

CHAPTER 1

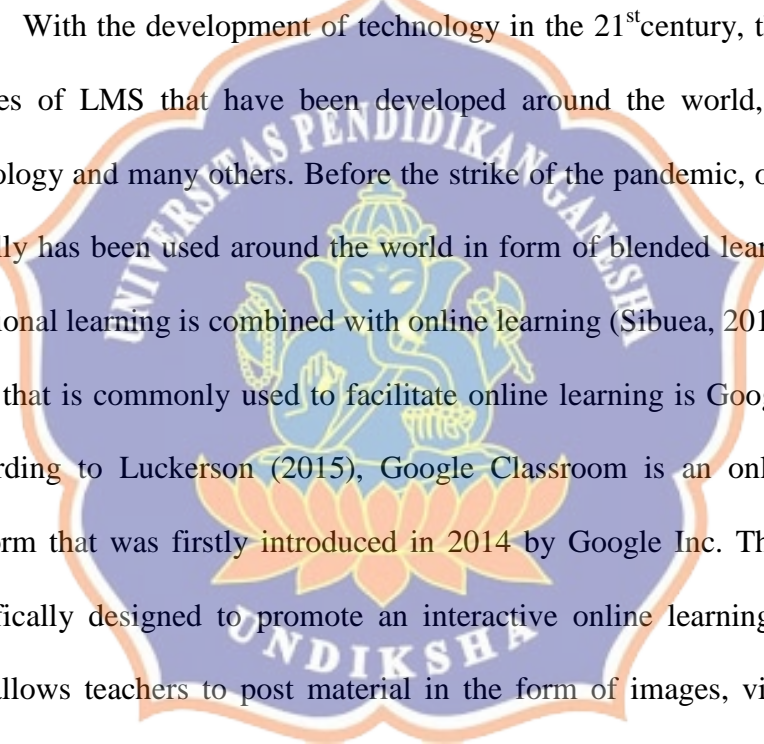
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Since the beginning of 2020, the world has been shaken by an infectious virus called COVID-19. The wild spread of the virus has forced the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare it as a global pandemic. The health system in many affected countries, including Indonesia, is not the only aspect that is affected by the global pandemic. It is because every aspect is being affected, including education. Hyseni, Zamira & Hoxha (2020) and also Dhawan (2020) report that many academic institutions from schools, colleges, and universities are forced to make a shift on their traditional, face-to-face teaching and learning process into online learning. This change is also due to the instructions from their government as the spread of the virus demands social distancing, resulting the shut of the academic institutions. UNESCO (2020) reports that as of July, 2020, there are nearly 1.1 billion affected learners in 107 countries who are learning through online classes. The sudden shift of the teaching and learning method challenges the educational stakeholders and the teachers to create an effective learning method where students can still learn despite of the changes.

In order to adjust with the current situation, the teachers and the students are forced to learn from home by changing the traditional, face-to-face meeting to online learning (Hyseni, Zamira & Hoxha, 2020). This sudden shift does not run smoothly as both the teachers and the students are expected to adjust overnight. On the teachers' side, teaching through online learning feels

challenging as they cannot deliver the materials easily and monitoring is hard to be done. On the students' side, learning becomes harder as they are expected to be more independent to learn and research by themselves. To facilitate the teaching and learning process in the online learning, the teachers often use Learning Management System (LMS), a software application that can be used for administration, documentation, tracking, reporting and even delivering educational materials (Sibuea, 2018).



With the development of technology in the 21st century, there are many choices of LMS that have been developed around the world, like Moodle, Schoology and many others. Before the strike of the pandemic, online learning actually has been used around the world in form of blended learning in which traditional learning is combined with online learning (Sibuea, 2018). One of the LMS that is commonly used to facilitate online learning is Google classroom. According to Luckerson (2015), Google Classroom is an online education platform that was firstly introduced in 2014 by Google Inc. This platform is specifically designed to promote an interactive online learning environment that allows teachers to post material in the form of images, videos or links. However, even though Google Classroom and online learning in general has been used by many, the preliminary observation conducted in several schools in Buleleng Regency, Bali, Indonesia, show that it was only after the strike of the pandemic that some schools became familiar with Google Classroom since they need to use the LMS to facilitate their teaching and learning process.

The results of the pre-observations and three short interviews showed that the use of this LMS has never been done before in SMA Negeri 3 Singaraja. In traditional classrooms, the teacher never uses a platform to support the learning process so that students are considered to use this platform for the first time. Before the pandemic, the teaching and learning process was carried out traditionally where the teachers and the students met physically in the classroom. Assignment was also given verbally and submitted in paper. However, in this pandemic situation, the learning process is forced to be carried out fully online and therefore the teachers use Google Classroom to facilitate the teaching and learning process. The choice of using Google Classroom is due to several advantages offered by the platform itself.

Sukmawati & Nensia (2019) suggest that Google Classroom offers lots of interesting features that could maximize the implementation of online learning. Yates (2017) also suggests that Google Classroom helps in simplifying the assignment and grade flow since teachers can just post the assignment and students' grades on the platform that can be easily accessed later by the students. Students can submit their work on the platform based on the stated deadlines that can also be monitored by the teachers. On the other hand, teachers can easily grade their works and give comments related to the works. When the works do not fulfil the requirements, teachers can ask students to revise them and resubmit them through the platform. This suggests a paperless work where students can manage their work files better in their computers or gadgets

Since it is the first time for the students to learn fully online through Google Classroom and they are expected to learn more independently, it is essential to investigate how they perceive the effectiveness of the use of Google Classroom as the platform used in the learning process. Addressing the students' perception is beneficial in order to make sure that the learning process has run effectively. It is there to ensure that the students enjoy the process of learning as well as comprehend the materials that they have learnt through the platform. In the worst case, when the students' perception is not addressed, the independent learning process through the platform can lead them to have anxiety and stress if it turns out that the learning through the platform does not run effectively. Agolla & Ongori (2008), Congos (2010), and Asikainen et al., (2018) argue that the stress and anxiety can lead them to have messed time management skill, concentration, and learning methods as what was found in a study conducted by Arenliu & Bexulli (2020) where around 11.4% of students suffered from severe psychological distress due to online learning.

Therefore, this study arises to investigate the students' perception on the effectiveness of the use of Google Classroom to facilitate online learning during COVID-19 pandemic. Further, this study also investigates the difficulties faced by the students in learning through the platform. This study is conducted at SMA N 3 Singaraja as it is one of the schools that implements Google Classroom to facilitate the learning process and take the 10th grade students as the subjects. The 10th grade students are taken as the subjects since they are considered quite new to the use of Google Classroom for online learning since the first semester they learned in SMAN 3 Singaraja, which

occurred in pandemic situation. Thus, it also related with the school policy and regulation about the way of using google classroom, which also related to the strategy used by the teacher. So, their perception is expected to be the genuine one.

Several studies have been conducted in order to investigate students' perception on the use of Google Classroom in online learning. The studies were conducted by Rossyawati (2018), Sepyanda (2018), Sibuea (2018), Islam (2019), Megawati & Astutik (2019), Hussaini et al., (2020), and Barus & Simanjuntak (2020). However, from those aforementioned studies, only the study conducted by Hussaini et al., (2020) that investigated students' perception towards the effectiveness of Google Classroom in facilitating online learning. All of the studies indicate that Google Classroom gained positive perception from the students in which they found the platform to be helpful and effective. However, there were several challenges which were faced by the students that actually could be minimized.

From the backgrounds that have been explained, the novelty of this study is in the context given, due to the full-online learning context caused by Pandemic of COVID-19. Previously, all of the studies were conducted without the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, meaning that Google Classroom was used as a platform in blended learning in order to support the traditional, face-to-face learning. Meanwhile, the current online learning is a whole new situation since it is a full online learning that puts the students as the focus of the study. Thus, Students are expected to learn mostly by themselves with the

help of the platform as well as other online learning sources. Therefore, the students' perception on the effectiveness of Google Classroom can be completely different from the one in the previous studies.

1.2 Problem Identification

Google Classroom is an Learning Management System that was firstly used to support learning during COVID-19 at SMA Negeri 3 Singaraja. Previously, in normal learning, the teacher only taught using traditional classroom methods, namely face-to-face without using the help of other platforms to facilitate learning. However, the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic is completely different from normal conditions which only conduct face-to-face classes. In the current pandemic situation, EFL students appear to be the most disadvantaged. They are expected to be able to learn more independently and actively while also achieving learning goals as if they were in a normal situation. This can cause problems for students if the implementation of the teaching and learning process through Google Classroom is not carried out effectively. Thus, it is important to address students' perceptions of using Google Classroom to facilitate online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic so that a fun and joyful online learning environment can be created later. Therefore, this study appears to find out students' perceptions and problems regarding the use of Google Classroom to facilitate online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic at SMA N 3 Singaraja.

1.3 Limitation of the Problem

This study is limited for EFL students at Senior High School, especially for students in 10th grades in SMA Negeri 3 Singaraja who carry out learning using Google Classroom. The focus of this study is to investigate students' perceptions and describe the challenges felt by EFL students towards using Google Classrooms to facilitate learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.4 Research Problems

Based on the background of this study, there are two main research problems that are going to be investigated in this study. The research problems are as follows:

1. How is the EFL students' perception on the use of Google Classroom to facilitate online learning during COVID-19 at SMA N 3 Singaraja?
2. What are the difficulties faced by the students at SMA N 3 Singaraja on the use of Google Classroom during COVID-19?

1.5 Research Objectives

Relating to the research problems, there are two research objectives that are proposed in this study. They are as follows:

1. To investigate the students' perception on the use of Google Classroom to facilitate online learning during COVID-19 pandemic at SMA N 3 Singaraja
2. To describe the difficulties faced by the students at SMA N 3 Singaraja on the use of Google Classroom during COVID-19 pandemic

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is viewed from two perspectives. They are theoretical significance and practical significance.

1. Theoretical Significance

It is expected that the result of this research is able to give contribution to the development of the education, especially in implementing Google Classroom to facilitate online learning as well as feedback for the online learning practice.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, this study is expected to give positive significance to the teachers and other researcher, especially those who are planning to conduct similar research

2.1 For Students

By conducting this study, it is hoped that students can use google classroom is adjusting with the online learning as they share their feedback regarding using Google Classroom in facilitating learning.

2.2 For Teachers

The students' perception as the result of this study can be used as a feedback for the teachers in the use of certain platform in facilitating online learning as well as the implementation of teaching and learning process throughout the platform. Therefore, the learning process in the future can be improved.

2.4 For Other Researcher

The result of this study can be used as a reference in writing related studies in the effectiveness of certain learning management system like Google Classroom

