

Australia-ASEAN Academics Forum: Online Education during COVID-19 and Beyond

AAAF Dr Andriyani Marentek talk 16th Sep 2021

Transcript

Good afternoon everyone. I'm Yani. I'm a lecturer and head of a language centre unit from Universitas XX. XX is the province of Indonesia. And if I can just go to the next slide, hopefully you can see it. Maybe some of you wonder where that place, North Sulawesi, might be. So, you can see the map here, the one with the circle here, that's the North Sulawesi province.



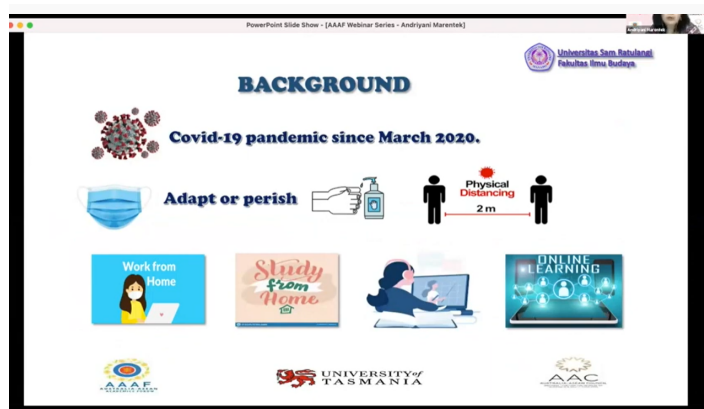
This island itself formerly was called XX. The one with a red circle here is North Sulawesi near the Philippines here. So we are very close to the Philippines in this case. And on the right-hand side as you can see here are some photos of my home university in the city of XX. The little dot here on the map, that's XX actually. And our university is the second largest university in the eastern part of Indonesia with almost 30,000 undergrads and post grad students studying here. And they're also photos of my home-based faculty here, faculty of humanities, fakultas XX in Indonesia we call it.

Yeah that's a bit about my place here.



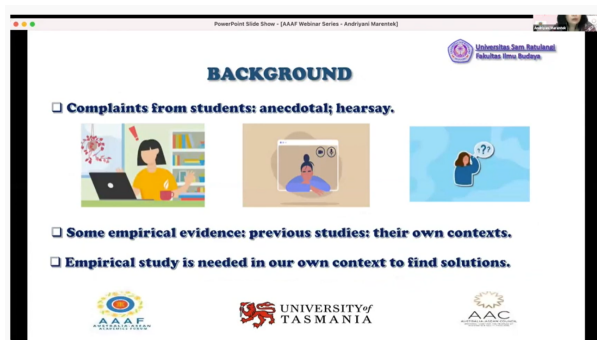
Now , okay, the title of my presentation has been mentioned before. It's about students' opinions on the effectiveness and challenges of online language learning in the COVID-19 pandemic era. And this is actually a small-scale study and I must inform here at the outset that this is ongoing, this is an

ongoing research and has not finished yet. So the results which I'm going to share at this stage are the survey findings.



And let me start with the background. And yeah, as the COVID-19 pandemic has hit our country since March 2020 we all have been forced to adapt to the situation, adapt or perish, perhaps that's a phrase appropriate for our situation now. So, wearing masks outdoors, washing your hands constantly and physical distancing are still a must in our province. And in our, in most parts of our country, actually. Although the restrictions level has decreased from four to three in our city now, and the mortality rate has declined in our city particularly, other regions are still at level four, the highest level of restrictions in our country.

And at our university, our director has been issuing many circular letters since the beginning of 2020 which most of them instructing us to work from home and study from home from the part of the students and this has been going on today. Therefore online learning has become the alternative to keep academic activities going in our university.



And it's been almost two years now and many anecdotal examples even hearsay implying complaints from students about online learning have been heard. Empirical evidence is of course much needed and many, we have seen from previous webinars here resulting from research reflections and experiences from the part of the teachers, lecturers and educators in this forum which all have been insightful and wonderful. And to that I need to be thankful. And previous studies have also shown some explanation on the strengths and weaknesses of online learning using their own context. And results of their studies may vary from context to context. Thus require different solutions. Therefore this small-scale study is conducted to investigate students' factual opinions about online learning in our own context.

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ❑ How effective is the implementation of online learning during this pandemic?
- ❑ What are the challenges facing students in their online language learning?

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Now two research questions guiding this study are, the first one how effective is the implementation of online learning during this pandemic. And the second one is what are the challenges facing students in their online language learning.

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METHODS

- ❑ Mixed methods (Creswell, 2014):
 - ❑ Quantitative: Survey
 - ❑ Administered using Google Form: WAGs, departmental announcements.
 - ❑ Qualitative: Interview → done later.

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The methods used here is mixed methods, consisting of quantitative approach using survey and the qualitative one using interviews which will be conducted later.

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PARTICIPANTS

- ❑ 161 students, English Dept., FIB, Universitas Sam Ratulangi.
- ❑ Taking various language related courses at the department via online learning.
- ❑ Semesters 1 to 8.
- ❑ From all over Indonesia (Sulawesi, Java, Kalimantan, Sumatera, Bali, Maluku, Papua).

Language related courses students take at the department via online learning.

- ❑ Oral English for daily & contextual conversations.
- ❑ Academic & Contextual Written English.
- ❑ English in a global context.
- ❑ Australia & Pacific Studies
- ❑ Oral English for Academic & Public Presentation.
- ❑ English Language Teaching Methods.

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And the participants in this case responding to the survey were actually 161 students studying language courses at the English department or faculty. And their semester here vary from semester one to even over semester eight and they are from various places in Indonesia such as from Sulawesi, java, Bali, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Maluku and even Papua. And on the right-hand side here you can see the language-related courses the students take via online learning classrooms. There are six of them.

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SURVEY: ADMINISTERING QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE: Via Online Google Forms.

ASPECTS OF ONLINE LANGUAGE LEARNING:

- A. Online learning in general.
- B. Facilities students use and receive
- C. Pedagogical aspects: Learning/teaching methods & delivery.
- D. Students' engagement/interactions.
- E. Class materials and assignments.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

STATEMENTS MEASURED BY A 5-POINT LIKERT SCALE:

- 1: Strongly Disagree (Sangat tidak setuju)
- 2: Disagree (Tidak setuju)
- 3: Maybe (Mungkin)
- 4: Agree (Setuju)
- 5: Strongly Agree (Sangat setuju)

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And in terms of the questionnaire, it consists of statements relating to five aspects of online language learning which are online learning in general facilities, pedagogical aspects, students' engagement and class materials and assignments. These statements were generated based on class observations and our university situation as well as from previous studies. Each statement is measured by using a five-point Likert scale in which one represents strongly disagree, two disagree, three maybe, four agree, five represents a strongly agree, as you can see on the right-hand side here. Of course each student has to choose one option for each statement depending on their experiences.

And this questionnaire was administered online using google forms and the announcement for participants' recruitment were done through students' WhatsApp groups and through departmental announcements too.

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FINDINGS: ONLINE LEARNING IN GENERAL

STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
1. Online language learning has given me opportunities to improve my English proficiency	4 (1%)	12 (7%)	5 (3%)	118 (75%)	22 (14%)	3.88 (78%)
2. I feel comfortable studying online during the pandemic	14 (9%)	31 (21%)	2 (1%)	94 (60%)	17 (11%)	3.41 (68%)
3. Online language learning is good to prevent me from catching or spreading the C-19 virus	6 (4%)	9 (5%)	1 (1%)	80 (50%)	55 (35%)	4.17 (83%)
4. I prefer direct face to face language learning than online language learning	4 (3%)	12 (7%)	2 (1%)	83 (52%)	60 (37%)	4.14 (83%)


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Now let's move on to the findings. The first aspect is online learning in general. So as you can see here, from the table, there are four statements here.

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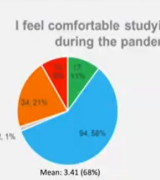
FINDINGS: ONLINE LEARNING IN GENERAL

Online language learning has given me opportunities to improve my English proficiency



Mean: 3.88 (78%)

I feel comfortable studying online during the pandemic

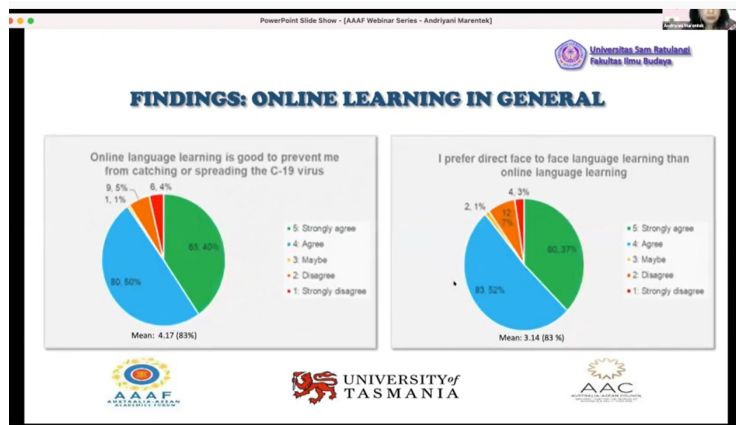


Mean: 3.41 (68%)

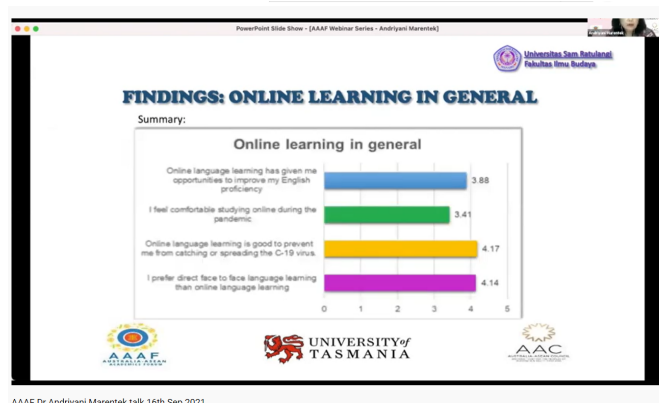
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And let's have a look at the statements one by one, here. As you can see from the pie chart here, the first general opinion for opportunities to improve their English proficiency through online learning, it shows 87% or accounting for 140 students agree or strongly agree with it. You can see the blue slice here and the green slice of the pie chart here represents scale four, which means agree and five, strongly agree, respectively. And only ten percent as you can see here, only ten percent or sixteen students disagree or strongly disagree with the statement.

The overall mean here of Likert scale value is 3.88 or 78% of the total five-point Likert scale there, which is in my opinion quite significant as it almost reaches four mean score in this case. Now the second one here shows 69% or accounting for 111 students, who agree or strongly agree for feeling comfortable studying online during the pandemic. However 30% or 48% as you can see here disagree or strongly disagree with it. The mean score is quite, not that high, 3.41, which equalling 68% of the total five points scale there. This is not that high. But anyway, almost 70% of the students show positive opinions about it.

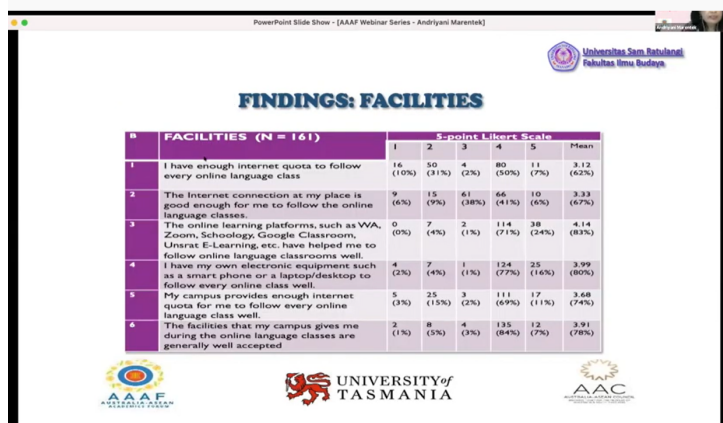


Now let's move on to the next one. There are four statements. The third one here shows that most students, accounting for 90% or 145 respondents, agree or strongly agree that online learning is good for their health. That is, it can prevent them from catching or spreading the virus. Only nine percent or 15 students disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. The mean score is four one seven here, or eighty three percent which is a significant value of agreement. And the fourth one here indicates that, although they acknowledge the benefits of the online learning, the majority of the respondents still prefer the direct on-site or face-to-face communication with 91 students here or 143 students agree or strongly agree with the statement and only 10 percent, accounting for 16 students, disagree or strongly disagree with it. And the mean score is quite high, 4.14 or 83% in total. This is also another support for previous studies and a factual, actually proof of how eager students are to get back on campus.



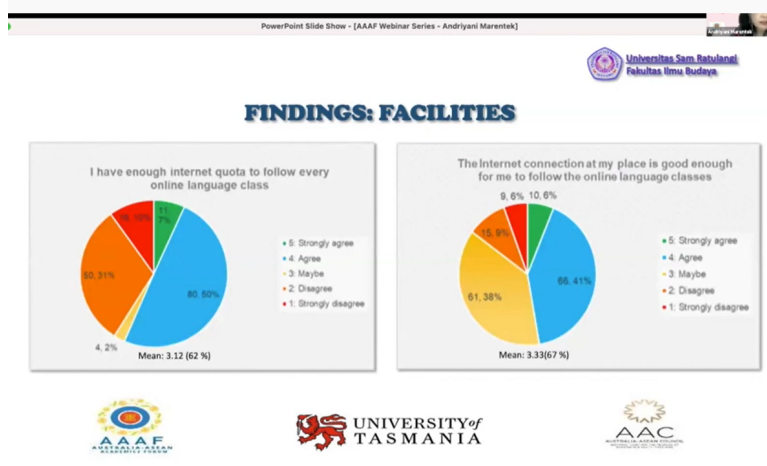
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Now, the next one here is the summary of overall results which can be seen from the bar chart here, showing fairly significant positive opinions towards the online learning that can improve their English proficiency, with 3.88, and their understanding of health issues that lead to the online learning during the pandemic. Nevertheless, the majority prefer on-site face-to-face learning rather than online learning with 4.14 here. And although more than half of the students feel comfortable with the online learning, many of them don't think so, as can be seen from the low mean score of 3.41 here.



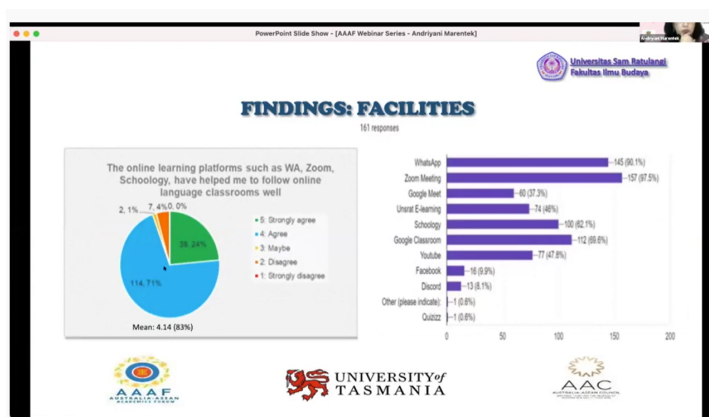
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Right, now let's move on to the next finding which is the facilities. So in terms of the facilities that the students have or receive, there are six statements as you can see from the table here.

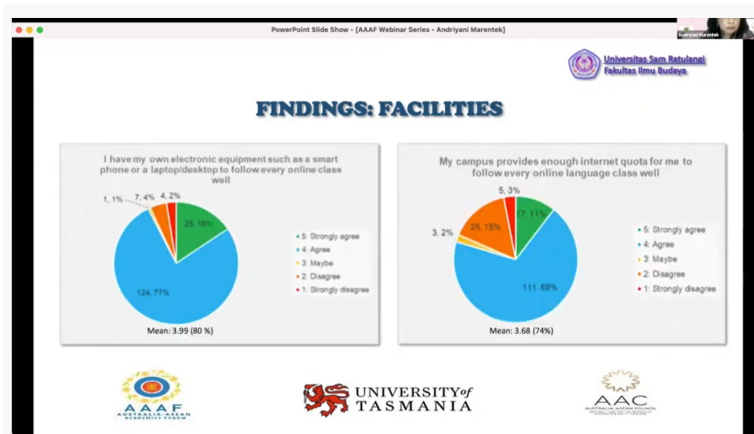


And if we look at each statement on the pie charts here, you can see from the first pie chart here that 57% or 91 students agree or strongly agree that they have enough internet quota to follow the online language classes. But of course you cannot turn a blind eye to students who might be struggling with it, especially those who disagree or strongly disagree with the statement, as there are 76 of them or 41 percent of the total respondents. It is also revealed that the mean point value of Likert scale is only 3.12 or only 62 which is a low mean score.

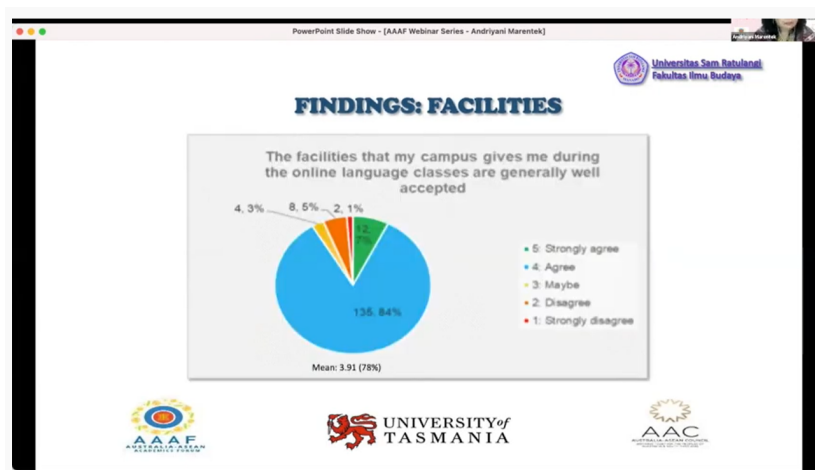
And the second one, pie chart here, show less than 47% or accounting for 76 students who agree or strongly agree that they have good internet connection to follow the online language classes. 15% or 24 students disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. 38% or 61 respondents represented by the yellow pie slice here, as you can see, are still unsure and perhaps might be struggling with the internet connectivity similar to the internet quota availability. The mean value is also quite low, 3.33, although a bit higher than that of the internet quota.



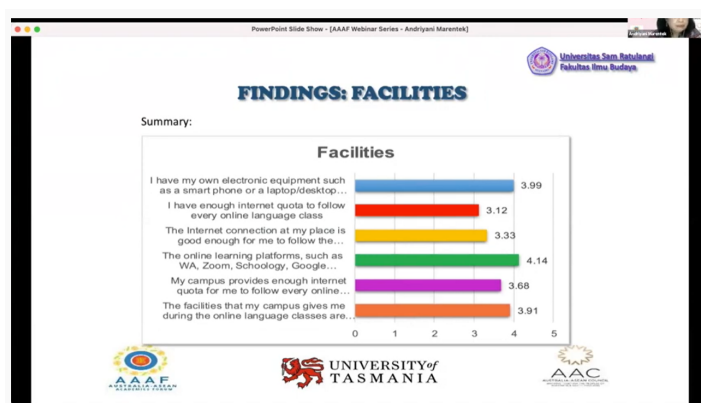
Now, from the results on the third statement here, we can just go onto the next slide, it shows that the online language platforms or application uses such as a WhatsApp, zoom meeting, google classroom, Schoology, Unstrategy learning, which is our university's learning management system platform, YouTube and so on, they all help students to follow online classes well. And the majority, which is 95 percent, agree or strongly agree with it although five percent or nine of them don't think so. We can see here from the bar chart on the right-hand side the online platforms used by the students. Three mostly used tools are zoom meeting, WhatsApp and google classroom, as you can see from the bar chart here.



Right, now let's move on to the fourth statement. From the chart it is seen that the majority of the students, which is 93% or 149 respondents agree or strongly agree that they have their own electronic equipment to follow the online language classes. And this might be due to the forced adaptability of course in this pandemic situation which has been going on for almost two years now. They have been forced to adjust to the condition as we all have, although of course there are always students not privileged to have the luxury of the electronic equipment. Because 12 of them, accounting for six percent, disagree or strongly disagree with it. The mean value is also pretty significant in my opinion which is 3.99, equalling 80% of the total Likert Scale.



Now, the fifth statement here show quite significant results in terms of the facilities that my campus, our university in this case, gives. Our university provides certain internet quota every month for students to follow the online classes, particularly for attending online zoom classroom. And zoom meeting actually has become the official online platform in our university since the beginning of the pandemic. And from this we can see that most students have positive opinion about it, with 80 percent or 128 respondents agree or strongly agree with the internet quota that they have received, although 18 percent or 30 students disagree or strongly disagree with it. And the means score of Likert scale value is not that low actually, with 3.91 or 78 in this case. So it's pretty much high in my opinion.



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Now, let's move on to the next findings. This is the summary of the facilities, and their positive opinions are shown here in this chart where the overall result can be seen in terms of the facilities. They have positive opinions towards the online learning platforms with 4.14 or 83 percent there.

And then as regards having their own electronic equipment to follow online classes, most students agree, with 3.99 there. And yeah, I think that's pretty significant. The facilities are our university has provided also shows quite significant value which is 3.91 mean score equalling 78 of the mean score. And the internet quota provided by our university also has fairly significant acceptance with the mean score of 3.68. Nevertheless, in terms of having their own internet quota and good internet connectivity, as we can see in the chart here, many students don't seem to agree with it and they account for only 3.12 and 3.33 respectively as you can see here, which are not that significant in terms of their positive opinions. So that's in terms of the facilities.

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FINDINGS: PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS

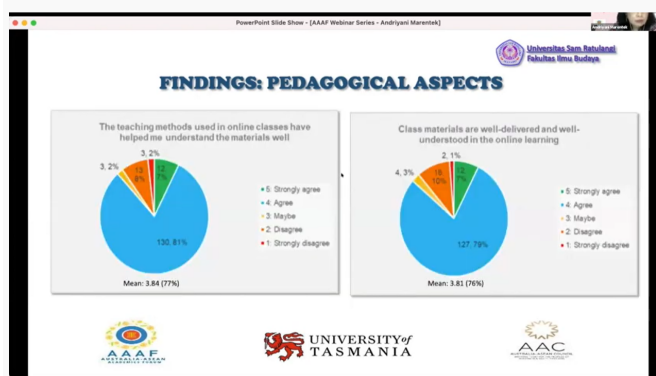
C	PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS: LEARNING/TEACHING METHODS & DELIVERY. (N = 161)	5-point Likert Scale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	The teaching methods used in online classes have helped me understand the materials well	3 (2%)	13 (8%)	3 (2%)	130 (81%)	12 (7%)	3.84 (77%)
2	Class materials are well-delivered and well-understood in the online learning	2 (1%)	16 (10%)	4 (3%)	127 (79%)	12 (7%)	3.81 (76%)
3	I can follow the online learning process well from the beginning till the end every time there is an online language classroom	1 (1%)	24 (15%)	4 (2%)	118 (73%)	14 (9%)	3.75 (75%)
4	I can follow my lecturers' instructions well in the online language classes	3 (2%)	7 (4%)	14 (9%)	113 (70%)	24 (15%)	3.92 (78%)

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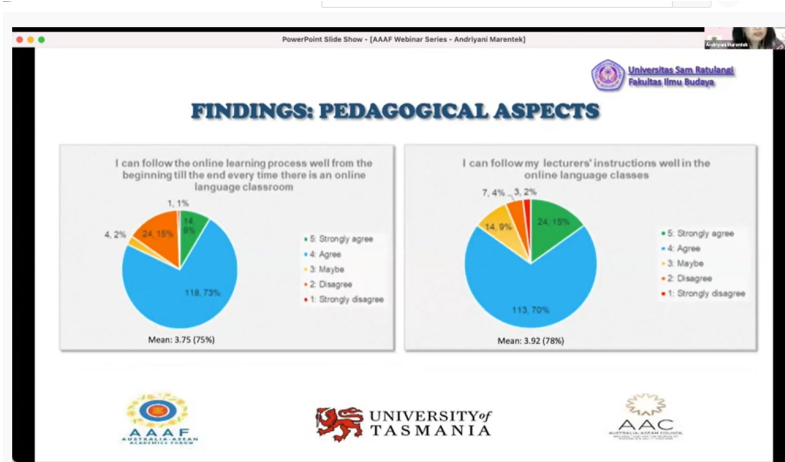
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Now let's move on to the pedagogical aspects. As regards pedagogical aspects here, dealing with teaching and learning methods and delivery, there are four statements as shown on the table here.



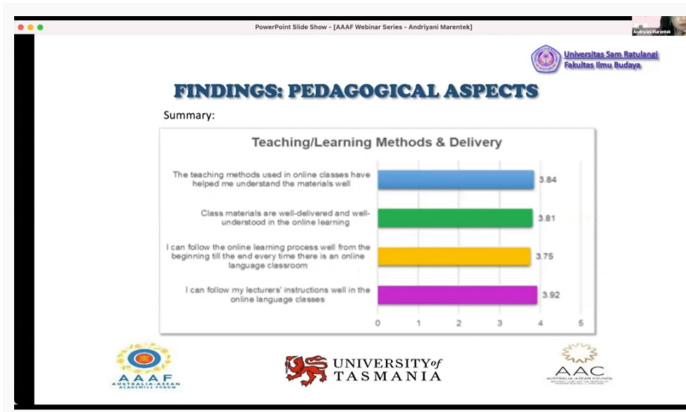
And then again, if you look at the statement one by one here, in terms of teaching methods in online language classes most students seem to agree or strongly agree that the methods used by lectures help them in learning the materials with 88 percent or 142 respondents agree or strongly agree with it. Nevertheless, 10 percent disagree or strongly disagree with it. The mean score is 3.84 or 77 of the total scale which is also pretty significant as it almost reaches four mean score in this case.

And then the second one still related to the previous one about teaching method, but the focus is on the delivery of the materials. And as the pie chart shows here, most students, accounting for 86 percent or 139 respondents, agree or strongly agree with it. And this reinforces the teaching methods used in language learning actually. However, 11 percent or 18 students disagree or strongly with the with the statement. The mean value is also pretty significant. It is 3.81 or 76 percent of the total Likert score value in this case.



Now, let's move on to the next slide. The third chart here shows that the majority of respondents, 82% or 132 students, agree or strongly agree that they can follow the online learning classes. Okay, yeah, let me continue. You can see here, the third chart, yeah, shows that the majority of the respondents, 82 percent of them, agree or strongly agree that they can follow the online learning classes from beginning till the end. Only 16%, however, they disagree or strongly disagree with it. The mean value sits at 3.75%, actually, which is fairly significant in my opinion although not that high.

And the fourth pie chart here shows that in terms of following instructions in online language classes most students can do it well with 85 percent or 137 students agree or strongly agree with the statement. A small number of students, 10 of them or 6 percent, disagree or strongly disagree with it. The mean score is also quite high there, 3.92 or 78 percent of the total scale.



Now, the summary of the pedagogical aspect is shown in the bar chart here. All the four statements receive almost four mean score, with the instructions that can be followed well sits at 3.92 followed by the teaching methods that help students understand the materials well with 3.84. The well delivered and well understood materials, 3.81, and the learning process that can be followed well from the start to the end is 3.75. So, in my opinion, all receive quite significant scores which indicates that the pedagogical aspect are more or less well implemented in online classrooms.

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FINDINGS: STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT & INTERACTIONS

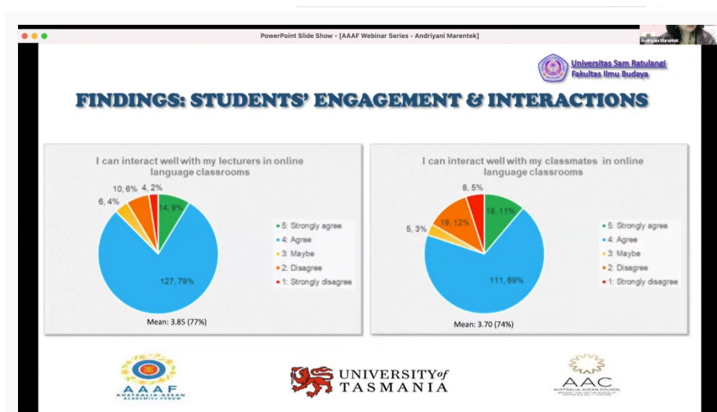
DC	STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT & INTERACTIONS (N = 161)	5-point Likert Scale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	I can interact well with my lecturers in online language classrooms	4 (2%)	10 (6%)	6 (4%)	127 (79%)	14 (9%)	3.85 (77%)
2	I can interact well with my classmates in online language classrooms	8 (5%)	19 (12%)	5 (3%)	111 (69%)	18 (11%)	3.70 (74%)
3	I can concentrate well during the online language classes	7 (4%)	37 (23%)	1 (1%)	106 (66%)	10 (6%)	3.47 (69%)
4	I do not feel isolated and can interact well with my classmates during online language classes	6 (4%)	29 (18%)	62 (39%)	44 (27%)	20 (12%)	3.27 (65%)
5	I do not feel isolated and can interact well with my lecturers during online language classes	7 (4%)	33 (21%)	52 (32%)	56 (35%)	13 (8%)	3.22 (64%)

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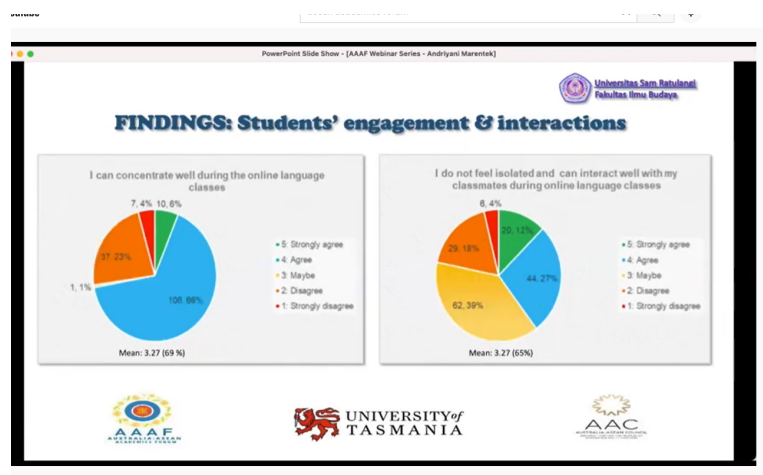
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Okay, let's move on to the next findings, that is, the students' engagement and interactions. Now, in terms of student engagement and interactions, it is a difficult aspect to achieve in online learning. And there are five statements here that reflect this aspect with varying score results as shown on the table here.



And if we look at look again at each statement, mostly as in on the pie chart here again, in terms of engagement with lecturers in online language classrooms, the majority as we can see here, 88% or 141 students combined, agree or strongly agree with it. Whereas only eight percent or 14 students who disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. The mean score is quite low in this case. But I think the mean square is not that low, 3.85, is not that low, 77 percent of the total Likert scale.

And yeah, in terms of students' engagement with their classmates or peers, the chart shows the majority of them, accounting for 80 percent, as you can see on the chart there, yeah, of the total respondents. And 17% disagree or strongly disagree with it. The mean score is fairly significant, with 3.70 or 74%. So students in this case can engage fairly well with their peers in online classes, although not as high as with the lecturers. And again, a blind eye nonetheless should not be turned on the other 20 who might struggle to engage with their classmates in online classrooms.

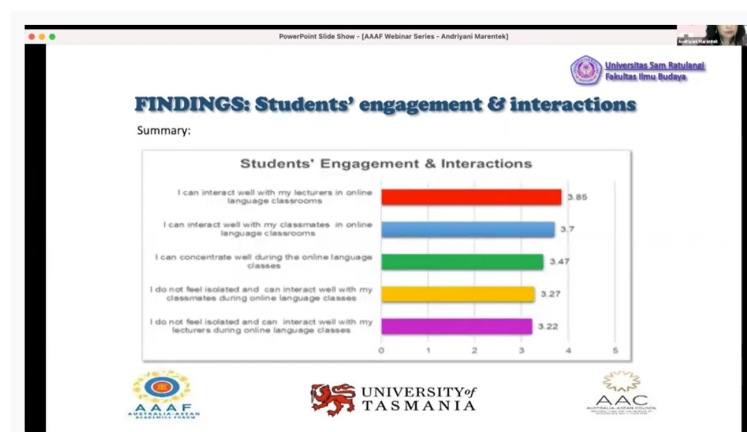


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Now moving on to the next slide. As we got students' concentration during the online classes, you can see that 72 percent or 116 students here can concentrate well, which is a high enough and still forms the majority of the student respondents here. However, 27% or 42 of them disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. The mean score is not that significant, with only 3.47 actually.

Okay, did I mention the wrong one here? Yeah, the mean value here for the concentration part is actually 3.47 not 3.27. It's 69 percent for the mean value. And of course, this needs to be clarified further by doing interviews with students.

And there is a question or statement here dealing with the feeling of isolation in relation to their classmates. The results show here only 39% or 64 who agree or strongly agree with the statement. The other 39 respondents, 64 of them, are not sure about it. And 22% or 35 students disagree or strongly disagree with it. And the mean score here, this is the 3.27 one which is quite low. This is in contrast with their opinion on engagement with their peers, in which the majority of them agree to the statement. And this needs to be investigated further in the interview session.



This is actually the summary in terms of interacting with lecturers. As we can see the student engagement on the bar chart here, the mean score is fairly significant with 3.85 of the total scale. And they also mostly agree that they can interact well with their classmates. In terms of concentration in the classroom, it seems that they many of them also disagree with the same statement, with only 3.47 or 69% of the five-point scale, which is not that significant in terms of the scale of agreement. And the feeling of isolation in relation to both classmates and lecturers also shows significant mean scores, with only 3.27 and 3.22 respectively. And this might imply that

although most agree that they can interact well with their peers and classmates, but in terms of consultation and feeling of isolation, many still feel a lack of them. So yeah, this may indicate challenges in terms of engagement in online learning that they might experience in the online context.

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FINDINGS: CLASS MATERIALS & ASSIGNMENTS

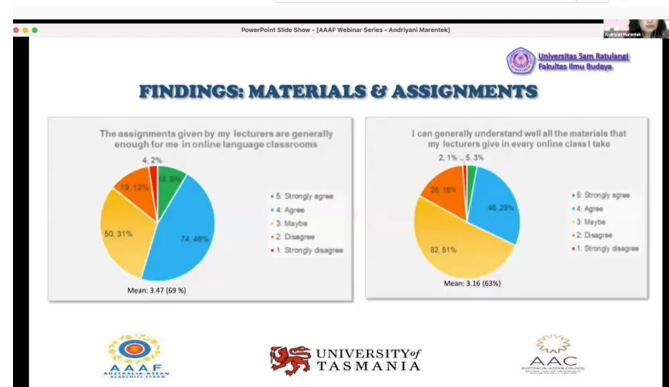
E	CLASS MATERIALS & ASSIGNMENTS (N = 161)	5-point Likert Scale					Mean
		1	2	3	4	5	
1	The assignments given by my lecturers are generally enough for me in online language classrooms	4 (2%)	19 (12%)	50 (31%)	74 (46%)	14 (9%)	3.47 (69%)
2	I can generally understand well all the materials that my lecturers give in every online class I take	2 (1%)	26 (16%)	82 (51%)	46 (29%)	5 (3%)	3.16 (63%)
3	I can generally do all my assignments well and submit them on time through online learning platforms	5 (3%)	9 (6%)	48 (30%)	78 (48%)	21 (13%)	3.63 (73%)
4	I am generally pleased with the assignments that my lecturers give me in online language classrooms.	8 (5%)	12 (7%)	72 (45%)	60 (37%)	9 (6%)	3.31 (66%)

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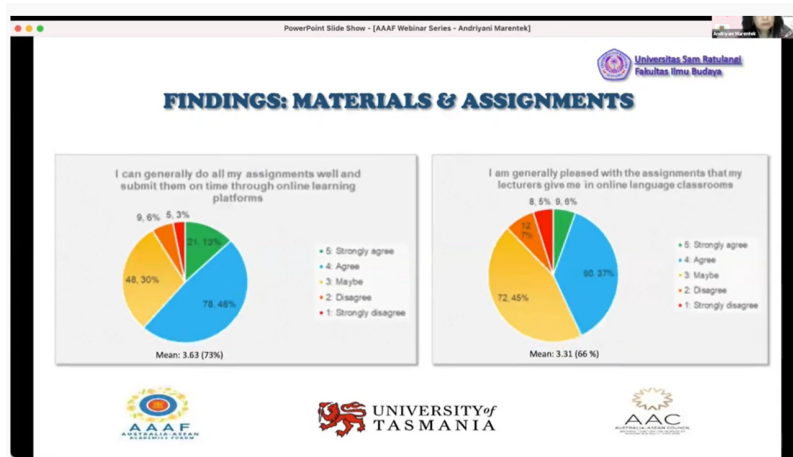
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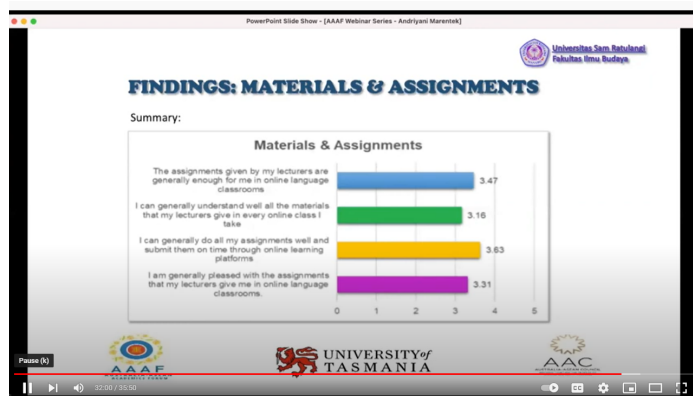
Now let's move on to the last aspect here ,which is class materials and assignment. So the class materials here includes four statements as you can see from the table here.



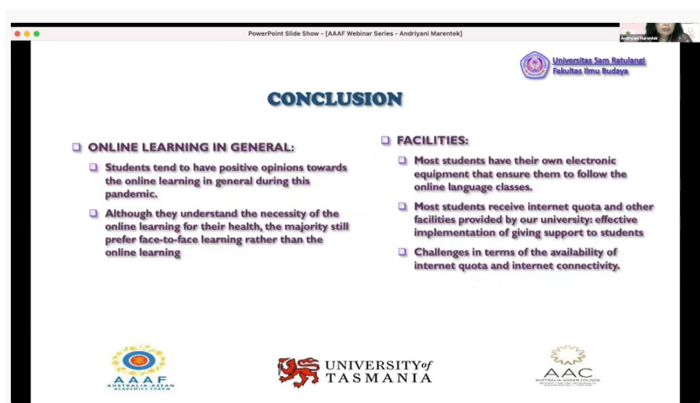
And again, let's have a look at each of the statements here. The first pie chart here shows 55% or a total of 88 students of the 161 agree or strongly agree with the number of assignments given in online classes, although 31 percent, accounting for 50 students, are not sure, and 24% or 23 of them disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. The mean score is 3.47 which is not that significant or not that high. Now you can see from the second chart here, it shows that only 31% or 51 students who agree or strongly agree with the materials, that they can understand well in online classes, whereas 51 percent or 82 respondents are not sure about it. 17% or 28 students disagree or strongly disagree with the statement and the mean score as you can see here is 3.16 which is quite low, in terms of their general understanding of the materials.



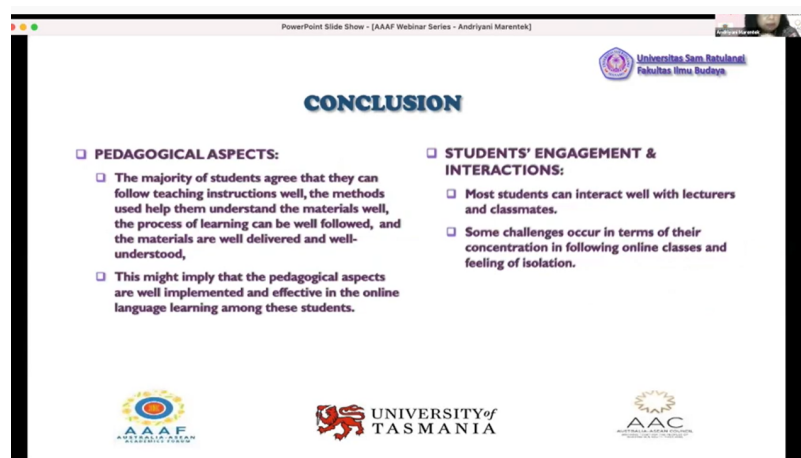
Now let's move on to the next one here. The third chart here shows that, in terms of doing their assignments well and submitting on time, 61% or a total of 99 agree or strongly agree with it. However, 30% or 48 students are not sure about it and 9% disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. The mean score here is, in my opinion, not that high but somewhat significant with 3.63 point scale or 73% of the total five-point Likert scale. And the last pie chart here shows that only less than 43% or 69 respondents agree or strongly agree with being faced in general with the assignments in online language classes and 45%, 72 of the students are not sure or undecided about it. 12% or 20 of the students disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. And the mean value as you can see is only 3.31. This actually pretty much support their opinions on the numbers of assignments given in the online classes.



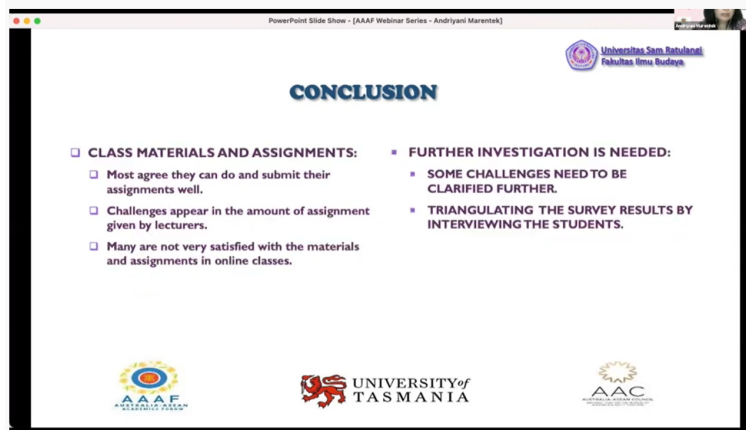
Now from the summary as you can see here, from the bar chart, you can see that most students fairly agree that they can do their assignments well and submit them on time with 3.63 or 75% mean score. However, many disagree with the statement that the assignments are generally enough for them, only 3.47 mean score. This can mean too much or too little too many of them. Many also fully disagree that they can understand the materials well and also disagree with being generally pleased with the assignments, with 3.16 or 63% and 3.31 mean scores, respectively. This may imply some challenges facing students in relation with the materials and assignments given in online classrooms, particularly their understanding of the materials, the amount of assignments given and their general satisfaction with the assignments and materials.



Now let's come to the conclusion. So, to conclude the study at this stage, based on the findings from the survey, we can see some of the online learning aspects that might effectively be implemented according to students' opinions or voices, and some which pose challenges to them. In terms of online learning in general, students tend to have positive opinions towards the online learning in general during this pandemic. Although they understand the necessity of the online learning for their health, of course, the majority still prefer face-to-face learning rather than online learning, so many of the students are so eager to come back to campus. And in relation to facilities, most students have their own electric equipment that ensures them to follow the online language classes. They also receive internet quota and other facilities provided by our university, which indicates effective implementations of giving support to students on the part of our university. However, there's some challenges in terms of the availability of the internet quota and internet connectivity.



Now in terms of the pedagogical aspects, the majority of the students agree that they can follow teaching instructions well, that the methods used help them understand the materials well, that the process of learning can be well followed and that the materials are well delivered and well understood. And this might imply that the pedagogical aspects are well implemented and effective in the online language learning among these students, although of course the not so high mean score of each statement may indicate more improvement needs to be performed. And concerning the students' engagement, interactions, more students can interact well with lectures and classmates but some challenges occur in terms of their concentration in following online classes and the feeling of isolation there.



And regarding class materials and assignments, mostly that they can do and submit their assignments well. Challenges appear in the amount of assignment given by lecturers. Many are also not very satisfied with the materials and assignments in online classes. So these are all conclusions made based on the survey results so far, which of course not enough, and further investigation is still needed of course. Some challenges need to be clarified further as well. So therefore the results will be triangulated for an in-depth qualitative study and that is actually the next thing that I'm going to do. And this concludes my presentation today.

Q and A session commences