



## Using Asynchronous Discussion for Teaching and Learning in EFL Class During Pandemic\*

<sup>1</sup>Muhammad Sahrir Aras\*\*, <sup>2</sup>Muhammad Ybnu T

<sup>1</sup> STKIP Tomakaka Tiwikrama, Pasangkayu, Indonesia  
muhsahrir365@gmail.com\*\*

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Tomakaka, Mamuju, Indonesia  
ibnutaufan125@gmail.com

---

### Article Info

#### Keywords:

Asynchronous discussion  
Students' Perception  
Pandemic  
Covid-19

#### History:

Received: April 1, 2022  
Accepted: April 2, 2022  
Published: May 31, 2022

\*Research article

\*\*Correspondence author

#### How to cite (APA):

Aras, M. S., Ybnu T, M. (2022). Using asynchronous discussion for teaching and learning in EFL class during the pandemic. *Journal of Teaching and Education for Scholars (JOTES)*, 1(1), 1-6.

---

### Abstract

This research investigates the students' perception of asynchronous discussion for teaching and learning in EFL classes during the pandemic. This research was descriptive qualitative research conducted at STKIP Tomakaka Tiwikrama Pasangkayu. The data was collected through observation and interviews and analyzed using the Interactive Analysis model. The result of the study shows that most of the students were pleased with the asynchronous discussion format. The students believe that the asynchronous discussion is used effectively for teaching and learning in EFL class during the pandemic. Additionally, sharing information between students during the meeting allows them to improve their knowledge and eradicate misconceptions. The eradication of misunderstanding was done through several phases: ideas exchange, evaluation of own belief, and reconstruction of the new view.

## Introduction

Currently, the world is struggling against the Covid-19 pandemic. In the education sector, efforts are continuously being made so that the teaching and learning processes do not stop due to this pandemic disaster (Arfan et al., 2021). Using an online learning model is an alternative way to ensure that the teaching and learning process continues during a pandemic (Misnawati, 2021). Due to the advancement in communication technology, teachers can carry out the teaching and learning process online.

### *Asynchronous Online Discussion*

Online discussion is a popular learning method used in the online learning environment. According to Krasnova & Ananjev (2015), online discussion has become a part of academic activities that create opportunities for collaborative learning based on a student-centered approach. The interactions in the online discussion are an essential component that brings students to the knowledge acquisition (Khlaif et al., 2017).

Generally speaking, the online discussion provides some advantages for students. Besides, it can help them learn to use the internet as a source of information. They can also reach out to other students and teachers to exchange ideas (Marín Díaz et al., 2013). Mainly, online discussion can be divided into synchronous and asynchronous (Amiti, 2020). The synchronous discussion is the real-time online chat that facilitates students and teachers to discuss together.

In contrast to the synchronous discussion, the asynchronous discussion is text-based only, using an online discussion board. To participate in the discussion, the discussants do not need to be present simultaneously. Additionally, the discussants can review their submissions before submitting them to the forum (Nandi et al., 2012).

There are some advantages students can get from learning through asynchronous discussion. The students can gain knowledge of the course content, but it also develops students' analytical thinking through high-quality participation in online discussion forums (Lyu, 2018). Similarly, the asynchronous discussion is an effective means for developing and enhancing critical thinking skills and writing in an online course (Aloni & Harrington, 2018).

There are many options of online learning tools that teachers could use to facilitate asynchronous discussion. Online learning tools are more common in today's online learning practice. The role of online learning tools such as Edmodo and Google Classroom is essential for online learning. Not only considered more appropriate but also an effective tool for online learning during pandemic (Cakrawati, 2017; Okmawati, 2020).

STKIP Tomakaka Tiwikrama is one of the universities in West Sulawesi located in Pasangkayu regency. This research aims to investigate the students' perception of the use of asynchronous discussion for English teaching and learning during the pandemic. In this university, most lecturers carry out the teaching and learning process in online mode during the Covid-19 pandemic. The lecturers were identified using Edmodo and Google Classroom to facilitate the asynchronous discussion in EFL class during the pandemic. Based on the observation, some lecturers used asynchronous discussion to develop students' knowledge of the course's subject matter.

Therefore, this research addresses the research question as follows:

1. What is the students' opinion on the asynchronous discussion using Edmodo for teaching and learning in EFL class during a pandemic?
2. What is the students' opinion on the asynchronous discussion using Google Classroom for teaching and learning in EFL class during a pandemic?

## **Method**

This research is descriptive qualitative research. This research describes the students' opinions concerning asynchronous discussion for English teaching and learning during a pandemic. This research was conducted at STKIP Tomakaka Tiwikrama Pasangkayu. The research subject was the students of English Department in academic year 2021/2022, which amounted to 34 students chosen using the purposive sampling technique. The primary data was collected through observation and semi-structured interviews. The data was analyzed using the Interactive Analysis model by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014).

## **Results**

During the online discussion process, lecturers used two online learning tools to facilitate the asynchronous discussion at STKIP Tomakaka Tiwikrama; Edmodo and Google Classroom. Therefore, the analysis of the students' opinions concerning the asynchronous discussion is presented in two parts.

### ***The students' opinion on the asynchronous discussion using Edmodo***

This research found that most students were pleased with an asynchronous discussion using Edmodo during pandemics. A student said that doing asynchronous discussion through Edmodo is quite good because it gives enough time for her to learn and understand the subject matters discussed or discussed. It can be seen in the following extract:

*" Doing online discussion through Edmodo is quite good because it gives us enough time to understand what is discussed in the forum. Therefore, we can learn and analyze it first before posting a comment."* Source: Students interview (January 24, 2022).

A student said that the discussion held in Edmodo could remind them about the course's subject matter, especially the topic selected to be discussed in the class. In addition, many students said that it was helpful for them to remember the course's subject matter. It can be seen in the following extract:

*" I think it is pretty good to discuss through Edmodo. Because the discussion is always there, it makes me remember well about the course's subject matter. It is one of the benefits of doing online discussions through Edmodo. Since the discussion is written there, we can see them whenever we want."* Source: Students interview (January 24, 2022).

Some students said that this discussion format offers psychological advantages for students during its implementation. It allows them to express opinions without anxiousness or fear. That is why students so much prefer this discussion format. It can be seen in the following extract:

*"In face-to-face discussion, many students are less confident. However, when discussing online using Edmodo, students can discuss with no worries, fear or nervous."* Source: Students interview (January 24, 2022).

A student said that doing discussion asynchronously through Edmodo is so much more flexible and effective since it can be done anywhere, also, the students can read and learn more during the discussion. Some students also said that this discussion is more effective. It can be seen in the following extract:

*"In my opinion, it is so effective and flexible to discuss through Edmodo because we can discuss from anywhere, like home, campus, or other places. In addition, this discussion is so much better because we have enough time to read and learn about the topic discussed."* Source: Students interview (January 24, 2022).

Most importantly, students feel that doing online discussions asynchronously helps improve their knowledge. It is because during the discussion process, they could exchange opinion each other. When debating, they always try to present factual information. A student said that doing online discussions in Edmodo can improve his knowledge and develop his critical thinking too. It can be seen in the following extract:

*"In my opinion, it is good to discuss this application because it can add my knowledge regarding the course's subject matter and develop my critical thinking. It is because, during the discussion process, we share information. During the debate, we always try to present a logical and irrefutable explanation to our friends."* Source: Students interview (January 24, 2022).

### ***The students' opinion on the asynchronous discussion using Google Classroom***

This research found that most students were pleased with asynchronous discussion through Google Classroom. A student said that the discussion format made him feel comfortable in expressing his thought. Like Edmodo, some students confess that doing online discussions through Google Classroom is helpful. It can be seen in the extract below:

*"I think that it is good to have discussions in Google Classroom because I feel free to express my opinion. Unlike the face-to-face discussion, it is easier for me to say something there in Google Classroom."* Source: Students interview (January 25, 2022).

A student said that doing online discussion through Google Classroom is much easier than the face-to-face discussion. Similarly, some students also said that doing online discussions asynchronously is more preferred. It can be seen from the following extract:

*"In my opinion, it is good to discuss Google Classroom. We can share our opinion simply by typing it on our phone, so we don't need to speak out during the discussion process like what we usually do in the face-to-face discussion."* Source: Students interview (January 25, 2022).

Most importantly, students confess that the discussion is constructive in eradicating students' misconceptions or misunderstandings. A student said that the discussion could eliminate his misconception. When he joined the discussion, he got a lot of information that contradicted what he had understood. Then, after a fierce debate with their friends, he could clear up his misunderstanding about a particular concept. It can be seen from the following extract:

*"I think that doing online discussion through Google Classroom is quite good because it can improve my knowledge and straighten out my misconceptions. During the discussion, I found that what I understood about a particular concept differed from what my friends understood. First, I think they have misunderstood it, but apparently, I'm the one who misunderstood. After doing a lot of discussion with my friends, I finally identified the right concept."* Source: Students interview (January 25, 2022).

### **Discussions**

The analysis result shows that most of the students were pleased with the asynchronous discussion. It is in line with the impact of the research found by Hew and Cheung (2012), that although online discussion needs a longer time frame to run, it is much more preferred because it is considered flexible. It is because it can be carried out anywhere and everywhere as long as the users are still able to connect to the internet. Most of the students were delighted with this type of discussion because they could benefit from it, including effectiveness and flexibility.

Doing online discussion in asynchronous mode is apparently decreasing the students' psychological problems and establish students' self-confidence. This finding is in line with the

result of the research conducted by Rahman (2010) and Nor et al. (2010). Asynchronous discussion mode could overcome the students' psychological troubles. It provides environment for the students to be more confident in giving response. It gives the students more time to interpret and analyze the submission before submitting their responses. In addition, it also helps the students be more confident in expressing their opinion compared to face-to-face discussion.

The asynchronous discussions give opportunity for the students to understand more about the subject matter that being discussed. Because all of the responses are written in the discussion board, it enables the participants to re-read the responses at any time and give them much more time to analyze them so that they can give proper response to the comment. Furthermore, the finding of this research is also in line with the result of the study found by Lyu (2018).

Most importantly, this research found that the asynchronous discussion positively impacts the students thinking capability. It is in line with the result of the study presented by Schwartz et al. (2011) that asynchronous online discussion develops students' high order of thinking skills. Higher-order thinking required by the assignment will generate higher levels of thinking, as demonstrated in the reflections posted by students.

Furthermore, this research found that the asynchronous discussion could also eliminate the students' misconceptions. During the discussion process, there is an opportunity for students to evaluate their own beliefs and then reconstruct their own opinions. In the first phase, students exchange their ideas during the discussion. There is a process of trading a lot of information between them. This includes factual and analytical data. When this happens, there is a possibility of a discrepancy of opinions between one student and another. In the next phase, this contradiction will cause all students to try to find out the truth concerning the fact, concept, or theory discussed by searching it through reference books or the internet. At the end of the phase, all students who get involved in the discussion will evaluate their understanding and will refer to the one valid and trusted source of literature so that it will straighten out the students' misunderstanding. Finally, students will be aware of their misunderstanding and reconstruct new understanding due to self-understanding evaluation.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the result of the research, it is concluded that most of the students were pleased with the use of asynchronous discussion for English learning during the pandemic. Most of the students seem to have gained advantages from this type of discussion, such as effectiveness and flexibility, reducing psychological problems, and eradicating misconceptions. The process of students' misconception eradication in asynchronous discussion comes up with several phases: (1) ideas exchange, (2) evaluation of own belief, and (3) reconstruction of the new belief.

## **Acknowledgments**

This research is supported and funded by the University of Tomakaka. We also thank the Head of STKIP, Tomakaka Tiwikrama, for his massive support during the study to complete this research very well.

## References

- Aloni, M., & Harrington, C. (2018). Research based practices for improving the effectiveness of asynchronous online discussion boards. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, 4(4), 271–289. <https://doi.org/10.1037/stl0000121>
- Amiti, F. (2020). Synchronous and Asynchronous E-Learning. *European Journal of Open Education and E-Learning Studies*, 5(2), 60–70. <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejoe.v5i2.3313>
- Arfan, H. H., Misnawati, Sakkir, G., Puspita, N., Akbar, Z., Asriadi, & Yusriadi, Y. (2021). Student Learning Interest in Covid-19 Pandemic Age by Blended E-Learning ( Asynchronous and Synchronous ). *Proceedings of the International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management Singapore*, 6330–6339.
- Cakrawati, L. M. (2017). Students' perceptions on the use of online learning platforms in EFL classroom. *English Language Teaching and Technology Journal (ELT-Tech Journal)*, 1(1), 22–30. <http://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/ELTTech/article/view/9428>
- Hew, K.F & Cheung W.S, (2012). *Student Participation in Online Discussions Challenges, Solutions, and Future Research*. Springer: New York.
- Khlaif, Z., Nadiruzzaman, H., & Kwon, K. (2017). Types of Interaction in Online Discussion Forums: A Case Study. *Journal of Educational Issues*, 3(1), 155. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jei.v3i1.10975>
- Krasnova, T., & Ananjev, A. (2015). Students' Perception of Learning in the Online Discussion Environment. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, November. <https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2015.v6n6s1p202>
- Lyu, X. (2018). The Effectiveness of Online Discussion Forums and Recommendations for Chinese Higher Education. *信阳师范学院*, 10(2), 1–15.
- Marín Díaz, V., Reche Urbano, E., & Maldonado Berea, G. (2013). Advantages and disadvantages of online training. *Ridu*, 7(1), 2.
- Miles, M.B, Huberman, A.M, Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Management and Analysis: A Method Source Book*. Sage Publication, Inc.
- Misnawati. (2021a). Model pembelajaran di masa pandemi Covid-19: Synchronous and asynchronous (Blended e-learning). In M. C. B. Umanailo (Ed.), *Elaborasi ilmu sosial untuk Covid-19: pengajaran, pembelajaran serta eksistensi lembaga pendidikan selama pandemi Covid-19* (pp. 44–55). Yayasan Cendekiawan Indonesia Timur.
- Nandi, D., Hamilton, M., & Harland, J. (2012). Evaluating the quality of interaction in asynchronous discussion forums in fully online courses. *Distance Education*, 33(1), 5–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01587919.2012.667957>
- Nor, N. F., Razak, N. A., & Aziz, J. (2010). E-learning: Analysis of online discussion forums in promoting knowledge construction through collaborative learning. *WSEAS Transactions on Communications*, 9(1), 53–62.
- Okmawati, M. (2020). The Use of Google Classroom during Pandemic. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 9(2), 438. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v9i2.109293>
- Rahman, S. (2010). Knowledge construction process in online discussion. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 8(2), 311–315.
- Rinekso, A. B., & Muslim, A. B. (2020). Synchronous online discussion: teaching English in higher education amidst the covid-19 pandemic. *JEES (Journal of English Educators Society)*, 5(2), 155–162. <https://doi.org/10.21070/jees.v5i2.646>
- Schwartz, J., West, O., & Szabo, Z. (2011). *Targeted Instruction for Preservice Teachers : Developing Higher Order*. 1(1), 32–51.

## Biographies

**Muhammad Sahrir Aras** is a lecturer at STKIP Tomakaka Tiwikrama Pasangkayu who teaches in English Department. He is also the Vice Chairman of Academic at STKIP Tomakaka Tiwikrama.

**Muhammad Ybnu T** is a lecturer of English Department at Universitas Tomakaka Mamuju. He is also the Director of Education at Universitas Tomakaka Mamuju.