

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to investigate the EFL learners' challenges of Zoom platform use in listening class during COVID-19. This chapter describes the background of the study, the scope of the study, the research question, and the purpose of the study. Moreover, it includes the significance of the study and the definition of the key terms used in this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Since many schools and universities adopted remote-class delivery in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Zoom classes have become the new norm among students and educators. Compared to previous remote class experiences such as online classes and online degree programs, the current Zoom class structure has two different features. First, it is a temporary strategy to hold Zoom classes and other video-meeting technologies to practice social distancing to lessen the severe consequences of the current pandemic. Secondly, isolation and a potentially difficult home environment become evident stressors because of the influence of the pandemic (Zhang, 2020).

The sudden COVID-19 pandemic requires educators and learners to adopt online learning. Current conditions are urgent for innovation and adaptation related to the use of available technology to support the learning process (Ahmed, Shehata and Hassanien, 2020). The practice requires educators and students to interact and transfer knowledge online. Online learning can take advantage of platforms in the form of applications, websites, social networks and learning

management systems (Gunawan et al., 2020). These various platforms, especially the Zoom platform application, can be used to support knowledge transfer supported by various discussion techniques and others.

Online media has many benefits, one of which supports the online learning process between students and teachers (Graham & Misanchuk, 2004). Different studies reveal that online courses have been found to be conducive to students who favor self-regulated learning (You & Kang, 2014). The most important thing to discuss is that there is an ample opportunity to make students have cognitive and metacognitive strategies to accomplish their learning goal. Besides they need not have additional preparation to get themselves connected online and so at any circumstances they can be ready to attend class disregarding their time and place. As there is an uncertainty everywhere in regard to reopening educational institutions, the minimum outcomes can easily be found that can make students keep standing in the right track of learning.

In the Indonesian context, Vitoria, Mislinawati and Nurmasiyah (2018) show about the advantages of e-learning that the students perceived the e-learning web-based module to be useful in improving their understanding, independence, self-discipline, motivation to learn, and interactions with each other and with the teacher. The study confirms that online learning is very helpful for students, one of which is through the use of the Zoom platform (Allo, 2020).

In an academic context, the need to develop listening skills is essential to language learners. Flowerdew (1994) points out that learners have to cope with particular demands such as understanding background knowledge, being able to identify essential and unimportant information, and taking notes if they strive to

succeed in academic listening. As receptive skills, listening has been shown to aid in the acquisition of pronunciation, vocabulary and syntactic knowledge (Lanning, 2015). According to Asemota (2015), listening is a process that involves more than just hearing voices and sound but includes identifying, understanding, and interpreting what is spoken language. Similarly, Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) state that listening has an important role in communication. In studying the English context, it is a must for students to get information and understand the language. Moreover, Armiun, Rahmatian, Safa, and Shairi (2017) agreed that factors of listening difficulties are concentration difficulties, high rate of speech, failing to recognize words, fatigue due to the length of texts, failing to construct the general meaning, and ineffective listening strategies use. It indicates that learning listening is a complex process, meaning that the students need comfort and enjoyment to deal with it. For this reason, the students' perceptions about the online listening courses need to be measured to know whether they perceived the enjoyment or the difficulties of this new learning system. The findings of this study are expected to provide an overview for the listening teachers or lecturers to consider the appropriate methods or activities that can be suitable for the students.

In general, there have been many studies discussing the use of the Zoom platform in the world of work and education. Researchers discuss the challenges or ways students use the Zoom platform, some studies also discuss the use of the Zoom platform in the world of work or in data collection as an instrument in research Mahyoob, M. (2020). However, there are still few studies that discuss the challenges of EFL learners in using the Zoom platform in listening classes during COVID-19. Based on this situation, the researcher tried to find the challenges and

experiences of EFL students when participating in online learning that focused on using the Zoom platform in listening classes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The result of this study is to provide a representation of student challenges in using the Zoom platform in listening classes during the COVID-19 outbreak. This will equip students, lecturers and also universities, so they can consider the use of online learning, especially through the Zoom platform. The other important thing to do in this study was the learners' role to evaluate online learning whereby they had involved and had experiences in it. They involved to evaluate by giving perceptions rating how effective and what the difficulties during the online learning process amidst Covid19 outbreak.

1.2 Scope of the study

This study involved 20 EFL students majoring in the English Department who were studying listening online at home using Zoom. This research focused on the EFL learners' challenges of Zoom platform use in listening class during COVID-19. The students' challenges to this research included the problems, limitations, and obstacles that EFL students feel when using the Zoom Platform during COVID-19 in the listening class.

1.3 Research question

Based on the research focus described above, the researcher asked the question "What challenges do EFL students face during online learning through zoom meetings in listening classes?"

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Based on the research background, this present study was aiming to analyze the EFL learners' challenges of Zoom platform use in listening class during COVID-19.

1.5 Significances of the Study

This study attempts to contribute to the body of knowledge already existing in this field, and practically. At the practical level, this study is expected to either describe the EFL learners' challenges to Zoom platform use in listening class during COVID-19, thus affecting the future direction of the teacher education program.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

For this study, the researcher defined the definitions of terms used in this study such as:

Students' challenges: are difficulties that students experience during online learning. In this study, the challenges of students in online learning using the Zoom platform include difficulties in accessing the Zoom platform application, the network is unstable, this results in students having difficulty listening to good speech and disjointed voices. In addition, students are also challenged by the discomfort of learning to listen at home then the situation at home is crowded and scrambled when the learning process via the Zoom platform starts.

Zoom platform: is a collaborative, cloud-based videoconferencing service offering features including online meetings, group messaging services, and secure

recording of sessions (Inc., 2016). As with comparable platforms like Skype, Zoom offers the ability to communicate in real-time with geographically dispersed individuals via computer, tablet, or mobile device. However, unlike many other Vo IP technologies, Zoom possesses several additional advantages that enhance its potential research utility (Archibald et al., 2019).

Listening skills: is one of the four basic language skills in English beside reading, writing, and speaking. Listening ability is needed by the students for facing both local and national tests of English tested in written form, so that listening should be learned earlier from kindergarten until the higher education level. Listening is the activity of paying attention to the speaker and trying to get meaning from something heard (Underwood (1989:1). In receiving something, the listeners will hear language produced by other people first, and he or she is going to respond with what they mean and their goals. The language learners will be successful if they master the language they learn to the point of using it in communication. That idea is supported by Littlewood (1981: 1) who states learners do not only need the ability to stand the linguistic forms but also the ability to use the language in actual use.

Usability: Usability comes from the word usable which generally means it can be used well. Usability refers to the quality of the user experience when interacting with a product or system, such as a website, software, device, or application. Usability is a quality attribute that describes or measures how easy it is to use an interface that can be measured by five criteria, namely; ease, efficiency, memorability, error and safety and satisfaction.

Efficiency: in this study, is related to the speed at which tasks are performed on a particular website or software application. Efficiency measurement also includes aspects of obstacles or challenges in using the application with poor weather and network conditions/situations that can result in lack of concentration.

Satisfaction: In this study, it relates to user satisfaction after using the website or application. The measurement of satisfaction also includes the challenging aspects of the user when using a particular device. just like audio that is still interrupted by a bad network

