

STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE APPLICATION OF GOOGLE CLASSROOM AS LEARNING AID IN EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

The non-conductive teaching and learning process in EFL Classroom at state Islamic university, Mataram in academic year 2018/2019 due to the earthquake strike made the university and lecturer thought to manage the class. As also being regulated by the university, the lecturer implemented blended-flipped class model using Google classroom application to teach the introduction to English linguistics (IEL) subject. Due to its effectiveness, the lecturer was intended to study the perception on 1) the students' attitude towards the application of Google classroom as well as how students feel when operating the application, 2) the advantage of Google classroom, and 3) the future behavioral intention towards Google classroom among 80 students from five different classes who attended IEL class. The results were: 1) Google classroom was significant as tool in learning IEL subject specifically and language learning globally, 2) it was as the aid to overcome the non-conductive classroom situation at English Education Department (Tadris Bahasa Inggris) at UIN Mataram, and 3) it increased students' engagement in learning through Google classroom discussions before the class to improve students readiness in class further discussion.

Keywords: Perception, Google Classroom, EFL

Introduction

The teaching and learning process in Lombok in the academic year 2018/2019 was not running well due to more than 500 earthquakes stroke the island. The similar situation also influenced the teaching and learning process at *Tadris Bahasa Inggris* (TBI) State Islamic University, Mataram (UIN Mataram). All of TBI department classrooms were damaged and were not safe to be used as shelter for students to learn. On the other hand, the unpredictable aftershocks made some students afraid to learn inside the building because of the trauma. Furthermore, the university as well as lecturer tried to find solution to maintain the teaching and learning process and keep the students to learn. Some solutions that were implemented by the

university were setting many huge tents as shelters for students to learn, renting another institution building as university classrooms, and providing chance for lecturers to implement blended learning. Blended learning is a model of learning that combine the superiority of face-to-face or direct meeting learning and virtual learning (Husamah, 2014).

The regulation of the application of blended learning at State Islamic University had been initiated by the e-learning workshop which introduced Google classroom to lecturers as option when in-class teaching and learning process was not able to conduct. Moreover, the English lecturer used it as mean to facilitate the teaching of introduction to English linguistics class in flipped class model. There are some definitions of flipped classroom according to some experts. Al-Harbi and Alshumaimeri (2016) stated that the flipped classroom is pedagogical model where content of the lesson is learnt in the house by using technology, giving chance for the lecturer to use class time for actuating lesson content, doing exercise, holding discussion, or finishing project. Another idea was raised by Doman and Webb (2017). They assert that the teacher existence is no longer so much needed in flipped classroom. The teacher role are as facilitator and mentor for students and is available outside the classroom to help to answer their inquiries. To add to that, learning becomes collaborative since students can use Web 2.0 technologies to communicate and exchange information with their teachers as well as their peers. While Dunn, J. (2014) states that the flipped class is a pedagogical approach where the students' individual performance tends to be more promoted than the group performance, and it results the dynamic movements and interactive learning situation where the lecturer focuses on guiding to apply the lesson concepts as well as engaging creatively in subject matter. Furthermore, positive impact of the implementation of flipped classroom has been mentioned in a research by Sarparaje (2018). He states the students love to use flipped class model which enabled them to improve English performance and communicative experience. Hence, flipped class can be understood as providing opportunities to the students to acquire the upcoming learnt knowledge at home by using technology, and later practice it inside the classroom with the lecturer's supervision. Then, Google classroom may be used as flipped class model mean to share the material.

Google classroom is an application which has been synonymous with State Islamic University, Mataram lecturers as well as the students. This application has been viewed as important platform for data sharing, communication, and online contact between students-lecturer and students-students as well as learning media in EFL classroom in which Google Classroom can be operated at students' condition. This application is freely downloadable from the play store for those who are using mobile phone to operate, and directly operates from Google for those who use computer when it is connected to internet. Moreover, students nowadays are inseparable from the gadgets and notebooks. This condition supports the use of Google classroom as medium for transferring knowledge and students' learning since it is installable in the students' gadgets.

According to KKNI based curriculum, the undergraduates students in *Tadris Bahasa Inggris* department need to possess the comprehension of introduction to English

linguistics (IEL) subjects which comprises many sub-subjects in micro-skills and micro-skills in linguistics including phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and so on. Those many materials need serious supervision and attention from the lecturer when the students learn. It means that the existence of lecturer's assistance in the same place with the students is very important. Otherwise, the situation at TBI department of UIN Mataram did not fully give the opportunity for students to be guided by the lecturer all the time to learn inside the class. Hence, Google classroom had made the lecturer assistance possible not only in class but also inside the application.

The students who are shy and have difficulties to express ideas inside the class needs to be helped in order to improve their engagement in IEL class. Their characters which tend to be behind the table performance need place to share their ideas not in face-to-face model. Hence, Google classroom also provides the space for them to discuss freely inside it by chatting. Students had the opportunity to share their knowledge as responses freely and the lecturer gave feedback and comments, began to raise new issues, or posted queries (Dunlap, 2006).

Inside Google classroom, students has freedom to access every information and queries shared and develop ideas from the provided topic. The lecturer's role in this process is as the assessor that facilitates students with checking and commenting on the students' responses. This process shows as an active participation in the interchange of the conversation. The good thing that is existed in the application is that students are not directly face-to-face meet others which may reduce students' anxiety to express their ideas. Moreover, students are able to attach any pictures or graphic or link as their ideas representatives to answer or response the topic discussed through the attachments given. This can be the students' encouragement to enjoy any reading sources and train them to generate ideas by exploring the knowledge available offline and online. In fact, they tend to participate more and actively sharing attachments. Then, students' internal confidence in has been gradually improved in real classroom activity lesson as they already have a lot of ideas or references to express and share like what they did in the Google classroom platform.

Although Google classroom is newly used for the subject, students are particularly promoted to its use in their learning. Consequently, it means the application of Google classroom in tertiary EFL classroom takes into consideration students' needs of learning the subjects. This application proposes students' active participations which the students may apply this at the students' paced and students may decide on what they will learn and how they will do it. The present study intends to identify the students' perceptions on the application of Google classroom as learning aid in Introduction to linguistics class with a flipped class learning model. The perceptions in this case include how they feel when operating the application which relates to its comfort, and the ease of operation, its advantage, the students' future attitude and behavioral intention towards the use of Google classroom.

A positive feedback on the implementation of Google classroom was presented by Khalil (2018) in his research about EFL students' perception towards using Google

docs and Google classroom as online collaborative tool in learning grammar. The research mentions that Google Classroom enables teachers to make, deliver, and evaluate students' assignments without paper in the grammar course and after doing so for the aim to seek for the effectiveness of both applications in building a collaborative learning environment and promoting the principles of flipped class model. The findings suggested that according to the students, Google Applications helped to establish collaborative learning environment since they support teacher-to-student and student-to-student interactions and the majority of the participants prefer using such applications for future courses given that students can take advantage from the presence of teacher written feedback and the accessibility to course materials. In addition, a research done by Iftakhar (2016) entitled Google classroom: What works and how? stated that Google classroom provides a vital chance to promote blended learning and professional development. Also, it support the embodying 21st century skill to students.

Another positive response was also presented in a research about the application of google classroom as an aid for teaching and learning by Shaharane, et.al (2015). The research result described that all students were enjoying to use the Google classroom that was used inside the class with the all scores were above averages. It was because that Google classroom was easy to access, perceived usefulness, provided interaction and communication, the instructions was delivered clearly in the application. Similar ideas had been also written in a study by Al-Marooif et.al (2015) about the students acceptance of Google classroom: an exploratory study using PLS-SEM approach. The study proved that Google classroom provided ease in operation and showed usefulness that further influence positive behavioral intention for the students.

On the other hand, some researches did not show positive feedbacks and perceptions from the users. Such as the study that was done by Rosyatawati (2018) under the title a survey of students' perception in using Google classroom in English language education department of Islamic university of Indonesia. The result of the study said that 1) it was time consuming to submit the assignment, 2) students tended to use it for chatting rather than learning, and 3) since the students used hand phone, they complained that it has small screen size that made them difficult to navigate and type.

Due to different result on studies that were conducted as described before. Hence, this study was aimed to provide some beneficial insights on how the Google classroom application can be beneficial for helping teacher to teach and students for learning in such situation where no well constructed building present and unpredictable situation might come up. Also, it would check how well this application help students to learn introduction to linguistics subject.

Methodology

Generally, the present study is directed to examine the application of Google classroom as aid to help both teacher to teach the introduction to English linguistics subject and students to boost learning for not depending only from the inside class process but also outside or using flipped class method. Also, this study wants to know how Google classroom could help the students to develop their language learning. Besides, it also investigates the significance of applying the software and defines its applicability based on students' perceptions. Moreover, the study is backed up by some relevant and related literature reviews about the use of Google classroom in flipped class method with blended learning strategy and its perceptions. Hence, this part depicts the research method that was used to complete this study.

Research approach is very import and play crucial role to improve the research validity (Cresswell, 2007). Therefore, this study is a descriptive quantitative research which it wants to give a systematic empirical investigation of the research area. Moreover, this research approach is very beneficial and relevant to grab the insight of understanding to the variable as being presented in the research problems. Furthermore, this quantitative research approach is more suitable than the qualitative approach.

In the present study, the design of this research is a survey research. This research design is one of the most popular methods in non-experimental research. In general, the survey research is done by collecting data from the samples or population to know and describe the analyzed items such as perceptions, attitudes, opinion, beliefs, and behavior. Therefore, this research design is really match with the objectives of this study.

The data collection technique was done by sharing questionnaires to second semester students of English department in State Islamic University of Mataram. The samples were taken from five different classes and the researcher is their teacher and has the access to conduct the survey. The reason to choose this data collection technique was because this technique normally gave a high rate of response. In addition, the cost to implement it is quiet low. In addition, it gives the possibility for the students (samples) to ask any questions to gain better explanation from the researcher before they complete the questionnaires.

The respondents or the sample of this proposed study were the second semester students of English department in State Islamic University of Mataram. These students are in regular class and joining introduction to English linguistics (IEL) class. The students' mother tongue is mostly Sasak language and Bahasa Indonesia. In this research, the questionnaires were administered to the students in order to know their perceptions on the application of the teaching technique to their introduction to English linguistics subject. The questions in the questionnaires were the adaptation from previous studies and matching them with the needs of this study. The formulation of the questions were designed to make the respondents easier to understand and efficient to finish with only 15-17 minutes needed. The result of the questionnaires was analyzed by SPSS to present the descriptive statistics of the data.

The subjects of this study were 80 students whom being selected from three different IEL classes and were able to participate actively throughout this research. Before, the initial study has also been done to 20 students who were randomly selected from two other classes in order to check the reliability of the research instrument in this study. As shown by the result of the initial study, every items existed in the research instruments has high reliability and they were able to used in the real study.

The way to choose the participants as sample was using purposive sampling that it was suitable with the objective of the research. The finding of the research would be able to presents some ideas on students perception on the application of Google classroom as learning aid in EFL classroom which further maybe could be generalized into in language learning. In general, all the collected information were discussed and synthesized accordingly. This step was done as medium to formulate the conclusion based on the research findings. Herewith, the total of each question in questionnaire were reported together with the overall percentage of the sample. The results of the findings were displayed in the form of means, modes (frequencies), percentage, and the standard deviations.

Findings

The finding of this study was directed to students' perceptions on the use of Google classroom as learning aid in EFL classroom. Furthermore, it would contribute to know whether or not this application useful for future use as aid for lecturer to improve students' language learning. The acquired data was processed in SPSS 22.0 to get the descriptive analysis. The obtained analysis included some data in range of the percentage, mode (frequency), mean and standard deviation. The standard deviation was used to identify the students' perception level on the use of Google classroom as an aid in EFL classroom. The aspects of the data were grouped into three categories, they are: 1) the students' attitude towards the application of Google classroom and how the students feel when operating the application, 2) the advantage of Google classroom, and 3) the future behavioral intention towards Google classroom.

The Analysis of the Questionnaire

The Attitude towards Google Classroom and the Students' Feeling when Using the Application

A descriptive analysis that comprised percentages, mode (frequency), mean and standard deviation were employed in order to check the level of students' Attitude towards the application of Google classroom and the students' feeling when operating the application. The descriptive analysis result is shown in the following table.

Table 1. The Attitude towards Google Classroom and the Students Feeling when Using the Application

No	Attitude	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Interp
1	Learning IEL via Google classroom is a nice idea			15 (18.8%)	48 (60%)	17 (21.2%)	4.03	High
2	Learning IEL via Google classroom is a positive idea			8 (10%)	44 (55%)	28 (35%)	4.25	High
3	Learning how to use the Google classroom was easy				36 (45%)	44 (55%)	4.55	High
4	Google classroom was easy to be used				12 (15%)	68 (85%)	4.85	High
5	Google classroom favored faster knowledge sharing			2 (2.5%)	30 (37.5%)	48 (60%)	4.58	High
6	It is easy to discuss the passed information in Google classroom			8 (10%)	24 (30%)	48 (60%)	4.50	High
7	My interaction in Google classroom was clear			17 (21.2%)	39 (48.8%)	24 (30%)	4.09	High
8	My interaction in Google classroom was understandable			16 (20%)	40 (50%)	24 (30%)	4.10	High
9	It was easy for me to become skillful in discovering information in Google classroom			8 (10%)	36 (45%)	36 (45%)	4.35	High
10	Learning IEL using Google classroom is comfortable for me			6 (7.5%)	44 (55%)	30 (37.5%)	4.30	High
11	Google classroom				64	16	4.20	High

	is comfortable for academic engagement purposes.			(80%)	(20%)		
12	Google classroom allowed me to academically engage with peers and lecturers at any time and any place	1 (1.3%)	7 (8.7%)	48 (60%)	24 (30%)	4.16	High
Total						4.33	High

The above table, table 1, explained that the questionnaire was digging out information in relation with the students' attitude toward the application of Google classroom. Also, the table showed how the students felt the comfort when using the application. The interpretation of the mean score of the questionnaire showed high level. The lowest mean of the questionnaire item was the Learning IEL via Google classroom is a nice idea. Its mean is 4.03. The frequencies stated that 15 students were not sure that the application will be applicable for teaching Introduction to English Linguistics (IEL), the 48 students were agree (60%), and about 17 students or 21.25% were strongly agree.

The highest score from the items is that the Google classroom is easy to be used with mean score 4.85. There were 12 students (15%) were agree and the 68% (85 students) were strongly agree. The conclusion of the data which describe the students attitude towards the use of Google classroom and how they feel when operating the application were scored high level (with mean = 4.33)

The Advantage of Google Classroom

In relation with the advantage of Google classroom, the result of statistical analysis presented data in sub-categories: mode (frequency), percentages, mean and standard deviation. The detail results of the descriptive analysis is displayed in the following table.

Table 2. The Advantage of Google Classroom

No	Attitude	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Interp.
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13	I found that Google classroom is useful in my IEL class	3 (3.75%)	49 (61.25%)	28 (35%)	4.31	High	
14	The use of Google classroom increased my language learning productively in IEL class	4 (5%)	52 (65%)	24 (30%)	4.25	High	
15	Using google classroom was effectively improve the language learning in IEL class	12 (15%)	52 (65%)	16 (20%)	4.05	High	
16	My performance in IEL class was improved by the use of Google classroom	3 (3.75%)	10 (12.5%)	45 (56.25%)	22 (27.5%)	4.00	High
17	My performance in IEL class has improved by the use of Google classroom	8 (10%)	56 (70%)	16 (20%)	4.10	High	
18	Interaction via Google classroom helped me to become active in IEL	2 (2.5%)	10 (12.5%)	44 (55%)	24 (30%)	4.08	High

class						
19	Interaction via Google classroom helped me to increase my confidence level in IEL activity	4 (5%)	48 (60%)	28 (35%)	4.30	High
20	Google classroom helped me to keep learning IEL subject though the classroom was not in well situation	4 (5%)	39 (48.75%)	37 (46.25%)	4.41	High
Total					4.19	High

The above table (table 2) depicted that all items in the questionnaire showed high level rate for the advantage of Google classroom. The highest mean of the questionnaire item is 4.41 for the item of Google classroom helped me to keep learning IEL subject though the classroom was not in well situation. The frequency were 4 students (5%) were uncertain, 39 students or equal to 48.75% were agree and it was about 46.25% amounted 37 students were strongly agree.

On the other hand, the lowest mean score was the item about the performance of the students in IEL was improved by the use of Google classroom with overall mean 4.00. This item showed that 3 students (3.75%) were disagree, 10 students or 12.5% were not really sure with the question item, 45 students were agree, and the 27.5% or 22 students were strongly agree.

Referring to all data included in the advantage of the Google classroom, the overall mean rated high since the mean was 4.19.

The Behavioral Intention towards Google Classroom

The third category of the analysis was about the behavioral intention towards the application of Google classroom in the future. The results of descriptive analysis are described in the following table.

Table 3. The Behavioral Intention towards Google Classroom

No	Attitude	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Interp.
21	In the future, I will use Google classroom in learning language for any subjects			8 (10%)	40 (50%)	32 (40%)	4.30	High
22	I will not stop to use Google classroom in my future language learning				27 (33.75%)	32 (66.25%)	4.66	High
Total							4.48	High

The above table showed that the overall mean for the behavioral intention towards classroom was 4.48 which means having high level rate. The lowest mean score was 4.30 that explained the students behavioral intention to use Google classroom in learning language for any subjects. In this questionnaire item, 8 students (10%) were neutral, 40 students or (50%) were agree, and 32 participants (40%) were strongly agree. While, the highest mean in the table was 4.66 for students intention to use Google classroom in learning language learning for any subjects. The 27 students or about 33.75% were agree and 32 students or about 66.25% were strongly agree.

The conclusion of the findings described that the students' attitude towards Google classroom on what the students feel when using the application, the advantages of Google classroom and the students' future behavior towards Google classroom were all at the high rating. This data confirmed that the use of Google Classroom as a learning aid for teaching Introduction to English Linguistics at TBI Department of State Islamic University, Mataram had been significant and highly applied for future implementation as it did help the EFL learners to improve the language learning.

Discussion

According to the obtained data which are stated in the previous chapter, the discussion in the present study is also presented into three categories: 1) the students' attitude towards the application of Google classroom and how the students feel when operating the application, 2) the advantage of Google classroom, and 3) the future behavioral intention towards Google classroom.

First, the students' attitude towards the application of Google classroom and how the students feel when operating the application. The overall result depicted that the students had positive high level attitude towards the use of Google classroom as aid for learning in Introduction of English Linguistics class at TBI department of UIN Mataram. It provided very high level on the attitudes among the participants because of the operating ease of this application, easy to learn the features of the application,

a quick knowledge sharing and helped to discuss the passed or shared information easily. The result of the present study supports the statements that were made by Khalil (2018), Shaharane et.al (2015), and Al-Marroof et.al (2015). Moreover, the students' statement on the use of Google classroom that make students confidence to interact with other strengthen the idea of Eckhaus (2018) the presence of technology support students to collaboratively communicate with others.

Second, the advantage of Google classroom for teaching and learning in IEL subject at TBI department of UIN Mataram showed also a high mean score. Based on the data in the questionnaire, this could be found that the advantage of this application was improving students' confidence to use the foreign language that is English, triggering students to be more active in all language activities, and surely help them to learn the materials better before the class. The application highly helped the students especially with non-conducive classroom building to prepare the learning materials before coming to the class by learning through materials in Google classroom.

Third, the IEL class students' behavioral intentions towards Google classroom were at the high level. The highest behavioral intention pictured in the descriptive analysis was that, the students in the future will not stop to use Google classroom for their language learning. The application, the Google classroom, can also be a source or students' library to obtain information and knowledge from various subjects or related subjects the students learn as they were uploaded and shared that the students may learned either individually or together. The process of knowledge sharing will be faster if it is done online as also being mentioned by Sheard and Lynch (2003). They explained if the online teaching process will enable students to reach the information anytime anywhere when it is managed and designed well by the lecturer, and it will enable students to give feedback to various learning needs.

Conclusion

From the discussion chapter, the conclusion can be drawn into three main findings, they are: Firstly, Google classroom was significant as a beneficial tool in learning introduction to English linguistics subject specifically and language learning globally. Secondly, it was as the aid to overcome the non-conducive classroom situation at TBI Department at UIN Mataram. Thirdly, it increased students' engagement in learning through Google classroom discussions before the class to improve students readiness in class further discussion. This study was successfully determine the students' attitudes, its advantage and students' behavioral intention towards the application of Google classroom with the findings exhibited were all at the high levels. The study provided the effects for students, lecturers and the university.

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