

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

This section presents the results of the study entitled "Students' View on The Implementation of Synchronous Online Learning in UIN Antasari Banjarmasin." The findings are organized based on the three research objectives. First, it explores the characteristics of synchronous online learning as implemented at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, including the platforms used, teaching strategies, and student engagement methods. Second, it examines the challenges perceived by lecturers during the implementation process, such as technical limitations, student participation issues, and assessment difficulties. Lastly, it presents the lecturers' perspectives on the effectiveness and overall impact of synchronous online learning, highlighting both the benefits and areas for improvement. Each of these subsections provides a detailed description supported by data collected from interviews with selected lecturers.

1. Characteristics of Synchronous Online Learning

Based on the in-depth interview with Lecturer 1, all four of Amir's (2020) core characteristics of synchronous online learning such as accessibility, independency, interactivity, and enrichment that manifested in her practice, albeit to differing extents and with unique nuances.

a. Accessibility

Accessibility emerged as the most pronounced feature in her virtual classroom. Lecturer 1 described how both she and her students benefit from the ability to “access the learning materials anytime and anywhere, as long as the internet connection is stable,”

“In my opinion, all these characteristics are interconnected. First, there is accessibility, both my students and I can access the learning materials anytime and anywhere, as long as the internet connection is stable. Then, regarding independency, online learning indirectly requires students to study independently so that their learning outcomes can be more or less equal to those of offline learning. As for interactivity, it’s undeniable that it tends to be lower compared to offline learning, since interaction is quite limited. Sometimes, there are even students who disappear right after I take attendance, and I have no idea where they go. Lastly, enrichment may also be somewhat lacking, as students usually need to be encouraged or motivated first before they take the initiative to, for example, find additional learning materials on their own.”

which, she noted, removes the traditional constraints of fixed classroom spaces and rigid schedules. She cited an example from Ramadan, explaining that:

“I feel very helpful especially when I have urgent matters but still have to teach in class, so like it or not, the lesson has to be conducted online. For example, during last Ramadan, since my class was scheduled in the afternoon, sometimes my students agreed to request that the class be held online instead. It’s because if we had to reschedule the class, we would have to find a new time slot that works for everyone, which is not easy.”

This flexibility not only preserves continuity in teaching but also

respects students' and lecturers' personal obligations.

Both lecturers underscored the pivotal role of accessibility in their synchronous online classrooms. Lecturer 1 highlighted that:

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a flexibility that allowed her students to shift afternoon Ramadan sessions online rather than struggle to find a new time slot. She built her ecosystem around Google Meet, Google Sites, and WhatsApp:

“I mostly use Google Meet for live sessions and Google Sites as a learning hub for materials. They're both integrated with the Google Workspace that UIN provides, so it's practical. I also use WhatsApp for follow-up discussions or to check in with students if something urgent comes up.”

to ensure materials and communication remained within reach. Lecturer 2 echoed this ease of access:

“For me, the first characteristics that fit most in my class is independency. They are university students, and as such, they are expected to be independent in their learning activities.”

They are considered as adult learners. And for another characteristics are interactivity, accessibility, and enrichment. Regarding interactivity, alhamdulillah, the students remain actively engaged in discussions during online classes. In terms of accessibility, online classes are easy to access as long as the students are in a location with a stable internet connection. As for enrichment, they are also able to further develop the material or topics being discussed.”

and she likewise leans on Zoom or Google Meet supplemented by WhatsApp for reminders. Both did note, however, that students in rural areas sometimes face bandwidth challenges, which can temporarily disrupt this otherwise smooth access.

b. Independency

Closely tied to accessibility is independency, the second most salient characteristic. Lecturer 1 requires students to prepare ahead of each session, reviewing pre-distributed materials, conducting brief research, or even designing their own pages on Google Sites. She observes that:

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highlighting how autonomy in content engagement fosters deeper ownership over the learning process.

Independency emerged as the foremost characteristic for Lecturer 2 and a close second for Lecturer 1. Lecturer 2 explained,

“For me, the first characteristics that fit most in my class is independency. They are university students, and as such, they are expected to be independent in their learning activities. They are considered as adult learners. And for another characteristics are interactivity, accessibility, and enrichment. Regarding interactivity, alhamdulillah, the students remain actively engaged in discussions during online classes. In terms of accessibility, online classes are easy to access as long as the students are in a location with a stable internet connection. As for enrichment, they are also able to further develop the material or topics being discussed.”

and she reinforces this through preparatory tasks, reflection exercises, and formal study contracts that assign presentation and discussion roles.

Lecturer 1 similarly requires students to “review pre-distributed materials, conduct brief research, or even design their own pages on Google Sites,” observing that “online learning indirectly requires students to study independently so that their learning outcomes can be more or less equal to those of offline learning.” This autonomy cultivates ownership over content and prepares students to engage meaningfully in every session.

c. Interactivity

By contrast, interactivity proved more challenging to sustain

at the same level as face-to-face classes. While Lecturer 1 employs group presentations, breakout discussions, and targeted questioning, she concedes that interaction in synchronous sessions is often limited sometimes, there are even students who disappear right after the lecturer took the attendance.

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This intermittent engagement underscores the need for deliberate strategies, such as instant polls, random cold-calls, and small-group tasks are to rekindle participation and simulate the dynamism of an in-person environment.

While both lecturers strive to foster dynamic engagement, interactivity proved more variable in practice. Lecturer 1 noted that “interaction in synchronous sessions is often limited sometimes, there are even students who disappear right after I take attendance,” prompting her to deploy group presentations, breakout discussions,

and random cold-calling to reignite participation. Lecturer 2, by contrast, reported consistently higher engagement:

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which she sustains by calling names randomly and sharing trending-topic videos. Both also integrate quick polls, quizzes, and interactive tools where Lecturer 1 uses Padlet and Google Forms, while Lecturer 2 leverages Bamboozle and Wordwall are to break up lecture segments and maintain attention.

d. Enrichment

Finally, enrichment is defined by Amir as the layering of additional learning activities and resources beyond core instruction that was identified as the least dominant trait in Lecturer 1’s online offerings. Although she integrates multimedia elements like embedded videos, infographics, and external articles via Google Sites, and encourages students to design and present their learning materials as creatively and engagingly as possible,

“First, I ask the students to work in groups. I divide them into

several groups, and each group is assigned to present material related to the topic being discussed. Oh, and the students also have access to create their own Home Page in Google Sites, so they are free to design and present their learning materials as creatively and engagingly as possible. Second, I implement a punishment system. For example, if the online class is held via Google Meet, I usually check their attendance within the first fifteen minutes of class. If a student hasn't joined by then without any explanation, I consider them absent from the class."

She noted that genuine student-led enrichment rarely occurs without explicit prompting. Students usually need to be encouraged or motivated first before they take the initiative to, for example, find additional learning materials on their own, she explained, suggesting that scaffolds such as guided research questions or optional extension tasks may be necessary to cultivate a more self-driven enrichment culture.

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Enrichment that adding value beyond core instruction was the

most nascent dimension for both lecturers. Lecturer 1 integrates multimedia elements such as embedded videos, infographics, and external articles via Google Sites, and she “encourage students to design and present their learning materials as creatively and engagingly as possible,” though she admits “students usually need to be encouraged or motivated first” to pursue enrichment tasks independently. Lecturer 2 enriches her sessions with curated YouTube clips, interactive games, and group projects, observing that when prompted, “students are also able to further develop the material or topics being discussed.” Although still evolving, these layered activities demonstrate each lecturer’s commitment to deepening learning beyond synchronous delivery.

2. Challenges in Implementing Synchronous Online Learning

Lecturer 1 reported several challenges in synchronous online teaching. A significant challenge was maintaining student *attention and readiness*. Students were often not fully prepared, and some lacked seriousness during sessions.

Another key challenge was time management. Sessions did not always start on time due to mutual agreements with students to delay, and discussions occasionally exceeded the scheduled time.

Technical issues, particularly related to *internet connectivity*, also posed problems. Both the lecturer and students experienced disruptions

during sessions. Additionally, enforcing classroom behavior norms, like keeping cameras on, was difficult.

L2 identified two dominant technical obstacles. First,

“Of course, there are obstacles I encounter when conducting online classes, such as students’ motivation and internet connectivity. Regarding students’ motivation, it is undeniable that their level of engagement tends to be lower in online classes compared to offline ones. This may be due to the perception that online classes are more relaxed and flexible, as they can attend from anywhere as long as their internet connection is stable. As for internet connectivity, it remains a drawback of online learning that is often unavoidable. For instance, there are times when students are in the middle of presenting their material and suddenly lose their internet connection, which temporarily interrupts the session. In such cases, I need to step in and take over the class to ensure that the discussion continues smoothly.”

Second, monitoring student presence proved difficult when cameras were off. She noted, “Students turning off their cameras and not responding... makes it hard to know if they’re really present.”

Maintaining motivation also posed a challenge:

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To counter this, L2 implements surprise quizzes and shares trending-

topic videos to spark renewed interest. She echoed L1’s concern over

assessment fairness: “It’s harder to monitor individual understanding... I rely on their presentations, quizzes, or short written responses.”

Finally, while institutional support was generally flexible, L2 mentioned the pressure to adhere to scheduled meeting times and reporting requirements: “Our department gives us flexibility... however, we’re still expected to maintain the schedule and report our activities, so time management is crucial.”

a. Time Management

Both lecturers found that the rigid 30-minute windows allocated for online teaching often proved insufficient or were misaligned with students’ circumstances. Lecturer 1 observed:

“Sometimes the class doesn’t start exactly according to the schedule during online sessions, but this usually depends on the agreement made with the students... discussions occasionally exceed the scheduled time.”

These delays, she explained, stem from students requesting brief postponements (“by a few minutes”) to resolve last-mile technical or personal issues. Lecturer 2 also highlighted the need for punctuality, noting that despite departmental flexibility, “we’re still expected to maintain the schedule and report our activities, so time management is crucial.”

Both lecturers grappled with pacing and scheduling in their synchronous sessions. Lecturer 1 noted that “sessions did not always start

on time due to mutual agreements with students to delay, and discussions occasionally exceeded the scheduled time,” which disrupted her carefully planned agenda. Lecturer 2 similarly emphasized that keeping to the allotted time slots is “crucial,” explaining, “Our department gives us flexibility... however, we’re still expected to maintain the schedule and report our activities, so time management is crucial.”

b. Technical and Logistical

Unstable internet connections and tool-related hurdles frequently interrupted class flow. Lecturer 1 reported that “technical issues, particularly related to internet connectivity, also posed problems. Both the lecturer and students experienced disruptions during sessions,” and enforcing norms, like constant camera use, added another layer of difficulty. Lecturer 2 highlighted parallel obstacles: “Internet connectivity remains a drawback... sometimes students lose their connection mid-presentation, and I must step in to continue,” and “students turning off their cameras and not responding... makes it hard to know if they’re really present.”

Both lecturers repeatedly cited unstable connections as the single greatest disruptor. Lecturer 1 reported that “if either I or the students are disconnected mid-session, it disrupts the flow,” while Lecturer 2 added: “Internet connectivity remains a drawback of online learning that is often unavoidable. Sometimes students lose their connection mid-presentation,

and I must step in to continue.”

Camera Usage & Presence Monitoring. The move to virtual classrooms removed the lecturer’s direct line of sight into students’ attention and behavior. Lecturer 1 found it challenging to enforce camera-on policies, conceding that “some students may be multitasking or doing other things. What matters to me is that when I take attendance or ask questions, they still respond.” Lecturer 2 was even more blunt: “Students turning off their cameras and not responding makes it hard to know if they’re really present.”

Both lecturers cite unstable internet as the chief obstacle. L1 laments: “If disconnected mid-session, it disrupts the flow... time management during discussions is tricky,” while L2 confirms: “Students lose connection mid-presentation, and I must step in to continue.”

c. Student Engagement

Keeping learners mentally invested proved challenging in the remote environment. Lecturer 1 observed that many “lacked seriousness during sessions,” leading her to deploy interactive tasks to recapture focus. Lecturer 2 described lower overall motivation: “Their level of engagement tends to be lower in online classes... they perceive it as more relaxed.” To counteract this, she introduced surprise quizzes and trending-topic videos designed to spark renewed interest and sustain dynamic participation.

Lecturer 1 emphasized that keeping students mentally present and academically prepared for every session required constant effort. She lamented that “students sometimes take things lightly, which can result in a less effective learning process,” and pointed out that many arrive to class expecting to be spoon-fed content rather than having done the required pre-readings or preparatory work. In her words:

“Regarding students’ readiness, since they are used to having the learning materials presented to them, some students are not fully prepared or don’t really understand the material being discussed.”

Similarly, Lecturer 2 noted a pervasive dip in motivation once students logged into an online session. She described the collective atmosphere as “more relaxed and flexible sometimes too relaxed to the point where engagement drops.” Her strategy to reignite student focus includes deploying unannounced quizzes and curating short, trending-topic videos, which she finds “quite effective in increasing student interest and participation.”

Maintaining focus online proves difficult. L1 notes, “Students sometimes take things lightly... multitask... I call names randomly or do mini-quizzes to bring them back,” and L2 observes, “Their motivation is lower online... they perceive it as more relaxed... I quiz them unpredictably and share engaging videos to maintain attention.”

d. Attendance and Readiness

Beyond mere login counts, both lecturers struggled to ensure meaningful attendance and preparation. Lecturer 1 lamented that “students were often not fully prepared,” which undermined class efficiency. Lecturer 2 echoed this readiness gap: when connectivity faltered or cameras stayed off, she was forced to improvise, stepping in to “summarize their points or allow them to continue later,” allowing the session to proceed without penalizing disengaged or unprepared learners.

Both mention variability in student preparedness. L1 reports, “Some request delays... most expect materials presented, so unprepared students struggle to follow,” while L2 finds “students’ motivation levels vary... those who prepare do better; unprepared students often disengage.”

e. Assessment Fairness

Evaluating students equitably in real time was a persistent concern. Lecturer 1 found it “difficult to gauge real understanding” without in-person cues, prompting her to lean on performance-based tasks. Lecturer 2 concurred: “It’s harder to monitor individual understanding... I rely on their presentations, quizzes, or short written responses,” acknowledging that these measures only partially mitigate the challenges of ensuring every student’s work is fairly assessed.

Fair evaluation is challenging without face-to-face proctoring. L1 explains, “I rely on performance-based tasks like presentations and project

submissions,” and L2 adds, “I use quizzes and group reports but can’t always monitor individual work as in face-to-face classes.”

f. Institutional Constraints

While departmental policies provided broad leeway for online delivery, procedural requirements still weighed on instructors. Lecturer 1 experienced occasional “scheduling conflicts and sudden time adjustments across departments,” and noted “not all lecturers align on tool usage, causing inconsistency.” Lecturer 2 pointed out that, despite flexibility, she remains bound by reporting obligations: “We’re still expected to maintain the schedule and report our activities,” underscoring how institutional frameworks shape, even as they enable the contours of synchronous online teaching.

Ensuring equitable and valid assessment of student learning proved another hurdle. Both lecturers rely heavily on performance-based tasks such as live presentations, group discussions, and spontaneous quizzes are to approximate the accountability afforded by a physical classroom. As Lecturer 2 admitted,

“It’s harder to monitor individual understanding... I rely on their presentations, quizzes, or short written responses.”

Finally, although both appreciated the university’s overall support for online teaching such as, “our department gives us flexibility to choose online if needed” meaning they acknowledged an underlying

administrative pressure to adhere strictly to reporting requirements and session quotas. This dual expectation of innovative online delivery coupled with rigorous documentation added an extra layer of complexity to their teaching workload. Scheduling conflicts and inconsistent tool adoption across departments hamper smooth delivery. L1 notes “sudden time adjustments” and L2 points to “occasional policy changes on synchronous quotas... administrative support is uneven.”

3. Students’ Point of View

Lecturer 1 viewed synchronous online learning positively, especially as a flexible alternative when in-person teaching was not possible. She appreciated the ability to explore diverse platforms and media, which allowed her to design creative and engaging classes. She believed that synchronous online learning could significantly enhance students’ knowledge if they were prepared and independent.

She noted the importance of *structure* in conducting online sessions. Her typical session began with greetings and attendance, followed by presentations or lectures, discussions, and concluded with reflective tasks. She also implemented strategies like group work, presentation roles, and the use of quizzes or interactive tools (e.g., Padlet, Google Forms) to boost student involvement.

Overall, L2 regards synchronous online learning as a valuable component of her department’s teaching toolkit: “It’s been a helpful

alternative, especially during emergencies or when students or lecturers can't be physically present." She highlighted its benefits in fostering student autonomy and digital literacy: "It teaches them flexibility, independence, and digital communication skills." Recorded sessions add further value, offering students the chance to revisit complex material.

Nonetheless, she cautioned against viewing synchronous learning as a full substitute for in-person instruction: "The biggest limitation is the lack of physical interaction and classroom atmosphere... it's harder to build emotional connection and monitor student behavior." On language acquisition, L2 observed that speaking practice thrives only when "students are willing to participate actively," and shy learners may be further inhibited by the online format.

To optimize the model, she recommends enhanced institutional support: "More training for lecturers... better infrastructure... perhaps data packages for those who need it." She concluded with this advice to colleagues: "Don't be afraid to explore different tools and platforms. Keep it simple, but meaningful. And always try to connect with your students whether it's online or offline."

a. Overall Adoption

Both lecturers see a positive departmental shift toward online modes. L1 reflects, "We're adapting quite well... many lecturers are comfortable with the tools, and students appreciate the flexibility," and L2

concurs, “The department has embraced online sessions... some resistance remains, but support is growing.”

b. Perceived Benefits

Flexibility and continuity stand out: L1 emphasizes “flexibility for urgent matters... continuity of teaching... digital literacy improved,” while L2 praises “schedule integrity... students develop self-management skills and digital competencies.”

c. Limitations vs. Face-to-Face

They agree on missing in-person elements: L1 laments, “Lacks physical presence... harder to build rapport... body-language cues are missing,” and L2 adds, “Reduced spontaneity... less immediate feedback on non-verbal cues... some students feel disconnected.”

d. Language Skill Development

Synchronous learning can support speaking if structured: L1 affirms, “It supports speaking only if students are willing... requires structured opportunities,” while L2 cautions, “It can hinder shy students... but breakout rooms and group work provide practice when facilitated properly.”

e. Recommendations

Lecturers call for improved support: L1 urges “more training on digital tools, better internet support, clear institutional guidelines,” and L2 suggests “regular professional development, dedicated IT helpdesk,

standardized scheduling policies.”

f. Advice to Peers

L1 encourages experimentation: “Start simple, be patient... keep communication open,” and L2 stresses clear expectations: “Build student contracts... leverage interactive tools gradually... collaborate with colleagues to share best practices.”

B. Discussion

The researcher conducted a qualitative approach using narrative inquiry method as the main strategy in collecting and analyzing relevant data. This method was chosen because it allowed the researcher to explore in-depth the context of synchronous online learning implementation in UIN Antasari Banjarmasin especially in English Education Department. The researcher specifically focused on two lecturers in English for Entrepreneurship Course and Teaching English For Young Learner Course in order to obtain a detailed and in-depth picture of how synchronous online learning is implemented in teaching and learning activities as well as the various characteristics and various challenges faced by both the lecturers and the students. In the discussion section of this research report, the researcher systematically presents findings obtained from the data analysis process, which are then linked to the problem formulation and research objectives that have been set previously. The main purpose of this section is to provide answers to the general and specific research questions, which include how the implementation of synchronous online

learning, what are the characteristics of synchronous online learning, and what are the challenges that faced by the students during the implementation.

With this approach, the researcher tried to present complete understanding of the reality in the field and make a meaningful contribution to the development of English learning practices that are more interactive and in accordance with the development of today's educational technology. This discussion is expected to be a reference for teachers, educational practitioners, and future researchers in developing synchronous online learning strategies more effectively and more efficiently.

The researcher focuses on the following research questions when describing the findings:

1. What are the characteristics of synchronous online learning that implemented in UIN Antasari Banjarmasin?
2. What are the challenges perceived by the lecturers on the implementation of synchronous online learning in UIN Antasari Banjarmasin?
3. What are the lecturers' point of view about the implementation of synchronous online learning in UIN Antasari Banjarmasin?

The main themes and categories identified from the data collection and analysis process were used as central concepts to relate the results of this research to previous theories on implementation of synchronous online learning

and its characteristics and its challenges. The following sections discuss each of the research issues addressed in this research:

a. Characteristics of Synchronous Online Learning

The findings of this study confirm many existing theoretical assertions about the nature and effectiveness of synchronous online learning, while also offering localized insights into how such learning is implemented in an Indonesian higher education context.

Lecturer 1 highlighted accessibility as a defining feature of synchronous learning, consistent with Amir (2020), who emphasized the importance of technological affordances in breaking down geographic and temporal limitations. Tools such as Google Meet and Google Sites were cited not only for their accessibility but also for their compatibility with institutional infrastructure, reflecting thoughtful adaptation to the digital learning ecosystem. The emphasis on these platforms indicates a practical orientation toward maximizing the availability of content and supporting asynchronous review.

Furthermore, independency emerged as a core trait of synchronous learning. Students were expected to prepare prior to class and actively contribute during sessions, which aligns with constructivist learning theories, where learners are considered active participants in their own knowledge construction. The shift from teacher-centered to student-centered practices mirrors trends in learner autonomy, especially critical in online settings where

self-regulation is often a determinant of success.

Interactivity, though rated lower, remains a crucial theme. Lecturer 1's strategy of using group presentations and breakout discussions demonstrates deliberate efforts to increase interaction, albeit within the constraints of the online medium. This finding resonates with the concerns raised by Hrastinski (2008), who argued that synchronous learning often lacks the spontaneity and immediacy of physical classrooms. However, it also reflects a move toward strategic pedagogy, where instructors innovate within available means to overcome communication barriers.

Lecturer 2's perspective complements this analysis by emphasizing independency through a more structured application of adult learning theory. By assigning discussion-leader roles and negotiating study contracts, she fosters a more accountable and self-directed learning environment. Her comment that "they are considered adult learners" reflects an intentional pedagogical stance that aligns with andragogical principles, including learner responsibility, experience-based activities, and goal-oriented tasks.

Interestingly, interactivity was rated higher in Lecturer 2's class. Her use of names during discussion and integration of current media trends (e.g., viral videos) to spark dialogue aligns with Clark & Kwinn's (2007) emphasis on active learner engagement. These techniques contribute to a sense of classroom presence and immediacy, which is often difficult to achieve online.

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Despite enrichment activities being rated lower overall, both lecturers made deliberate efforts to enhance learning through technology. Lecturer 2's use of Bamboozle ice-breakers, student-generated materials, and multimedia content reflects a growing appreciation of multimodal learning environments. These tools not only engage learners but also diversify instructional strategies, consistent with Samoylenko et al. (2022), who highlight the pedagogical potential of ICT in fostering deeper learning.

b. Challenges in Implementing Synchronous Online Learning

The challenges reported by Lecturer 1, particularly concerning time management, internet instability, and declining student attention that resonate strongly with broader research on the limitations of online learning environments, especially within developing countries. These issues are not isolated incidents but part of systemic challenges affecting educational equity, accessibility, and instructional quality (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). Internet connectivity remains a foundational issue: in regions where infrastructure is underdeveloped or unreliable, synchronous learning becomes inconsistent and exclusionary. Lecturer 1's experience mirrors this reality, as she often faced technical disruptions that

interrupted the continuity of instruction and required frequent adaptations.

One of the most prominent challenges both lecturers reported was maintaining student engagement in the absence of physical presence. Lecturer 1 emphasized that the virtual format reduces the immediacy and richness of teacher-student interactions, resulting in students appearing less responsive or focused. Therefore, physical separation in online environments can lead to psychological and communicative gaps between instructors and learners. The lack of nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions or body language, further complicates the instructor's ability to gauge understanding and adjust instruction accordingly.

Lecturer 2's reflection on "camera-off behaviors" exemplifies a widespread issue in synchronous settings: students often keep their video off, which not only hinders visibility but also affects classroom dynamics and accountability. Such behavior, although sometimes rooted in legitimate privacy or bandwidth concerns, may contribute to learner passivity and disengagement. Her strategy of immediately "stepping in to summarize" when a student disconnects reflects proactive teaching, but it also illustrates the reactive nature of synchronous instruction under uncertain conditions.

Student motivation was another recurring concern. As Lecturer 2 noted, "their level of engagement tends to be lower... they perceive it as more relaxed." This observation reflects findings by Irawan et al. (2020),

who identified “Zoom fatigue,” emotional detachment, and lack of structure as common demotivating factors in online settings. In synchronous learning, students must navigate distractions in their home environments, and many lack the self-regulation needed to remain attentive without direct supervision. The perception of online classes as less formal further diminishes intrinsic motivation.

The issue of fair assessment also emerged as a key concern. Both lecturers mentioned the difficulty of evaluating student comprehension authentically when relying solely on presentations, quizzes, or written tasks. These methods do not always reflect real-time learning processes or language proficiency, especially in language-related courses. Lecturer 2 explained the challenge of assessing speaking and listening skills without the aid of face-to-face dialogue, which supports Basaran and Yalman’s (2020) call for more nuanced and valid online assessment designs. Furthermore, the potential for academic dishonesty in unsupervised environments poses an additional threat to fairness and reliability in grading.

Time management, for both students and instructors, surfaced as a persistent challenge. The flexibility of online learning, while often lauded, can paradoxically lead to disorganization if not structured rigorously. Lecturer 2 emphasized that “time management is crucial,” pointing to difficulties in maintaining consistent schedules due to overlapping

personal, professional, and academic responsibilities. This issue is compounded in households with shared devices or limited space, where competing demands disrupt students' ability to focus or attend classes regularly.

Additionally, both lecturers pointed to institutional and administrative constraints, such as rigid curriculum requirements or inflexible synchronous quotas, which sometimes conflict with students' lived realities. While institutional scheduling flexibility was seen as a partial solution, deeper structural changes, such as asynchronous alternatives, hybrid models, or recorded session access, are needed to better accommodate students from marginalized or rural communities.

Finally, psychological and emotional stress emerged as an implicit challenge. While not always explicitly addressed by the lecturers, the strain of teaching and learning in a pandemic-accelerated digital environment, coupled with feelings of isolation and screen fatigue, is well-documented. These emotional burdens can reduce teaching effectiveness and learning retention, indicating a need for mental health awareness and support systems within institutions.

In sum, the findings illustrate that while synchronous online learning offers educational continuity during crises, its implementation is fraught with challenges that are deeply interwoven with infrastructure, pedagogy, motivation, and equity. The experiences of Lecturers 1 and 2

reflect a broader narrative: that technology alone is not sufficient. Successful synchronous learning requires systemic support, pedagogical innovation, and institutional commitment to address the realities of learners and educators, especially in under-resourced environments like UIN Antasari Banjarmasin.

c. Students' Point of View

Lecturer 1's overall perspective on synchronous online learning is notably optimistic, especially given the limitations of the local context. She acknowledged the inherent flexibility of the medium and viewed it not as a mere contingency plan, but as an opportunity to experiment with new pedagogical approaches. Her structured approach, dividing sessions into lectures, discussions, and Q&A segments that demonstrates a clear understanding of how to maintain instructional coherence online. Her integration of interactive media, such as videos and polls, further exemplifies a readiness to adapt to a digital teaching environment and sustain student interest.

This experience reinforces the idea that, despite its challenges, synchronous online learning can be pedagogically sound if intentionally designed. Lecturer 1's ability to maintain structure, engagement, and clarity underlines the importance of teacher agency and adaptability in online contexts. Her case supports existing models of online learning design (such as Anderson's Interaction Equivalency

Theorem), which suggest that well-planned instructor-learner interaction can mitigate limitations of physical absence. Moreover, her reflections highlight a broader issue: the urgent need for ongoing professional development in digital pedagogy, particularly in under-resourced institutions. Training in platform use, interactive strategies, and online assessment is critical to equip educators for dynamic virtual classrooms.

Her remarks also emphasize the significance of access to reliable technology. While pedagogical skill can offset some technological limitations, it cannot replace the necessity of stable internet infrastructure, adequate devices, and institutional support systems. Then, Lecturer 1's perspective both affirms and extends the literature, suggesting that even competent instructors are limited by systemic and logistical constraints. As such, her experience points to the need for localized strategies that take into account the infrastructure realities and learner contexts of institutions like UIN Antasari Banjarmasin.

In contrast, Lecturer 2 offers a more nuanced and cautious endorsement of synchronous learning. She regards it as a "valuable alternative... although it still can't fully replace face-to-face learning." This measured stance aligns with Flynn-Wilson and Reynolds (2021), who argue that online learning expands access and flexibility but lacks

some of the intangible benefits of in-person education. For Lecturer 2, the benefits included increased digital competence, flexible scheduling, and the ability to record and replay sessions, a particularly helpful feature for students who experience connection problems or need additional reinforcement.

However, her insights address the limitations of synchronous online learning. She emphasizes a reduced emotional connection between teachers and students, and the loss of a cohesive classroom atmosphere, concerns that mirror Watts (2016), who maintains that the physical presence of peers and instructors fosters motivation, spontaneity, and stronger interpersonal engagement. Particularly in language education, Lecturer 2 highlights that speaking practice only succeeds when students are self-driven and motivated, an observation that supports Minocha & Roberts (2008), who stress the need for structured and frequent interactive speaking opportunities to cultivate oral proficiency.

Furthermore, Lecturer 2's reflections contribute practical insights to the discussion. Her recommendations, including enhanced lecturer training in digital tools, investment in better internet access, and student support for data plans and devices that are aligned with institutional strategies for improving e-learning outcomes (Stefanovic et al., 2011). These points reinforce the idea that technology

integration is not simply a technical issue, but a strategic institutional concern that requires coordination across administrative, pedagogical, and technological dimensions.

Taken together, the lecturers' experiences affirm a number of existing theoretical models, such as Garrison et al.'s Community of Inquiry framework, which emphasizes the interplay between teaching presence, social presence, and cognitive presence in successful online learning. However, their accounts also highlight the need for contextual sensitivity, then generic best practices may not always translate smoothly into resource-limited environments. Institutions like UIN Antasari Banjarmasin must tailor their online learning strategies to local constraints, including connectivity issues, digital literacy gaps, and diverse learner needs.

In conclusion, while both lecturers recognize the potential value of synchronous online learning, their insights underscore that its effectiveness depends on much more than platform access. It requires intentional design, teacher training, technological investment, and institutional commitment to ensure equitable and meaningful learning experiences. Their reflections thus bridge theory and practice, offering grounded, context-specific lessons for improving online education in similar developing-country settings.