

TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH USING GOOGLE CLASSROOM AT SMK BUDISATRYA MEDAN DURING COVID-19

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Abstract

The use of technology in teaching and learning process is inevitable. The Covid-19 pandemic has insisted the teaching learning process conducted online. *Google Classroom* is one of online learning platform used by teachers and students in SMK Budisatrya Medan. This study is aimed at describing the teaching and learning English by using *Google Classroom* at SMK Budisatrya Medan during Covid-19 pandemic. This study belongs to descriptive study. The participants in this study are all English teachers and students of SMK Budisatrya Medan. The result shows that teaching and learning English by using *Google Classroom* gives advantages for both teachers and students. The advantages are the ease of access, easy to operate, flexible time of teaching and learning, and supporting various learning sources. However, the teaching and learning using *Google Classroom* cannot be done optimally because of the lack of facilities experienced by some students and unsupportive communication feature of the application.

Keywords: Google Classroom, Teaching and Learning English.

Abstrak

Penggunaan teknologi dalam belajar mengajar merupakan hal yang tidak dapat dihindarkan. Pandemi Covid19 telah memaksa proses belajar mengajar dilaksanakan secara daring. *Google Classroom* sebagai salah satu *platform* pembelajaran daring digunakan oleh guru dan siswa SMK Budisatrya Medan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan proses belajar mengajar bahasa Inggris dengan menggunakan *Google Classroom* di SMK Budisatrya Medan selama pandemic Covid19. Penelitian ini termasuk ke dalam penelitian deskriptif. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah seluruh guru bahasa Inggris dan siswa SMK Budisatrya Medan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa belajar mengajar bahasa Inggris dengan menggunakan *Google Classroom* memberikan manfaat baik bagi guru dan siswa. Manfaat tersebut berupa kemudahan dalam mengakses, kemudahan dalam mengoperasikan, waktu belajar dan mengajar yang fleksibel, dan mendukung pembelajaran dari berbagai sumber. Namun, belajar dan mengajar menggunakan *Google Classroom* tidak bisa dilaksanakan dengan optimal karena adanya kekurangan fasilitas yang dialami oleh beberapa siswa dan fitur aplikasinya yang kurang mendukung untuk komunikasi.

Kata Kunci: Google Classroom, Belajar dan Mengajar Bahasa Inggris.

A. Introduction

Almost every aspects of life has been impacted by technology and the learning process is no exception¹. Teaching and learning process have been developing rapidly. Technology makes a real different to the quality of learning². Therefore, the technology should be used optimally in teaching and learning.

The development of technology nowadays is growing rapidly³. The developments have been in almost every sectors. Economics, politics and education have applied technology. It can be predicted that many people have been addicted with information and communication technology (ICT). The development of ICT cannot be separated from information technology (IT) which is also growing.

The students' ability to use and to accept technologies for learning activities requires instructional design provided by their teachers⁴. In developing countries, some educational institutions are still in their ways to introduce policies to oblige their educators to integrate technologies in their instructional delivery. In such situation, both teachers and students entail transformation of their perspective of technology in their educational practices.

The coronavirus disease (Covid-19) has resulted challenges in education, teachers and students have struggled with online and distance education which was introduced abruptly under the new norm of social distancing⁵. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought the teaching and learning process to the online learning platform. Teaching and learning process experienced the significant challenge regarding with the new norm of social and physical distancing.

The significant challenges of distance learning are faced by students and teachers. Many students do not recommend online classes. Students see that they do not interact or be motivated in the online classes. The poor internet connection also contributes to the ineffectiveness of online learning experienced by the students⁶. Meanwhile, teachers thought that online learning was time-consuming. Teachers have to be ready for 24 hours in 7 days responding their students' tasks, comments and questions⁷.

Online learning is a typical teaching and learning process through electronic media of computers and the internet⁸. This system calls an *e-learning* or *blended learning*. *E-learning* system is the manifest of information and communication technology (ICT) that currently grows up rapidly in this modern era. In this 21st era, learners require to renew the knowledge of the way for learning through any

¹Zboun and Farrah, "Students Perspectives of Online Language Learning during Corona Pandemic: Benefits and Challenges."

²Somekh and Davis, *Using Information Technology Effectively in Teaching and Learning*.

³Sukmawati and Nensia, "The Role of Google Classroom in ELT."

⁴Salam, "The Students' Use of Google Classroom in Learning English."

⁵ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, "Covid19 Impact on Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Sri Lanka."

⁶Zboun and Farrah, "Students Perspectives of Online Language Learning during Corona Pandemic: Benefits and Challenges."

⁷Rahayu and Wirza, "Teachers Perception of Online Learning during Pandemic Covid -19."

⁸Sholah, "Teaching and Learning English Using Google Classroom for Indonesian Learners."

technological tools. Both teachers and students must be aware of technology and how to use it in the learning process. Some advantages of learning using ICT for teachers and students are necessary to be considered.

The online learning is considered by the students as an unattractive and ineffective learning activities. Meanwhile teachers thought that online learning is time-consuming. These perceptions are contrast with some theories which showed that online learning is very helpful for both teachers and students. For an instance, English learning conducted by implementing Telegram group class proved that in online learning teachers and students can take advantages⁹. Online learning encouraged students to be more active in the learning process since they did not face their friends or their teacher directly.

The online learning also provides practicality for both students and teachers. Students can submit their assignments directly without meeting the teacher and their works are completely safe because in online learning, all files, photos, or videos uploaded are stored in the internet¹⁰. The teachers can review the students' works anytime and anywhere she/he wants and the feedback can be seen by students directly through the platform of the online learning. Teachers can limit the time for students to submit their works. So, the online learning is considered to be an efficient learning rather than time-consuming learning.

Online learning has experienced many different stages¹¹. The first stage is CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) system which started in some universities in 1980. With the rapid development of CALL system, many instructors and institutions tried to blend technology inside and outside the classrooms with the aim of having both traditional learning and certain forms of online learning to promote the teaching and learning process.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, online learning is a necessity especially for educational institution which is in yellow or even red zone. In order to avoid the spread of the virus, the online learning should be optimized. Even though there are some problems regarding with the process of online learning¹². They are: (1) Students find it difficult to understand the learning materials presented by the teachers because there is no sufficient explanation and lack of students-teachers interaction; (2) Teachers' lack of ability to use online learning platform which made them cannot apply the various online learning platform effectively and efficiently; (3) Limited time to control the learning process which caused the teachers felt difficult to maintain the students' enthusiasm and keep them learning actively.

In order to solve those problems, the maximum efforts from governments, teachers, students and parents are needed. Teachers can use videos from any sources

⁹Wiranegara and Hairi, "Conducting English Learning Activities by Implementing Telegram Goup Class during Covid-19 Pandemic."

¹⁰Sholah, "Teaching and Learning English Using Google Classroom for Indonesian Learners."

¹¹Zboun and Farrah, "Students Perspectives of Online Language Learning during Corona Pandemic: Benefits and Challenges."

¹²Efriana, "Problems of Online Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic in EFL Classroom and the Solution."

such *Youtube* or governmental sites to provide comprehensive materials for the students or even teachers can create their own learning videos so that the students will find it easier to understand. Teachers are also expected to actively join the teaching training which held by government or non-governmental organizations. This would improve teachers' competences in teaching in the era of online teaching.

Parents' role are also important to help the learning process. Parents act as the second teacher controlling their children learning at home. This can be done by watching their children activity during the learning-time. However, it will be difficult to do if both the parents are working. If so, the parents are required to be able to motivate and encourage their children to be independent learners. This can be done by explaining to their children about the importance of learning during the pandemic.

The government regulation which instructing all educational units to conduct online learning need to be supported by the strategic policies which enables schools, teachers, parents, and students to conduct effective online learning. The government should provide facilities which support the online learning such as the stable internet connection, the availability of teaching and learning sites and encouragement for teachers, parents and students so that the online learning process can be conducted effectively.

The regulation issued by the government applies to all level educational units including SMK Budisatrya Medan. During the distance learning, there are many ways of carrying out the teaching and learning process. Some can share information, the course materials, and the assignments by *WhatsApp Messenger*, video call through *Zoom Meeting*, or other online platforms¹³. There are many digital classes that can be used in online learning such as *Rumah Belajar*, *Kahoot*, *Edmodo*, and *Google Classroom*.

SMK Budisatrya Medan is one of schools in Medan which conducting online learning since the first time the regulation was issued. The online learning platform used are *Google Classroom*, *Google Meet*, and *Zoom Meeting*. This study will be focused on the use of *Google Classroom* in teaching and learning English.

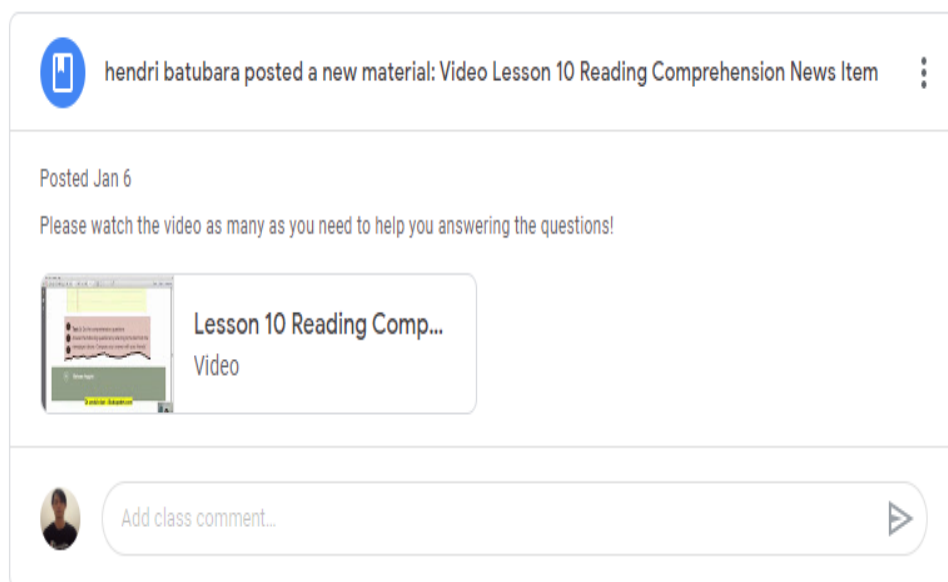
Google Classroom is a free service for schools, non-profits and anyone with a personal *Google* account. It enables teachers to create online classes, distribute assignments, communicate and organized the English learning. Teacher can create announcements and paperless assignments for students and students can submit their assignments in the folder provided by the teacher in the application. The types of file that can be submitted in this application are also vary such as *doc*, *pdf*, *ppt*, *xl*, *jpeg*, *mp3* or even *mp4*.

Google Classroom provides several features that support the teaching and learning. They are: (1) Assignment: provides advantages for teachers to assign the tasks online. When the students complete the assignment, they can submit it in this part with various types of files; (2) Question: This feature enables teachers to conduct the paperless assessment. Students can do the assessment directly from their devices as

¹³Okmawati, "The Use of Google Classroom during Pandemic."

soon as the teacher share it; (3) Material: this feature helps teachers to share their materials just by uploading them here. The students can have the materials just by downloading them; (4) Topic: this feature lets teachers to classify the lesson easily by giving the topic of the lesson; (5) Re-use post: when the teachers need to repost the previous announcement, they can easily do it by using this feature. So, teachers do not need to retype the announcement; (6) Stream: this feature enables teachers to communicate with students; (7) Comment: This feature consists of two types namely class comment and private comment. Class comment can be used when teachers need to interact with all class members. Meanwhile, the private comment is used when the students need to communicate privately; (8) Raring (grading): this app supports different assessment methods. Teachers can monitor the progress of each students on every assignment they make.

Lesson 10 (Semester 2) Friday 8 Januari 2021 ⋮



Picture 1. The teacher posted a lesson in form of video.

Google Classroom is considered as an effective online learning platform. The effectiveness can be viewed from the message recipients, the content, communication media, message format, sources, and the timing¹⁴. The messages posted in *Google Classroom* are directly sent to the students' accounts which are registered in the application. The contents can be clearer because the application guides the teachers in posting the learning materials.

This application also connected to various learning sources which ease the teachers and students to access the learning materials. Teachers and students can interact each other through the chatting section provided by the application. Teachers can limit the time for students to submit their assignments and the time limitation does

¹⁴ Okmawati.

not apply to the teacher. So, teachers can post or review anytime they need. The ease of access, usefulness, communication and the instructional delivery provided by *Google Classroom* satisfied the students¹⁵.

Google Classroom is used in online learning because of some reasons¹⁶. Firstly, most of EFL students agreed that *Google Classroom* gave students many uses that other apps did not have, such as it can be used in other classes, increase students' skills, and the activities are useful. Secondly, most of EFL students agreed that this app is easy to use because the instructions are clear and easy to submit multiple tasks. Thirdly, most of EFL students can access this app easily because *Google Classroom* is available on android, windows, and *IOS*.

The previous studies showed that the use of *Google Classroom* can enhance the online teaching and learning process. This current study is trying to investigate the teaching and learning English using *Google Classroom* at SMK Budisatrya Medan during Covid-19 pandemic. Since there is still no any considerable study which has been done in terms of teaching and learning English through *Google Classroom*¹⁷. Thus, this current study is needed to be conducted.

B. Methods

This study belongs to descriptive study. This study tries to describe the teaching and learning English using *Google Classroom* at SMK Budisatrya Medan during the Covid-19 pandemic. The participants of this study are two English teachers and all students (280 students) from three different grades (X, XI, XII) which come from three different departments (Accounting & Financial Institution, Automation & Office Management, and Multimedia). In this research the random sampling method is used to obtain a representative sample.

The collecting data process is done by distributing questionnaire with the help of *Google Form* by sharing the link to the students. The data analysis is done by using percentage analysis technique and the formula are as follow:

$$\text{Percentage (\%)} = F/N \times 100\%$$

Where F represents the frequency and N represents the research subject.

C. Result and Discussion

The results of this study consist of two parts namely the English teaching and the English learning using *Google Classroom*. The results of the study are presented as follows:

1. The English Teaching using *Google Classroom*.

In order to provide the description about the English teaching using *Google Classroom*, the questionnaire was distributed to the two English teachers of SMK Budisatrya Medan. Based on the data of this study, it can be seen that the use of *Google*

¹⁵Salam, "The Students' Use of *Google Classroom* in Learning English."

¹⁶Astuti and Indriani, "The EFL Students Perceptions in Using *Google Classroom* for English Learning during Pandemic."

¹⁷Islam and Ferdousi, "Techno-Aide *Google Classroom* for Learning English: Prospects & Challenges."

Classroom helps teachers in delivering the lessons, assignment and scoring the students' works. It can be seen from Table 1.

Table 1. The English teaching using *Google Classroom*.

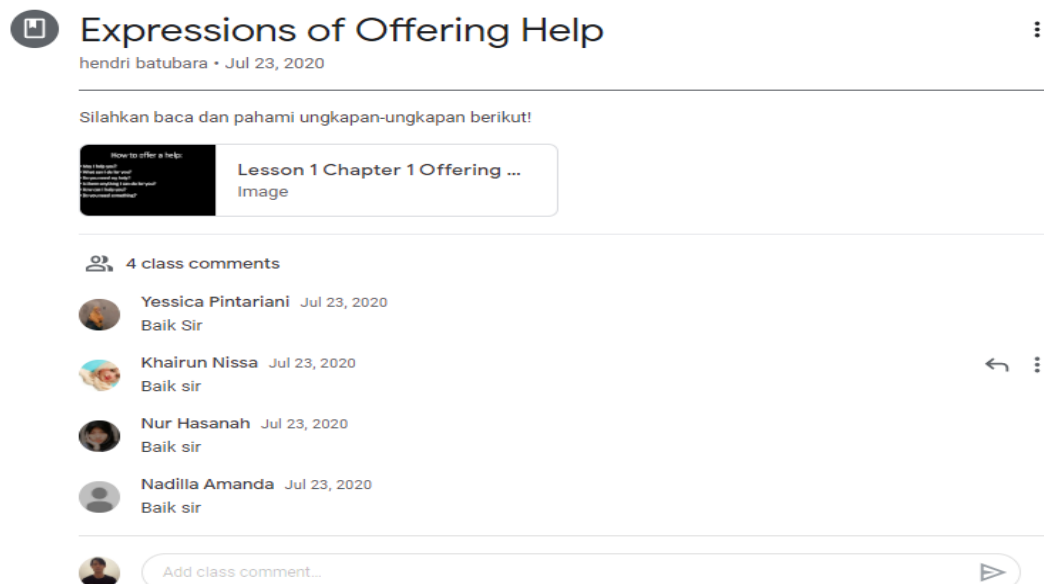
Statements	Frequency	Percentage
Easy to distribute the course materials	2	100%
Easy to distribute the assignments	2	100%
Easy to operate	2	100%
Easy to review or check the students' works	2	100%
Easy to interact with students	0	0%
Engaging students and productive discussion	0	0%
Saving time	2	100%
Providing supports from various learning sources	2	100%

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the use of *Google Classroom* in English teaching provides benefits for the teachers. They can distribute the course materials and the assignments easily to the students. The students are notified directly after the materials and the assignments were posted. Teachers can operate the app easily, helps them in finding the best course materials since the app is linked to various learning sources from internet. Teachers can also review or check the students' work easily because *Google Classroom* provides facility to check the students' answers automatically.

The screenshot displays the Google Classroom interface. On the left, a sidebar lists lessons from Lesson 7 to Lesson 17. The main content area shows details for Lesson 17, titled 'Lesson 17 Monday April 19 2021'. Below the title, there are three items: an assignment 'Assignment Lesson 17 Biography Text' due on May 2, 11:59 PM; a video 'Video Lesson 17 Reading Comprehension Bi...' posted on April 19; and an attendance list 'Attendance List Lesson 17 Biography Text' due on May 2, 11:59 PM. Below this, Lesson 16 is shown, titled 'Lesson 16 Monday March 29 2021', with an assignment 'Assignment Lesson 16 Reading Comprehens...' due on April 11, 11:59 PM, and an attendance list 'Attendance List Lesson 16 Reading Compre...' due on April 11, 11:59 PM.

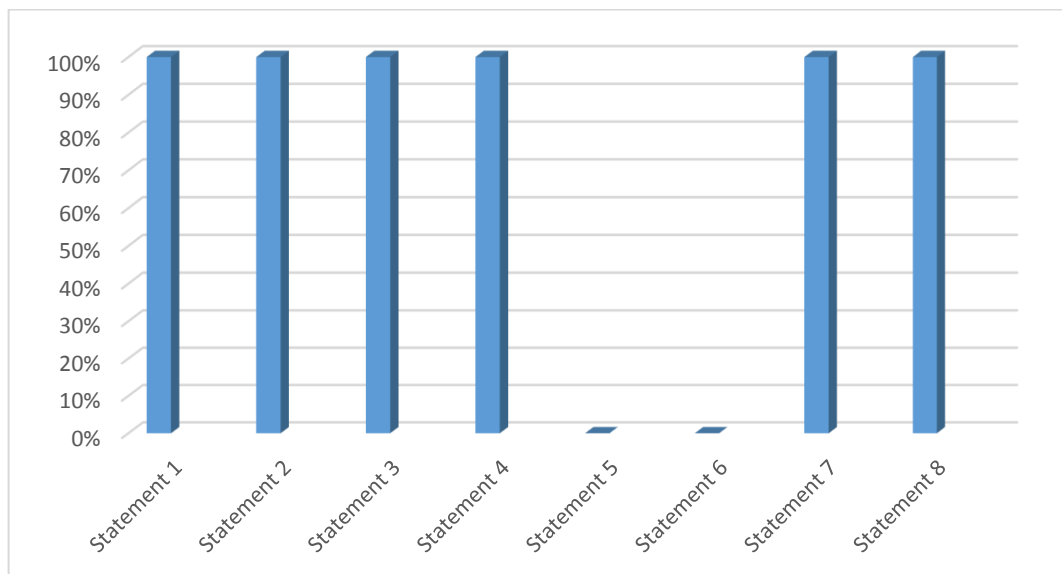
Picture 2. The lesson posted by teachers.

However, the use of Google Classroom in English teaching does not provide the similar benefit to the aspect of students' interaction and engagement in discussion. The data showed that only few students involved in discussion especially those who are considered to be the high-rank students. Meanwhile, students with low-rank seems to be more passive. Some others cannot interact because they do not have facilities needed such as mobile phone/computer and sufficient internet connection. This is in line with the previous study which showed that some problems such as the devices and poor internet connection made students felt less motivated, and passive in online learning¹⁸.



Pictures 3. Students give comments on the lesson.

¹⁸Zboun and Farrah, "Students Perspectives of Online Language Learning during Corona Pandemic: Benefits and Challenges."



Picture 4. The English teaching using *Google Classroom*.

In order to help students who are constrained with the device and internet connection, the English teachers encouraged them to come to school (by following the health protocol) to get an additional lesson so that they can catch up with the lesson. However, this effort is considered unable to solve the problem because only few students come to school.






2. The English Learning using *Google Classroom*.

The data about the English learning using *Google Classroom* was obtained from the questionnaire distributed to the students. They were asked to give their opinion about several statements. The results show that some students, the English learning using *Google Classroom* is considered to be the new and practical way of learning. Meanwhile, other students think that learning English using *Google Classroom* frustrated them. It can be seen from the following table.

Table 2. The English learning using *Google Classroom*.

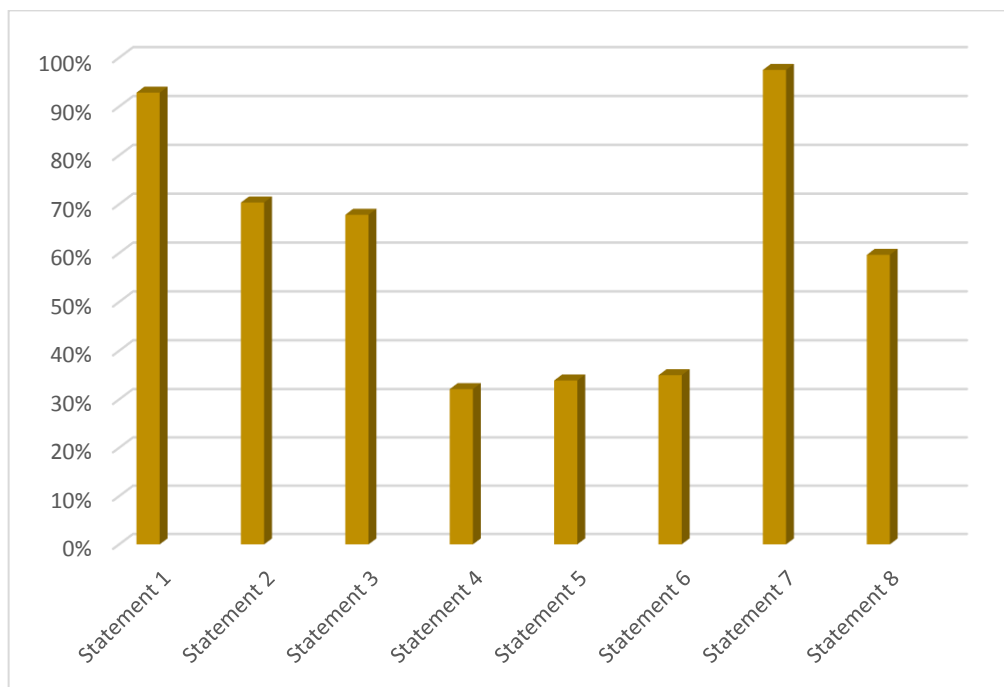
Statements	Frequency	Percentage
Easy to access the course materials	260	92.85%
Easy to submit the assignments	197	70.35%
Easy to operate	190	67.85%
Easy to send feedback	90	32.14%
Comfortable communication channel	95	33.92%
Friendly and supportive discussion	98	35%
Flexible time	273	97.50%
Providing various learning sources	167	59.64%

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that 92.85% (260 students) think that they can access the course materials easily. The percentage shows that the majority of students have the devices and the internet connection to access the course materials through *Google Classroom*. Meanwhile, there are 20 students who cannot join the online learning activities due to the lack of facilities.

Sort by last name ▾		May 2 Assignme nt Lesso... out of 100	May 2 Attendanc e List...	Apr 11 Assignme nt Lesso... out of 100
	Class average		N/A	100
	Rifqi Akram	Missing	Turned in	—/100 Done late
	Rahmad Amy	Missing	Missing	Missing
	Dwi Andira	Missing	Turned in	Missing
	Suryani Aqilah	Missing	Missing	Missing

Pictures 5. Some students missed the lesson.

There are 197 students (70.35) who think that by using *Google Classroom*, they can submit the assignments easily because the application provides feature that enable the users to upload various types of file. However, there are 83 students (29.65%) cannot submit their assignments by using *Google Classroom*. It is because they do not know how to use the feature well.



Picture 6. The English learning using Google Classroom.

Google Classroom as an online learning platform provides ease for the users to operate it. It is shown by the data that there are 190 students (67.85%) say that the application is easy to operate. This result shows that the majority of students are able to operate the app. But, there are still 90 students (32.15%) cannot use the application. This was because they did not use *Google Classroom* in the previous class. They used different online learning platform such as *WhatsApp* and *Telegram*.

Most of students (67.86%) tell that sending feedback (questions or opinion) is difficult. It is caused by their English teacher deactivated the feature which enables students to communicate using *Google Classroom*. This action is done by the teacher

to avoid the useless communication in the application. The teacher encourages the students to use messaging app such as *WhatsApp Messenger* for asking questions, giving opinion or comments.

There are 33.92% (95 students) who say that *Google Classroom* makes them feel comfortable to communicate. Meanwhile, there are 66.08% (185 students) say that they do not feel comfortable using the app to communicate. They prefer to use messenger application such as *WhatsApp Messenger* to communicate.

Most of the students (65%) say that they cannot follow the discussion because the teachers deactivated the communication feature in the *Google Classroom*. This was done by the teacher to avoid unnecessary communication in the app. So, the teacher welcomes the students to discuss the lesson in other application.

The English learning through *Google Classroom* is considered by the students as flexible learning. It can be seen from Table 1 which showed that there are 273 students (97.50%) who say that time of learning using *Google Classroom* is flexible. They can access the course materials and the assignments anytime they can. It helps students with the lack of facilities to learn as well as possible by providing them enough time to learn.

Google Classroom has a feature that enables the users to share any kinds of files such as pictures, audios, and videos. The users also can share links from various internet sites which help students to learn from various learning sources. However, there are still 113 students (40.35%) who cannot access those various sources due to the lack of facilities. Some of them cannot open the videos or links which are shared by teachers because the poor internet connection or the limited storage in their devices.

Teaching and learning English through *Google Classroom* provides ease for both teachers and students in accessing the course materials and the assignment. *Google Classroom* has several features such as *Material, Assignment, Question, Topic* and *Reuse Post*. Those features give advantages for teachers to share materials, assign the task, conduct an assessment, classify the lesson which also help the students to understand the materials, submit the tasks easily, and get feedback from their teachers. This finding is consistent with the previous study which showed that the *Google Classroom* provided ease in accessing materials, submitting assignments and receiving tasks from teachers¹⁹.

Google Classroom is relatively easy to operate because the format is simple. However, it is important for teachers to introduce and explain about how to use the app in the first session. So that students who are not familiar with the app can operate it optimally.

Although the *Google Classroom* has some features such as *Stream* and *Comment*, the use of this app as communication is relatively ineffective. Teachers and students prefer to use other messaging apps to communicate or discuss the lesson. *Google Classroom* is considered to be more effective for assigning tasks. This finding is in line with previous study which showed that online learning with *Google Classroom* is only

¹⁹Salam, "The Students' Use of Google Classroom in Learning English."

effective for giving assignments and quizzes to students²⁰. The contrastive study showed that by using *Google Classroom*, teachers and students can be involved in interactive communication²¹.

Teaching and learning English using *Google Classroom* has presented significant change in education. Teaching and learning process is now conducted in flexible time. The term of *school-hours* is no longer applied. Students can access the materials and submit their assignments anytime they can. Students can learn anywhere and anytime²².

Teaching and learning English by using *Google Classroom* enriches the learning materials for students. Teachers can write the explanation and it can be supported by photos, audios, or videos that can be obtained from various learning sources such as websites or even *YouTube*. This in line with previous study which showed that there is significant different between teaching not using *Google Classroom* and using it²³.

However, students who has no suitable devices (such as smartphone or computer) and/ or has poor internet connection are constrained to access the learning materials and tasks posted in *Google Classroom*. Sometimes they cannot download the materials or upload their assignments because of the low speed of internet²⁴. It is a fact that there are still some students who cannot afford the required facilities to follow the online learning. In order to solve this problem, some students are required to go to internet shop, or asking help from their friends or relatives to lend them smartphones or computers. Other students have to come to school to get their materials/assignment and submit their tasks.

D. Conclusion

This study is aimed at describing the teaching and learning English by using *Google Classroom* during Covid-19 pandemic. The online learning is the only solution to decrease the spread of the virus. The online learning has resulted the significant challenges in education. Teachers and students have struggled to keep the teaching and learning going well.

Teaching and learning English by using *Google Classroom* gives advantages for both teachers and students. The advantages are the ease of access, easy to operate, flexible time of teaching and learning, and supporting various learning sources. However, the teaching and learning using *Google Classroom* cannot be done optimally because of the lack of facilities experienced by some students and unsupportive communication feature of the application.

In line with the finding of this study, there are some points that can be suggested. Firstly, English teachers are needed to train students about how to use the

²⁰Efriana, "Problems of Online Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic in EFL Classroom and the Solution."

²¹Sukmawati and Nensia, "The Role of Google Classroom in ELT."

²²Sholah, "Teaching and Learning English Using Google Classroom for Indonesian Learners."

²³Isda et al., "The Effectiveness of Google Classroom in Teaching English during Covid-19 at SMA N 1 M Payed."

²⁴Islam and Ferdousi, "Techno-Aide Google Classroom for Learning English: Prospects & Challenges."

Google Classroom in the first session. The course materials should be arranged comprehensively. Secondly, the app developers are suggested to improve the features which enable users to communicate more interactively and ensure the download and upload processes can be done with the low internet connection. Thirdly, the government and stakeholders are suggested to provide proper facilities to help students who cannot afford the required instruments for online learning.

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