

# EFL students' perceptions and preferences of online learning: a Japanese higher education context

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## Research Reasons

- Anxiety & uncertainty about how students feel
- Inclusive - ensure equal access to material
- Evidence based approach to strategy

### Research Questions:

1. What were Japanese students' experiences with online classes?
2. What were their preferences and concerns?

### Private Japanese University in Tokyo

#### Technology available:

- Zoom
- Google Education (Meets, Classroom, Docs, etc)
- Freedom to select others too (e.g. FlipGrid)
- Students provided with device & wifi support if needed

#### School directives:

- Freedom to choose technology and approach
- Recommended maximum synchronous class to be 80 mins

#### Class Types:

- Department classes 100 students +
- Foreign Language classes under 25 students
- Zemi

## Research Context

## Method

### Data Collection

- Collected in September 2020 : one semester and one month online classes
- 9-Item questionnaire via Google Forms
  - Demographics (close-ended)
  - Accessibility (close-ended)
  - Experience & Preferences (open-ended)
- English and Japanese responses accepted

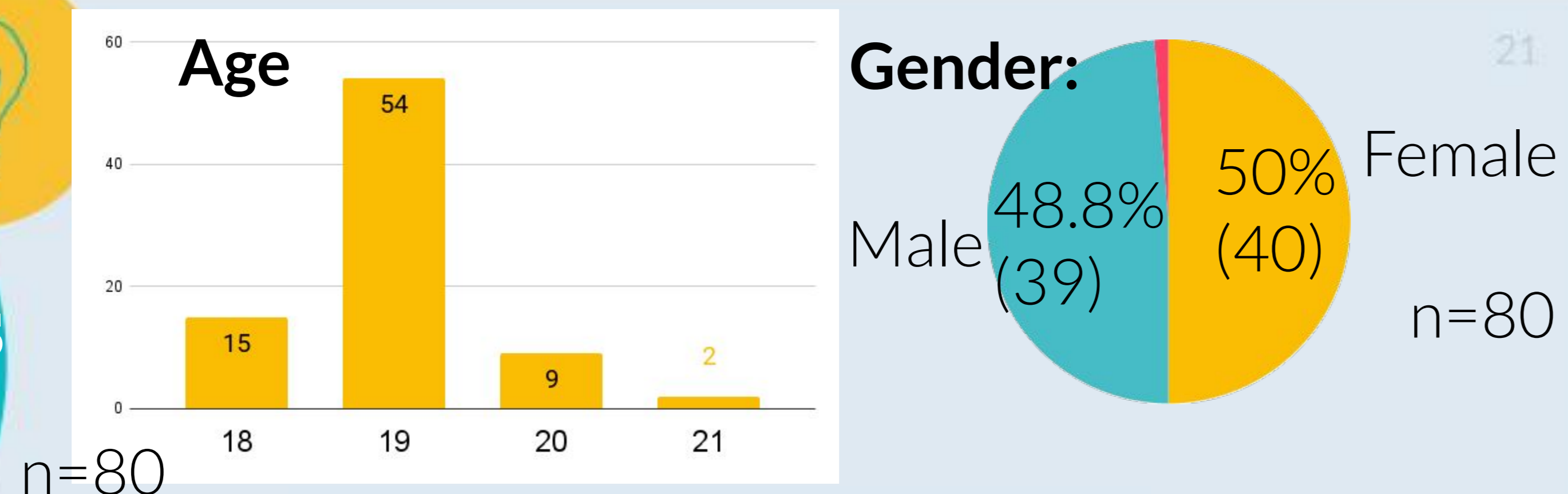
### Participants:

- Recruited from 6 freshmen (1st year) classes
- 84 responded from 96 surveys sent out (87.5% response rate)
- Student consent provided

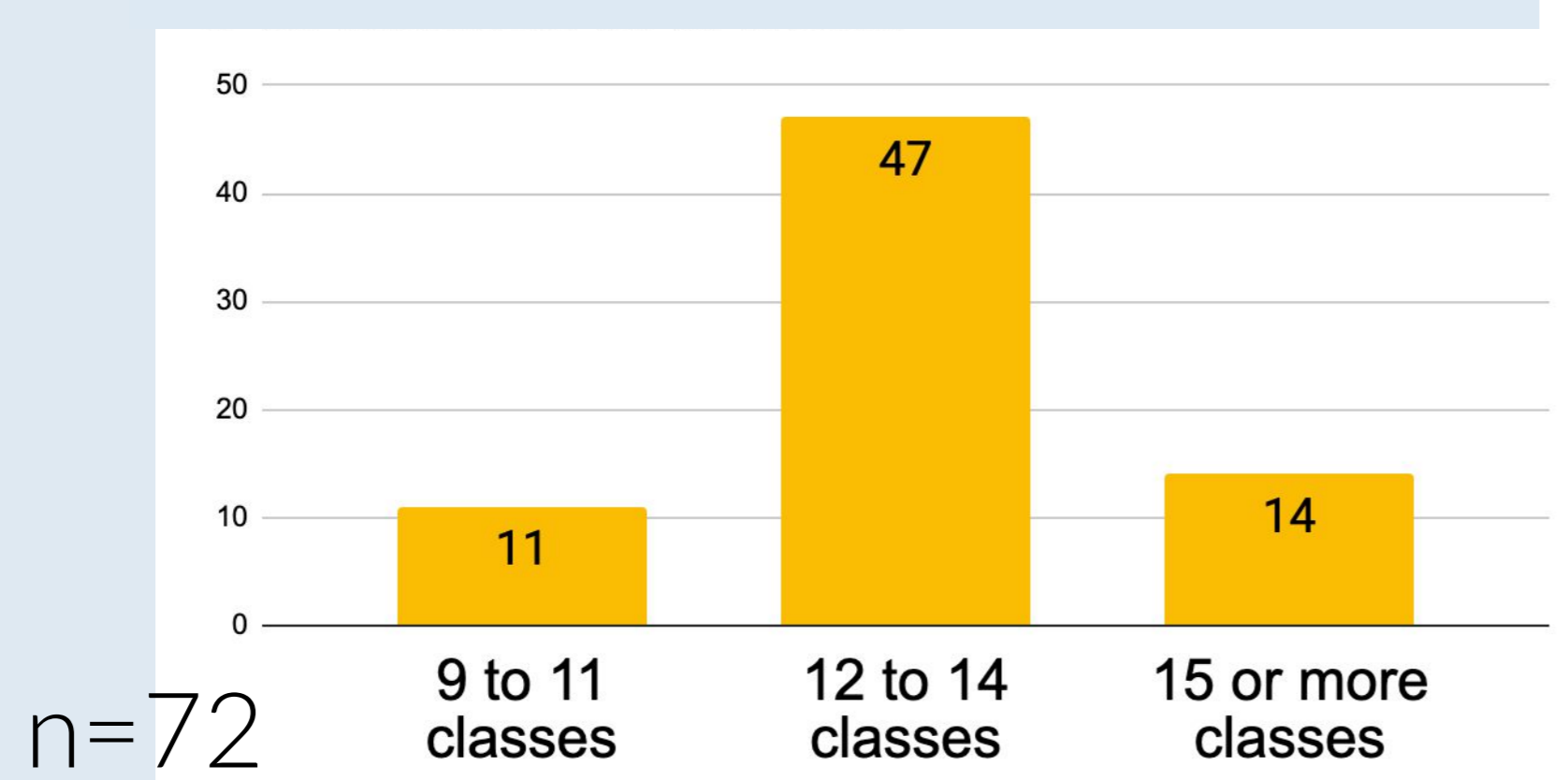
### Data Analysis

- Excel for descriptive analysis of close-ended items
- Constant-comparative method for coding of open ended items
- Thematic analysis

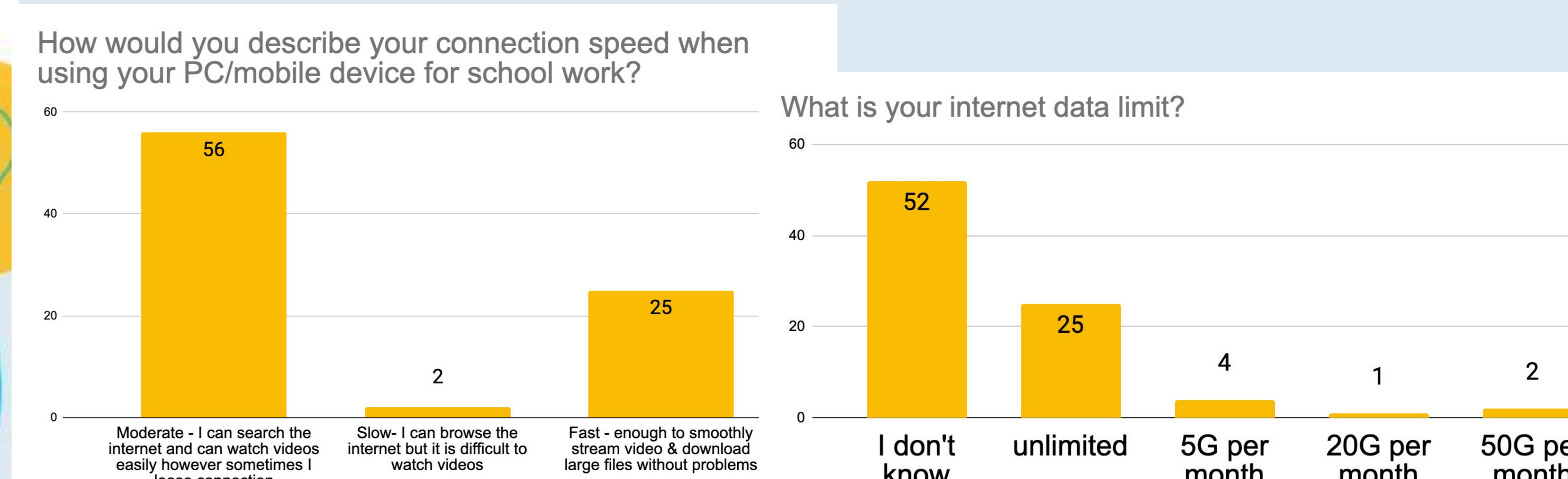
## Demographics



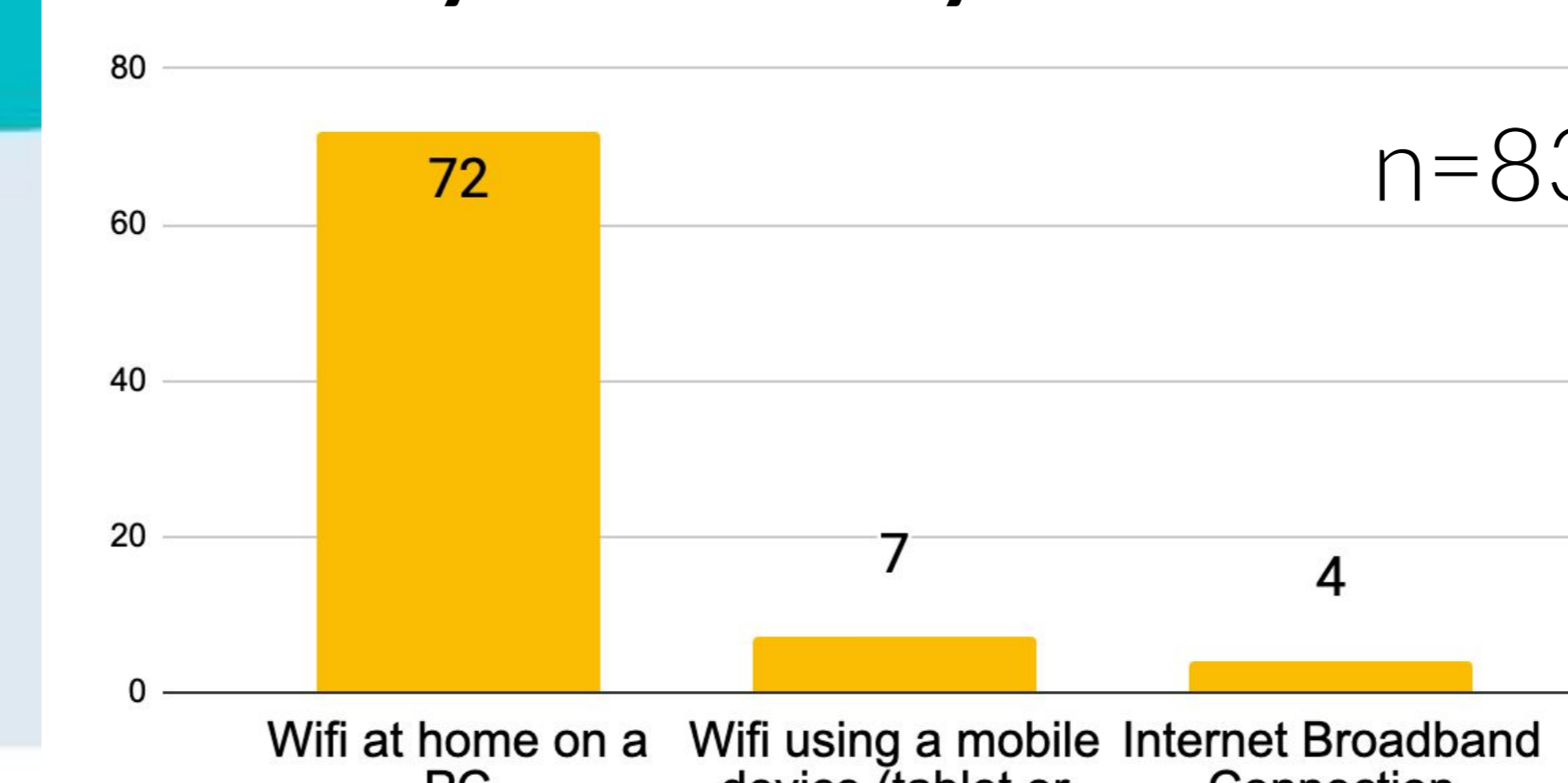
### # of classes in one week:



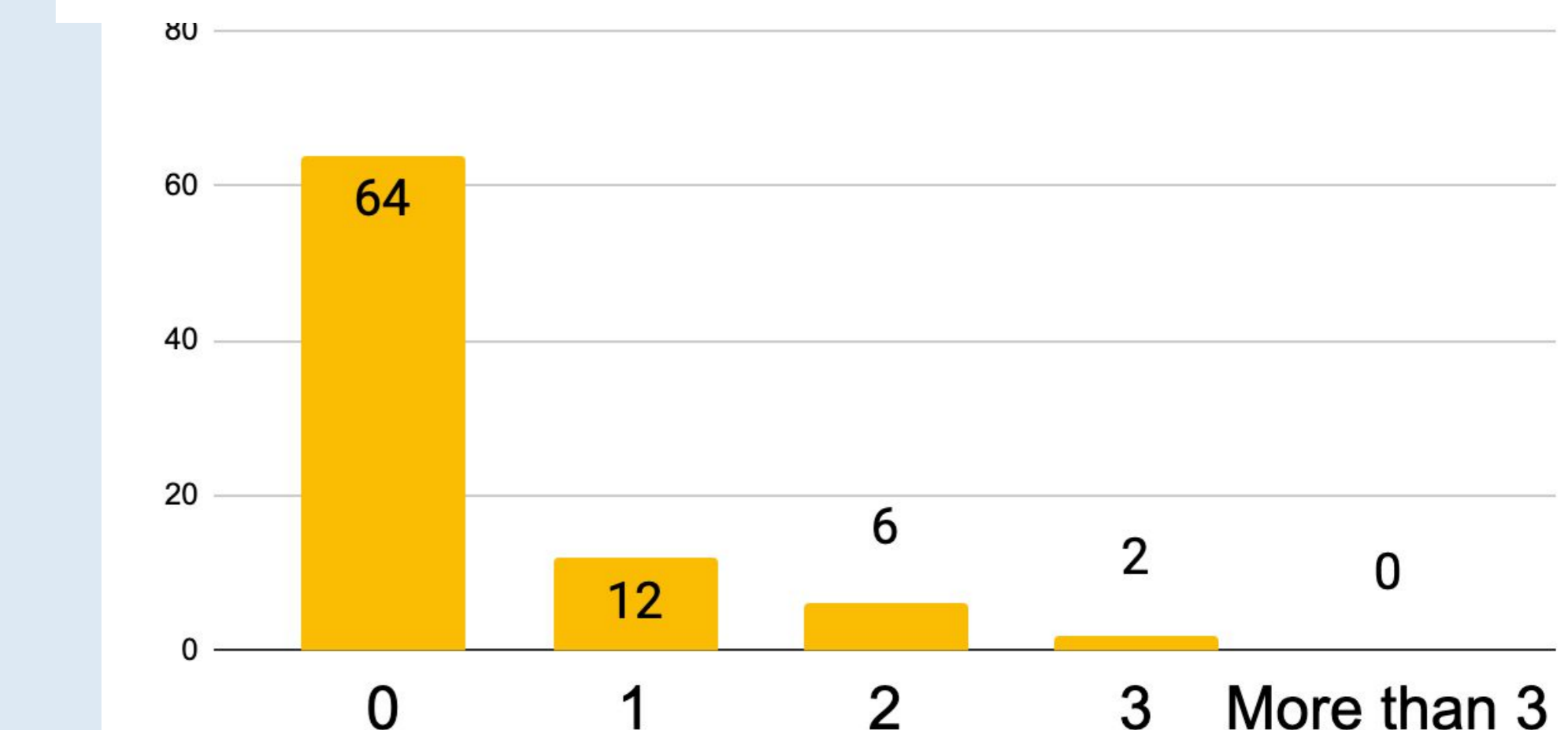
## Accessibility



### How do you access your classes



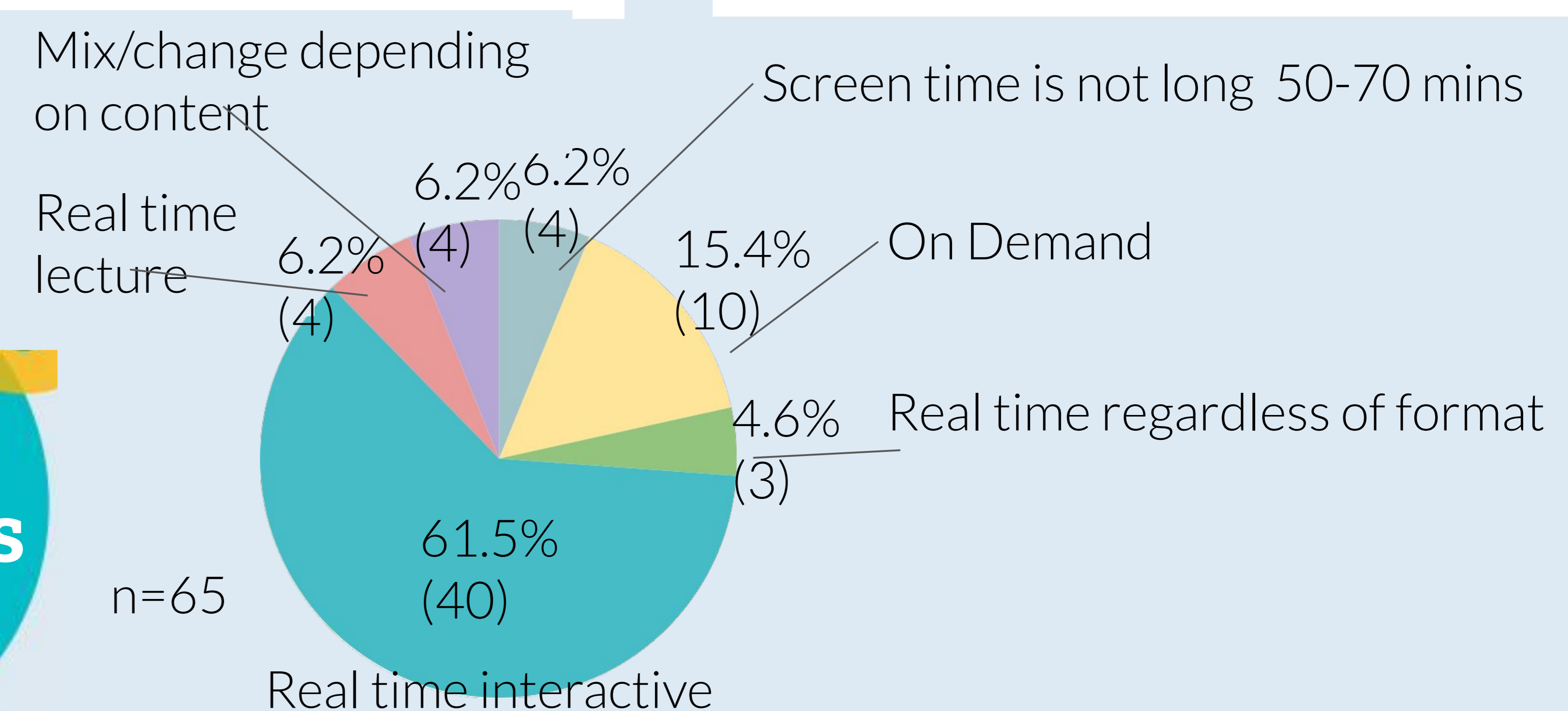
### # of other people using the same device



## Results: Experiences

- Smaller Foreign Language (communicative) classes generally had interactive online classes
- Most larger lecture style classes live streamed lectures but some (relatively much less) switched to 100% on-demand.
  - "17 courses: 3 put video and discussion, 1 used google meets for a mix of lecture and conversation. 12 were lecture style so we were watching the lesson but not talking. 1 only posted sounds and resumes, we only had to submit a short report."
  - "Out of 14; 4-used Zoom for 80 mins lecture style so we were watching the lesson but not talking, 1 one put videos and discussions, 3 used Zoom or google meets for a mix of lecture and conversations, others only posted videos and gave us written assignments."
  - "Most classes were conducted in real-time ZOOM, and English and French classes were often asked to speak. For other classes, only materials were sent, and reports were submitted for them."

## Results: Preferences



### Prefer Real Time Interactive

Response n=40, No reason n=6

Reasons	Responses n=34	Reponse %
Communication with students	25	73.5%
Communication with teacher	2	5.8%
Communication with both students and teacher	2	5.8%
Can practice	4	11.8%
Can confirm information easier	1	2.9%

### Prefer Real Time Lecture

Response n=3

Reasons	Count
Prefer to watch, not talk	1
Focus more than on demand	1
Schedule is decided	1

### Prefer On Demand

Response n=10, No reason n=1

Reasons	Count
Can understand it better/watch it many times	2
Study at my own pace/time/when internet conditions are good	7

## Results: Concerns

"I want you to write what shout we do as homework in case we couldn't understand in class."

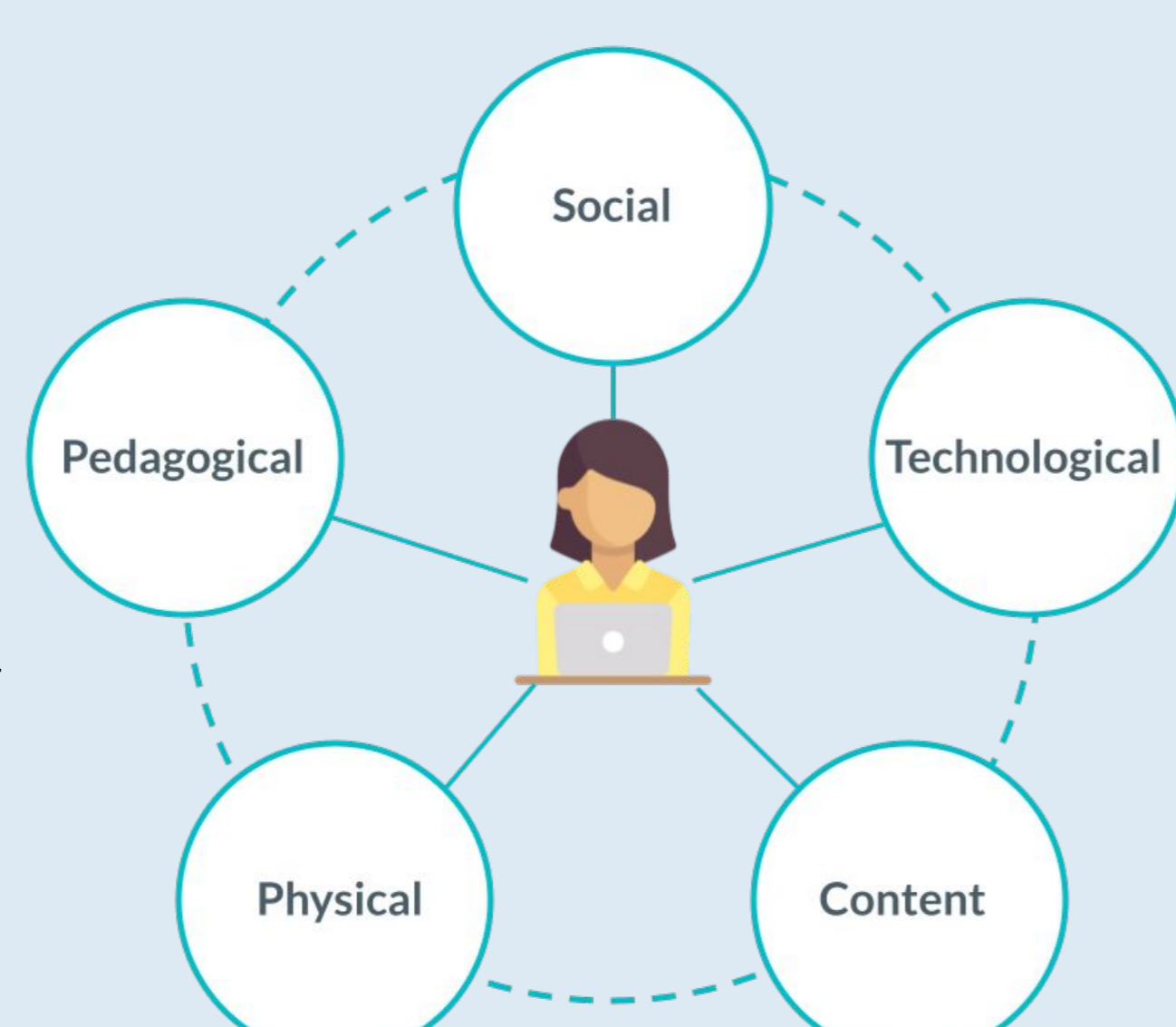
"My eyes get really stressed out and my neck as well."

It is stressful to face the computer all the time. Also, since it is difficult to ask questions to teachers and friends, I may be worried that I may have overlooked some homework.

"In last semester, I often felt a little bit lonely when I did my assignments and I didn't know the right way to approach them. I would like to talk with my friends about assignments and classes much more."

"Difficult to make friends"

"In many cases, I could not participate in group work due to unstable connection."



"I think it is difficult to use Google Classroom."

"Sometimes I loose the connection. Especially when using a zoom for conversations, I often had to video off because my voice wasn't heard by others."

"Cannot understand after returning into class when losing connection."

## Results: Preference Reasons

### Time is not too long (50-70 mins)

Response n=4

Reasons	Count
Hard to keep focus	2
Eyes become tired looking at the screen	2

### Mix/Changing modes

Response n=4, No reason n=2

Reasons	Count
Real time for discussion but lectures or information on demand	2

### Real time regardless of mode

Response n=3, No reason n=1

Reasons	Count
Schedule is decided	2