Proficiency online classes increase students' motivation in learning.	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	6 (30%)	3 (15%)	3 (15%)	20 (100%)

7.	English Proficiency online classes make it easy to facilitate students in doing assignments.	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	3 (15%)	4 (20%)	20 (100%)
8.	Gadget, internet packages, and poor signal are not the problems in English Proficiency online classes.	8 (40%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	0 (0%)	20 (100%)
9.	English Proficiency online classes are difficult to do because students have difficulties in understanding the learning applications.	2 (10%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	8 (40%)	4 (20%)	20 (100%)
10.	English Proficiency online classes can foster students' independent learning attitudes.	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	20 (100%)
11.	English Proficiency online classes utilize internet as the learning sources.	9 (45%)	6 (30%)	4 (20%)	1 (5%)	4 (20%)	20 (100%)
12.	Through online classes, it is easy for students and teachers to discuss the English Proficiency subject anytime and anywhere.	7 (35%)	7 (35%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	0 (0%)	20 (100%)
13.	English Proficiency online classes can save times in the learning process.	8 (40%)	8 (40%)	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	2 (10%)	20 (100%)
14.	English Proficiency online classes are wasting internet data.	8 (40%)	2 (10%)	4 (20%)	5 (25%)	1 (5%)	20 (100%)
15.	Based on the sophistication of technology in this modern era, English Proficiency online classes can be developed further.	14 (70%)	6 (30%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	20 (100%)

Following the result above, the interviews were conducted with 8 students as the informants who were considered as representative of the problem in this study. The interview was conducted on March 10 2022. There are 5 main questions asked to the informants in order to figure out how their perceptions on English Proficiency classes during the COVID-19 pandemic as follow:

1. Describe your opinion of the English Proficiency online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. What are the good things about English Proficiency online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic?

3. Describe your difficulty in English Proficiency online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic?
4. If you have to choose to learn English Proficiency classes online or offline, which are you going to choose?
5. Some suggestion for the future English Proficiency classes.

The result of the interview shows that most students stated that they have mixed perception about the English Proficiency online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. 5 out of 8 students in their interview stated that they like English Proficiency online classes because they can easily access the internet sources for their materials since most of them enjoying surfing the internet as the daily basis. 3 students mentioned that online classes especially on the English subject including English Proficiency is difficult because teachers are making them surf the English sides of the internet, e.g., by watching English news, reacting to English videos on *Youtube* and to do more stuffs in English on the internet.

Related to their thoughts of the beneficiary of the English Proficiency online classes, 7 out of 8 students stated that they enjoy the online based project delivered by the teachers. They argue that the online projects are more fun than the offline ones since they can utilize many apps online and to be creative with their ideas. One student stated that the good thing about English Proficiency online classes is that they can directly translated what the teachers say by turning on the CC. So it he can understand the teachers better than the offline classes because teachers usually speak in full English during the presentation or on the videos uploaded as the teaching materials.

The interview also mentioned that not many students have difficulties related to the gadget and the internet data because SMA DEK students are required to have the compatible gadgets for learning even before the COVID-19 pandemic. Students usually used their mobile phone during the offline classes. Also, Quintal app used by the school does not usually consume many internet data. The app converted high quality videos into regular sizes to reduce the data used. Here, 6 out of 8 students believed that the data is not the problem. The problem is that sometime the app crashed and the students need to redo their tasks because of the error. Also, it is difficult of some students (4 students on the interview) to post their written assignment as an attachment of photos in jpg or pdf format because the app forbid them to post an attachment larger than 5MB. Some attachment went missing and caused students to fail on the certain subject.

In relation to whether the students want to continue learning English Proficiency classes online or offline, all students on the interview stated that they wanted to experience the offline classes because they have been studying online classes for nearly 3 semesters and they need to actually be in school for having the physical school projects. A student stated that the English Proficiency online classes are fun but the online classes missed an essential thing: the actual communication in English. They have been told that English Proficiency classes used to be a fun English Classes in compare with the regular English classes where students can express their selves in English. The online classes, eventhough they are allowed to utilized as many as possible online sources, are

missing the actual interaction among students and teachers. The other student also emphasized that the English Proficiency online classes have told him many things about the internet. Now the students are aware that live videos on *Youtube, Google Classroom*, and many streaming sites can be automatically transcribed and translated that they finally get to understand what the speakers say by reading the close caption subtitle or transcription. This also helped them understand the teachers and their friends better since English teachers force students to speak full English during the presentation. This means that some students are enjoying the English Proficiency online classes.

Even though most students on the interview stated that they love English Proficiency online classes. There are statements of the students who express that they rather pick offline classes than online classes for English Proficiency. The reason is because they believe that language classes need actual interaction and online classes do not really taught them a lot of interaction. This opinion was backed up by the statement who said that their seniors (grade XII students) used to have fun on the offline classes by participating in numerous English based activities, e.g., role play, singing, storytelling, and/or debating competition as the product of the English Proficiency classes and the English Club. Now that the school is online, those activities are prohibited and restricted. The students want to have the experiences in those activities too and the better way to reach them is by having offline classes.

The questionnaire and the interview show mixed perception of the students related to English Proficiency online classes. In short, it can be conclude that, in general the students SMA DEK Padang are enjoying the English Proficiency online classes. The result of the questionnaire shows that there only 20% of the students who disagreed that learning English Proficiency online is easier than offline. The data is also backed up by the interview which stated that 7 out of 8 (87.5%) students enjoy the online learning better thus the result of the questionnaire stated that there are only 30% of the students thought that the learning English Proficiency only is fun.

The result of the questionnaire also stated that students find that the English Proficiency online classes did not much engage with students' interest in learning English (about 30%) but the online classes are able to deliver the material better than the offline classes. This is in line with the interview which stated that students are able to understand the materials because the online classes provided them with the auto generated CC on the videos or live videos given by the teachers so that students with lower abilities in English can understand the teachers by activating the CC or subtitle of the videos.

DISCUSSION

From the result of the research it can be concluded that the students SMA DEK Padang enjoyed learning English Proficiency online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic because online learning let them utilize recent technologies through many online apps and the internet. The students of SMA DEK Padang

believe that online learning is one modern way to do the learning activities that they need to understand.

The finding of this research is in line with the research conducted by Yunita & Maisarah (2020). The implementation of learning process at the Graduate Program of English Education of the Bengkulu University shows that the results of filling out a questionnaire which obtained an average score of 1211.25 for 40 items from the five indicators of the items that were responded to. Nevertheless, 40 items were produced in the form of statements. The average score is in a good category. The questionnaire items were measured with statistical numerical results ranging from 5-1: 5 (Strongly agree), 4 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 2 (Disagree), and 1 (Strongly disagree). This is in line with the result of this research. The responses of the grade XI students of SMA DEK Padang toward English Proficiency online classes during COVID-19 pandemic are mostly positive which show that: 60% of the respondents agreed that English Proficiency classes are easier online, 60% of the respondents agreed that gadget, internet packages, and poor signal are not the problems in English Proficiency online classes, 75% of the respondents agreed that English Proficiency online classes utilize internet as the learning sources, 70% of the respondents agreed that through online classes, it is easy for students and teachers to discuss the English Proficiency subject anytime and anywhere, 80% of the respondents agreed that English Proficiency online classes can save times in the learning process, 50% of the respondents agreed that English Proficiency online classes are wasting internet data, and 100% of the respondents agreed that based on the sophistication of technology in this modern era, English Proficiency online classes can be developed further.

Most respondents had positive perception on English Proficiency online classes during COVID-19 pandemic because they believe that English Proficiency online classes are easier because most students bound to the internet on their daily life. They enjoy being with the internet and most of all English Proficiency online classes allow them to surf the network on their full capacity.

The result of the research conducted by Muthuprasad et al. (2021) shows that majority of the students evinced a positive attitude towards online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Online learning activities were found to be advantageous as it provided flexibility and convenience for the students. This is in line with the result of this research where most respondents agreed that English Proficiency online classes give them the opportunity to be more adventurous and creative by utilizing the internet sources on their learning activities. Muthuprasad et al. (2021) mentions that students preferred well structured content with recorded videos uploaded in university web-sites. They also indicated the need for interactive sessions with quizzes and assignments at the end of each class to optimize the learning experience. However, most students also reported that online classes could be. This is also similar with the case of SMA DEK Padang where students claim that they enjoy studying English Proficiency online because they can access the video material online and actually understand what the videos say by turning on the CC generated transcription. From the interview, it shows that 15 out of 20 respondents agreed that English Proficiency online classes utilize

internet as the learning sources. This means that the students of SMA DEK Padang find it easy to learn English Proficiency subjects through online learning.

Some students had negative perception on learning reading comprehension online during Covid-19 pandemic because they believe that learning reading comprehension online is still an effective way to learn reading comprehension. They also stated that the strategies used by the teacher could not help them much because the teacher was not there to help them fix their problems. Thus, to some students, learning reading comprehension online is good because whenever they found problems, they can directly go to the internet and find the solution.

The finding of this research is also supported by Rasmitadila et al. (2020) who mentions that students' perceptions of online learning are relatively good with several obstacles that require improvement. Rasmitadila et al. in their research stated that students are willing to continue participating in online learning and agreed that online learning has provided numerous benefits and conveniences in the learning process because the online learning can be done anywhere and anytime. Students also tend to master the platforms used during online learning. Another trend that was found was the students' perception of the difficulty in understanding the material with online learning. So that online learning must be planned, implemented, and evaluated in order to minimize problems and maximize the achievement of learning objectives. It is relevant with the result of this research. Students of SMA DEK Padang agreed that gadget, internet packages, and poor signal are not the problems in English Proficiency online classes. They also agreed that through online classes, it is easy for students and teachers to discuss the English Proficiency subject anytime and anywhere. This means that in the practice, learning English Proficiency only do not give the students serious difficulties because they can always connect to the teachers anytime anywhere.

These researches have similarities and differences with this research. The similarity is because the subject of these researches is similar: students' perception on online learning. The differences are in research design and the object of the researches.

CONCLUSION

From the research about students' perceptions on English Proficiency online classes during the COVID-19 pandemics at SMA DEK Padang, it is concluded that the students' perceptions on English Proficiency online classes are vary. However, the results in general show that most students agreed that English Proficiency online classes are good because they can easily access the materials online through the Quinal app and various online materials available.

The result of questionnaire in general shows that most students believe that English Proficiency online classes are good and beneficial. It is concluded from questionnaire which stated that: 1) 60% of the students agreed that English Proficiency classes are easier online; 2) 30% of the students agreed that English Proficiency classes are more fun online; 3) 50% of the students agreed that English Proficiency online classes make the learning process more effective in achieving learning objectives; 4) 35% of the students agreed that English

Proficiency online classes increase students' interest in learning; 5) 45% of the students agreed that English Proficiency online classes improve students' understanding; 6) 40% of the students agreed that English Proficiency online classes increase students' motivation in learning; 7) 45% of the students agreed that English Proficiency online classes make it easy to facilitate students in doing assignments; 8) 60% of the students agreed that gadget, internet packages, and poor signal are not the problems in English Proficiency online classes; 9) 20% of the students agreed that English Proficiency online classes are difficult to do because students have difficulties in understanding the learning applications; 10) 40% of the students agreed that English Proficiency online classes can foster students' independent learning attitudes; 11) 75% of the students agreed that English Proficiency online classes utilize internet as the learning sources; 12) 70% of the students agreed that through online classes, it is easy for students and teachers to discuss the English Proficiency subject anytime and anywhere; 13) 80% of the students agreed that English Proficiency online classes can save times in the learning process; 14) 50% of the students agreed that English Proficiency online classes are wasting internet data; and 15) 100% of the students agreed that based on the sophistication of technology in this modern era, English Proficiency online classes can be developed further. Which means the majority of students agreed that learning English Proficiency classes online is considered as good.

The result of the interview also stated that most students find the online classes help them understand the English materials better for they can access the CC and the subtitles of the materials directly. Students also claimed that gadgets and internet data are not the problems because they live and bound to them as the daily basic.

SUGGESTION

Online learning activities could be the new generation of learning in the present days especially during and post the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers are required to conduct the lessons that are suitable with the development of the internet era and it is hoped that this study could be one of many sources that can be considered as the development of the future online learning activities at the school level, especially in English language classes.

This research is focused on the analysis of the students' perception on English Proficiency Classes at SMA DEK Padang. The English Proficiency class is a supplementary class endemic to Yayasan Pendidikan DEK Padang, where students are prepared to have advanced understanding and skills in English. The researchers suggest that there will be many schools in Indonesia to have supplementary classes for their students whether they are related to the English language or to the other subjects, e.g., arts, sports, sciences, digital, etc.

The researcher also suggest for the future researchers to continue this research. The present research needs to be expanded into different aspects, with larger sample for this was still too little to generalize an overall conclusion on students' perception of the online learning.

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