SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING IN ONLINE EFL CLASSROOMS

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Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, EFL teaching and learning has been concucted synchronously and asynchronously. Synchronous learning has some benefits, such as facilitating direct interaction between students and teachers, letting the students to give direct reviews and comments on other students' work and allowing the students to ask questions get direct responses from their teachers. Meanwhile, the advantages of asynchronous learning are (1) the students have more time to comprehend and discuss their learning materials with their friends, (2) the learning can be done everytime and everywhere and (3) the teachers and the learners are not bounded by the time. Thus, it is highly recommended for the English teachers and lecturers to be able to select the approriate learning modes for their EFL classes.

Keywords: *synchronous learning, asynchronous learning, online EFL classrooms*

Abstrak

Selama pandemi COVID-19, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris daring sebagai bahasa asing telah dilaksanakan secara langsung dan tidak langasung. Pembelajaran online yang langsung memiliki kelebihan –kelebihan, antara lain memfasilitasi terjadinya interaksi langsung antara guru dan murid, siswa bisa memberikan review dan komentarnya terhadap tugas kelompok lain secara langsung dan siswapun bisa langsung bertanya dan mendapatkan jawaban secara langsung atas materi yang sedang dipelajarinya. Sedangkan, pembelajaran online yang tidak langsung memiliki kelebihan antara alain: (1) siswa memiliki waktu yang lebih banyak untuk memahami dan mendiskusikan materi yang dipelajarinya bersama teman-temannya, (2) pembelajaran bisa dilakukan kapanpun dan dimanapun dan (3) guru dan siswa tidak terikat oleh waktu. Oleh karena itu, sangat direkomendasikan bagi guru dan dosen bahasa Inggris untuk bisa memilih moda pembelajaran online yang tepat untuk kelas-kelas bahasa Inggrisnya.

Kata Kunci: *pembelajaran online langsung, pembelajaran online tidak langsung, kelas EFL online*

1. INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 pandemic outbreak has changed all the people's activities including the activities in the education sector. All countries in the world including Indonesia has shifted their education system from face-to-face meeting into online learning. Especially in Indonesia, this change happened since March, 2020. Indonesian education minister has decided and instructed to all teachers and lecturers in Indonesia to hold online learning. Therefore, all Indonesian teachers and lecturers including English teachers and lecturers conducted various models of teaching in their teaching and learning.

All the teachers and lecturers of English conducted their English learning as creatively as possible. They used some different applications and platforms in teaching English. Those applications and platforms are Google Classroom, Schoology, WhatsApp, Zoom, Google Meet, Autodesk Sketch Book, TEDEd, FastStone Capture, Google Forms, Quizizz and Kahoot (Atmojo and Nugroho, 2020). In the online English learning during this COVID-19 pandemic, the teachers combined some platforms and applications to make their teaching and learning English become easy, easy for the teachers in delivering the materials to be studied and easy for the students to understand the materials.

Dealing with the running of the English teaching and learning during this pandemic of COVID-19 in Indonesia., there are several studies which investigated the students' perceptions on it. Amin and Sundari, (2020) held a survey research about the students' perceptions on the use of Cisco WebEx Meeting, Google Classroom and WhatsApp in the remote English classrooms to 140 university students in Jakarta and Aceh. Their study results showed that (1) the students felt the real language communication when using Cisco WebEx Meeting, (2) there was a good potential for using Google Classroom for learning English online but it should be combined with other applications or plaforms in order to create the communicative classroom and (3) the students preferred using WhatsApp because of its practicality.

Then, Tanjung and Utomo (2021) found that university students have positive and negative perceptions on the teaching and learning online English carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic in low-tech environment. The positive impacts for the students are that (1) they become familiar with the e-learning applications and platforms and e-learning resources, (2) their digital literacy is developed and (3) their knowledge about certain learning applications is expanded as well. Meanwhile, their negative perceptions can be explained as follows: (1) they are not optimal in participating the learning activities because of the problems related to the internet in Indonesia, (2) they felt that the interaction between the lecturers and the students are still less and (3) their motivation in learning is influenced by the learning schedule that is not consistence. It is supported by Anwar and Wahid (2021) finding that although the online learning was assumed as an effective and cheap way to get the knowledge but they felt that their interaction with their lecturers were still less. In addition, Hendrawaty, Angkarini and Retnomurti (2021) found that the students preferred using WhatsApp Group, Email, Google Classroom and YouTube channel for their online classes.

There are also studies exploring the teachers' perceptions on teaching English online amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. One of them is a study by Nuraeni (2021) finding that the English teachers have positive perspective on using mobile-assisted language learning during their online teaching. Mobile learning is advantageous because it is portable, interactive and easy to access. Besides that, other study by Nugroho, Haghegh and Triana (2021) showed that the English teachers faced some challenges in thier online learning, such as lack of familiary in using digital platforms, lack of ability to give fast feedbacks to students' assignments and lack of students' motivation and engagement. Furthermore, the study by Yulianto and Mujtahid (2021) revealed that the teachers have problems on carrying out assessment test because of the connection of the internet, the assessment validity and the less students' enthusiasm.

Teaching and learning English remotely during this COVID-19 pandemic has been done synchronously and asynchronously. Synchronous learning is an online learning where the teachers and the students interact in their online class at the same time. Meanwhile, asynchronous learning is the opposite of synchronous learning, the teachers and the students do not interact at the same time. The further discussion about synchronous and asynchronous English learning can be explained as follows.

2. SYNCHRONOUS EFL LEARNING

This COVID-19 pandemic causes the English teachers and lecturers conduct their teaching remotely. One of the ways in their teaching is using synchronous learning.

2.1 The Definition of A Synchronous EFL Learning

When teaching English remotely, the teachers and the students interact in the real time or at the same time, then, it is called as a synchronous learning. The applications which are usually used in the synchronous learning are Zoom, Skype, and Google Meet (Subekti, 2020). Furthermore, Riwayatiningsih and Sulistyani (2020) state that video conferencing, teleconferencing, live chatting and livestreaming lectures can become the teaching models in the synchronous learning . Synchronous learning is basically like the teaching and learning happening in the offline class but it happens virtually. In synchronous learning, the students and the teachers meet in an online meeting via video conference platforms. The teachers can present the materials on PowerPoint slides, textbooks, word documents, pdf documents and other types of documents during the teaching and learning process in this synchronous learning. The

students also can do the presentations. After the teachers deliver the materials or after the students carry out the presentations, the teachers and the students can make discussions about the materials being studied in their virtual classess as well as the teachers can give the feedbacks or the answers of the students' questions. All in all, the activities in the face-to-face learning can be brought into this synchronous learning. The difference is that the teachers and the students can meet directly in the far distance even unlimited distance. Besides, Nikmah and 'Azimah (2020) argue that the classroom, the media and the conference are the main factors in the synchronous online learning. Meanwhile, Khan in Shahabadi and Uplane (2015) states that synchronous online learning is as an interaction of students and teachers via Web in the real time.

2.2 The Advantages of A Synchronous Online Learning

According to Perveen (2016), there are some advantages of a synchronous learning., such as:
a. The voices , text chat rooms, and video-conferencing which are synchronous create the interaction chance of teacher-student and student-student.
b. The students have high motivation to be engaged in the online class.
c. The students get the direct feedbacks and answers from the teachers.

Additionally, Riwayatiningsih and Sulistyani (2020) mention that synchronous learning provides direct input, greater encouragement and the responsibility to participate and be present. It is supported by Rinekso and Muslim (2020) who argue that synchronous learning can (1) facilitate the students to deliver ideas, questions and answers as well as to get answers from the teacher directly, (2) improve the students' critical thinking and writing skills and (3) give the students opportunities to make negotiations with their teacher about the students' tasks.

2.3 The Teaching Steps of A Synchronous Online Learning

Moallem (2015) presents the steps of teaching in a synchronous learning, as follows:
a. The students are given reading assignments covering instructors' lecture and multimedia materials a week before live/synchronous meeting.
b. The students are divided into groups of four and asked to discuss about the problems in their materials being studied in the breakout meeting rooms
c. The students are given time for a week to complete their assignments
d. The students are only allowed to make discussion synchronously
e. At the end of each week's live meeting, the groups present their assignments to other groups
f. Other groups give live review and comments
g. The teacher gives the feedback and comments synchronously after all the groups' reviews and comments

3. ASYNCHRONOUS EFL LEARNING

During this pandemic of COVID-19, the English teachers and lecturers also do their emergency remote teaching asynchronously.

3.1 The Definition of An Asynchronous EFL Learning

The EFL teachers and the EFL learners do the online learning not at the real time, then, this kind of learning is called as asynchronous learning. They do the teaching and learning process at the different time. The teachers deliver the materials at first through some applications. Next, the students study the materials later. The students have several days to understand and comprehend the materials being studied independently from the learning management systems that they use. The learning management systems (LMSs) usually used in this asynchronous learning are Google Classroom, Kahoot, and Schoology. The The students do not directly respond to the teachers' explanations and assignments. They submit the assignments or deliver the questions of the explanations given by the teachers some days after the teachers give the materials on those LMSs. In addition, the teachers also can deliver the materials through an email and the students also give the responses from their emails. Furthermore, Nikmah and 'Azimah

(2020) explain that an asynchronous online learning is a learning community which is interactive because it is not limited by the place, the time and the classroom. Khan in Shahabadi and Uplane (2015) supports this by stating that asynchronous online learning refers to an instruction which the geography and the time do not constrain.

3.2 The Advantages of An Asynchronous Online Learning

An asynchronous learning has some strengths. Perveen (2016) explains the strengths of an asynchronous learning as follows: (1) being flexible to be operated, (2) providing the learning materials that can be accessed whenever and wherever, (3) being not time bound, (4) being able to be responded by the students when they are free so that the students can use their HOTS to understand the materials and increase their divergent thinking, (5) creating less reliance on memory and notes and more chance to discuss, (6) making the students less shy because of no direct interaction with their teachers and (7) having less problems with the technology because of the much time to do the learning.

3.3 The Teaching Steps of An Asynchronous Online Learning

Moallem (2015) explain the procedures of teaching in asynchronous learning as follows:
a. The students are given the reading assignments containing instructors' lecture and multimedia materials) a week earlier
b. The students are asked to make groups of four for discussing their assignments for a week
c. The students are not allowed to meet synchronously in completing their assignments
d. At the end of the week, all the groups have to submit and publish their assignments the teams
e. Every group is ordered to give review or comments to other groups' work
f. The teacher gives feedback and comments after all the groups give their reviews and comments.

4. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1. Conclusion

To sump up, synchronous and asynchronous EFL learning have thier own advantages. Both of them contibutes much on the success of EFL learning during this COVID-19 pandemic.

4.2 Suggestion

Synchronous and asynchronous online EFL teaching and learning has helped the EFL teachers and learners to conduct their EFL distance learning during this COVID-19 pandemic. Both of those modes can run well. Therefore, it is suggested for EFL teachers to implement these two modes of learning in the post COVID-19 pandemic era appropriately so that the various environment of EFL learning can be reached.

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