

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS VIDEO CONFERENCE FOR REMOTE ONLINE TEACHING: THE USE OF GOOGLE MEET IN EFL ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

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Abstract

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic which occurred in 2020, many schools shifted their traditional classroom teaching to online EFL (English as a foreign language) teaching. Various video conferencing platforms were used to mediate synchronous meetings, including Google Meet. Though research focusing on examining aspects related to various video conferencing platforms has been quite frequent, investigation on teachers' experience in and perception of online EFL teaching in the primary level using Google Meet has been rather scarce. Therefore, the present study intended to examine EFL teachers' experience in and perception of EFL teaching using Google Meet. The study made use of focused group discussion which involved the participation of three EFL teachers from a private school in Jakarta. Results revealed that teachers had both positive and negative experiences, such as being able to present learning materials with ease and not being able to monitor students fully. Their perceptions towards using Google Meet for EFL teaching was influenced by these experiences and therefore, were concluded to be mixed since participants perceive the platform to be a source of convenience in various aspects, such as presenting learning materials, while still having limitations such as not enabling teachers to monitor students' learning progress fully.

Keywords: *EFL, online teaching, perception, synchronous*

INTRODUCTION.

In late March of 2020, numerous schools around the globe were affected by the Covid-19 virus outbreak. In order to halt the infection rate of the virus, governments worldwide issued a policy requiring schools to be closed. Since then, many formal education institutions were forced to implement remote learning to maintain education. As face-to-face meetings were prohibited, schools and universities resorted to platforms which allowed online communication. This enabled learning to take place remotely as teachers and students in numerous parts of the world were able to continue meeting face to face with the help of said platforms.

While the availability of online platforms does enable online teaching and learning to occur, previous studies showed that teachers generally showed mixed perceptions toward this procedure of learning and teaching. For instance, Astuti and Solikhah (2021) found that Indonesian junior high school teachers showed rather negative perceptions towards the online teaching process in general. Furthermore, the researchers mentioned that the teachers had a quite pessimistic belief towards the prospect of said online teaching process for it had various limitations, such as the lack of available facilities and limited learning outcome assessment methods. Budianto and Arifani (2021), on the other hand, identified teachers' positive perception towards the use of Whatsapp, an online messaging application, in online learning. Such a perception was related to the software's ease of use as well as its usefulness. Additionally, the study reported that the application fostered the teaching and learning process. To add to the discussion, another study conducted in Indonesia by Nakhriyah and Muzakky (2021) suggested that junior high school teachers generally had positive perceptions toward online learning done through platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, Google Classroom, and Whatsapp. However, it was necessary to note that the educators also had challenges, such as not having full control of the students' behavior.

It can be learned from the previous studies mentioned above that scholars frequently focused on teachers' perception towards online learning in general. On the other hand, while similar previous

studies in the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) education do exist, they primarily focused on higher education levels, namely junior high school (Astuti & Sholikhah, 2021; Nakhriyah & Muzakky, 2021; Cakrawati, 2017). Moreover, perception research involving Google Meet, a synchronous meeting platform, in other words, as the main software used to mediate interactions between students and teachers, has been rather scarce. As a matter of fact, the previous studies carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic period had a tendency to focus more on the context where applications other than Google Meet, such as Zoom and Whatsapp, were used (Budianto & Arifani, 2021; Nakhriyah & Muzakky, 2021) or had little focus on the software used during the teaching process (Astuti & Sholikhah, 2021). Other studies concentrated on students' perceptions instead of teachers' (Serhan, 2020; Daroedono et al., 2020), and one of them was conducted before the pandemic (Cakrawati, 2017).

The results of previous studies in the junior high school context make it very unlikely for the findings to be generalized into the elementary school setting. Moreover, there has been very limited research on teachers' experiences in using Google Meet for EFL teaching, as well as their perceptions toward their EFL synchronous teaching practice in the setting of primary level of education using said video conference platform. Hence, this study aims to investigate primary English teachers' perception toward online EFL synchronous teaching processes done using a synchronous meeting platform, specifically Google Meet. Consequently, this study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the experiences of primary school teachers in online EFL synchronous teaching using Google Meet?
2. What is the primary school teachers' perception toward online EFL synchronous teaching using Google Meet?

This study is expected to provide an insight into the use of a particular video-conference platform for teaching EFL to young learners, specifically in Indonesian EFL classes. In addition, the

findings of this study, specifically the experiences and perception, are hoped to be able to assist primary school stakeholders in building policies regarding the use of said platform to maximize the effectiveness of teaching and learning process and to enhance teacher support.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this study, three elements are present, namely perception, remote learning, and the EFL teaching process during the Covid-19 pandemic. Each of these elements will be defined in the following subsections, followed by previous studies regarding EFL learners' perceptions towards certain online learning platforms.

Perception

The perception was explained by Qiong (2017) as having three stages, namely selection, organization, and interpretation. During the first stage, selection, a person selects stimuli that are considered familiar or interesting while also ignoring those which may not be relevant. Such a cognitive process is done in order to prevent overload. In the second stage, the received stimuli are organized into meaningful patterns, hence creating stability. Qiong also mentioned that this was related to another characteristic of human perception, which is having a structure. Finally, the interpretation stage is where meanings are assigned to the patterns formed in the previous stage. Qiong also claimed that such an interpretation may differ from one person to another. In other

words, perception, according to Qiong, is defined as one's reaction to stimuli by assigning meaning through interpretation.

Qiong's elaboration of perception is similar to Eggen and Kauchak's (2016) description. They explained that perception is a means for object and event interpretation. In their book, they also illustrated how one person may have a perception that differs from that of another person. According to Eggen and Kauchak, this was caused by expectations, motivations, and previous experiences. Hence, they also mentioned that perception is constructed personally.

In the context of teaching, perception is essential. A teacher's perception may affect the teaching materials prepared (Astuti & Sholikah, 2021). Additionally, positive perception towards a certain teaching method may lead to that method being utilized frequently (Liu, Mishan, & Chambers, 2021). Furthermore, teachers' perception on a platform used in online learning lead to insights on how said platform can be effectively utilized (Budianto & Arifani, 2021). In these cases, it can be seen that perception leads to an action carried out in a specific context. In other words, perception is followed by an adjustment and orientation of an activity towards its environment (Turvey, 2018).

Online Learning and Emergency Remote Teaching

Online learning, according to Murphy, Rodriguez-Manzanares, and Barbour (2006), refers to a type of learning procedure that can rely on asynchronous and synchronous teaching. Here, the first form involves a teaching procedure where teachers and students do not meet in real-time, making it dependent on the text and audio recordings whenever they are used. On the other hand, synchronous teaching and learning is where teachers and students meet in real-time despite the geographical distance between them. Such a procedure is usually reliant on video and audio conferencing platforms.

Synchronous learning has been proven to enhance the effectiveness of learning. Park and Bonk (2007) identified several advantages of using online synchronous learning. These included the ability to share and view presentation content as well as to record and archive sessions. Aside from these, Park and Bonk also emphasized the ease of use of various features, such as voice conference. Furthermore, text-based chat did not require additional cost.

Kessler, Loewen, and Trego (2021) emphasized that online video conferencing platforms, which they referred to as SVCMC (Synchronous Video Computer-Mediated Communication), offered advantages in English language teaching. For instance, Google Meet and Zoom have breakout rooms which may be used for group

discussions at a smaller scale. Furthermore, the screen-sharing feature enabled the presentation of learning material, and the chat feature can be useful for vocabulary and spelling aspects of L2 (Kozar, 2016, as cited in Kessler, Loewen, & Trego, 2021). In a more specific ELT context, Vurdien (2019) suggested that video conferencing omitted peer pressure during online discussions and provided flexibility as it allowed students to have more time to prepare for their synchronous tasks. Vurdien explained that such benefits may foster the development of speaking fluency.

Despite the benefits of online synchronous learning, Park and Bonk (2007) also elaborated that there are some disadvantages to such a learning type. They mentioned that online learning is vulnerable to technical issues which may be experienced by the platform users, which may disrupt the completion of tasks as well (Vurdien, 2019). Additionally, in an online class with a large number of students, the chat-based discussion may be difficult to moderate. This might imply that online synchronous learning could be more effective in smaller class sizes. As a result, it can be said that online teaching is not without its disadvantages.

Online or remote teaching should not be confused with emergency remote teaching regardless of their similarity. Hodges et al. (2020) elaborated that there is a significant difference between the two, namely the preparedness of the learning program. As opposed to the emergency counterpart, online teaching is a result of a careful

design and planning process. Furthermore, there are multiple aspects that need to be considered in online learning design and preparation, such as the role of instructors and students in the learning process, the ratio between the educator and the students, pacing modality, synchrony of the online communication, online assessment role, as well as the feedback source. Consequently, since all of the aspects need to be planned carefully to ensure the effectiveness of the program, they may not be present in emergency remote learning as usually there is no time to prepare said aspects. Hence, according to Hodges et al. (2020), emergency remote learning is considered as a temporary change of instructional delivery into one that can be implemented quickly because of emergency conditions. Nevertheless, like the planned version, the emergency type also involves remote teaching and learning methods.

EFL Teaching During the Covid-19 Pandemy in Indonesia

Indonesian teachers have been carrying out various activities during the online learning period amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Atmojo and Nugroho (2020) identified the educators' efforts in making online emergency remote EFL teaching possible, for instance, through using online platforms such as Google Classroom, Schoology, and Whatsapp. Additionally, assessment applications such as Google Forms, Kahoot, as well as Quizziz were utilized. Both synchronous and asynchronous teachings were also carried out

by the teacher as a part of the mandatory education program. During the face-to-face meetings, teachers interacted with students and explained learning materials which were also uploaded to online learning platforms. Discussions also took place in these meetings, and the teachers assigned tasks and projects as well. Moreover, feedback was also provided by the educators. An investigation performed by Safira, Hadi, and Zaitun (2021) found similar activities, where a junior high English teacher in Jakarta interacted with students synchronously through Google Meet. The teaching and learning activities were generally identical to the conventional classroom activities albeit the use of online platforms as media. In other words, teaching and learning activities usually performed in face-to-face meetings in a classroom context were continued during the remote learning period.

Moreover, the use of online communication platforms in teaching seemed to see a rise. A study conducted by Nugroho, Haghegh, and Triana (2021) revealed the phenomena occurring in the online emergency remote teaching context. Similar to its planned counterpart, the researchers found that the learning process involved the use of an online forum and discussions. The discussions mentioned by the researchers were carried out through the use of video conference platforms and synchronous applications, such as Google Meet, Zoom, WhatsApp, and Google Classroom. Moreover, Instagram was found to be utilized by one of the participants as a

way to teach writing through the usage of the caption and comment features. Furthermore, the study revealed that Quizziz and Kahoot were used for games and exercises.

Although the teaching and learning process could take place through remote learning, challenges were also present. It is worth noting that despite past research's findings suggesting online learning activities were quite similar to those of the classroom context's, it may not always be the case as according to Mardiana (2021), aspects such as teachers' interaction, allocation of time, as well as resources were not identical. Atmojo and Nugroho's (2020) study presented challenges stemming both from the students and the educators. Students did not have the device needed in order to participate in the learning sessions due to their financial conditions. Moreover, not all of them possessed the necessary digital competence, and there were misperceptions among the students regarding online learning which led to the failure of punctual task completion and even passive learning style. On the other hand, the teachers felt that they were not prepared for performing remote learning as the Covid-19 outbreak occurred quite suddenly. Nugroho, Haghegh, and Triana (2021) also managed to reveal that teachers were not familiar with online learning platforms during the beginning of online emergency remote learning. Additionally, the study they conducted also identified that both teachers' and students' poor internet connection posed a problem since it prevented the

teachers from responding to students' questions and providing feedback. Students' lack of motivation and engagement in online learning was also a challenge; it was identified through occurrences including less participation in learning activities, slow responses towards instructions, as well as a fewer attendance rates. Finally, the availability of devices on the students' end may prove to be a challenge as well since some students may not have the luxury of regular access to said devices, thus leading to one of the teachers' difficulties, namely monitoring the students' learning as the unavailability of devices severed the connection between teachers and students (Terry et al., 2021).

Previous Studies on Teachers' and Students' Perception toward Online Emergency Remote Teaching in EFL Classroom

Research conducted by Astuti and Solikhah (2021) aimed to explore the perception of junior high English teachers on the EFL teaching and learning process during the Covid-19 outbreak in Klaten, Indonesia. The respondents of this study were teachers in Klaten, Central Java. The result of this research suggested that junior high school English teachers in Klaten had negative perceptions towards the online teaching process, which was performed mainly through Google Classroom and Google Meet. The educators' pessimistic view was influenced by a lack of support system as well

as technical issues such as students' limited internet data package which resulted in the learners' limited access to online learning platforms.

A study similar to Astuti's and Sholikah's was conducted by Nakhriyah and Muzakky (2021), which aimed to investigate the perceptions of teachers working at a junior high school in Jakarta. The findings of this study suggested that the educators had mixed perceptions towards online learning. In fact, while the teachers generally believed that the use of online learning platforms they used, such as Zoom, Google Classroom, and WhatsApp, assisted them in becoming more innovative, most of them did not perceive that the online class they conducted increased the effectiveness of English language teaching. Moreover, it could be implied from the statistical findings of the study that the teachers had mixed perceptions towards whether or not the use of online classes for teaching the four skills of English, namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking was effective.

Another similar study was conducted by Cakrawati (2017) which aimed to investigate Indonesian junior and senior high school students' perception toward the use of Edmodo and Quipper, online learning platforms, in an EFL classroom context as well as the benefits of utilizing said platforms. The findings of this study showed that the students had positive perceptions toward the two remote learning platforms since they encouraged student-teacher

interaction outside of the classroom. Additionally, the students thought that Edmodo and Quipper assisted them in learning language skills, specifically listening and reading skills.

Similar to the studies mentioned above, Baron (2020) intended to investigate not only students' perception of online video call applications, namely Google Meet and Zoom, in learning speaking skills, but also to look for the most suitable application for the same purpose. The participants of the study were postgraduate students in Jakarta, Indonesia who were taking an English speaking class. The findings showed that the students had positive perceptions towards Google Meet and Zoom since they were easy to use in practicing conversational skills. Additionally, the most suitable online application for monologue activities was Youtube since it also allowed interaction between students through the comment section.

While other researchers took perception into account, Mu'awanah, Sumardi and Suparno (2021) took a different path by exploring the advantages and challenges of using Zoom as a synchronous video conferencing platform as well as students' perception of said advantages and challenges. The results revealed that Zoom was beneficial as it allowed synchronous face-to-face meetings, driving students to be more active and to receive feedback from the teacher more quickly. Despite these benefits, some drawbacks were present, namely technical issues related to slow

internet connection, outdated devices, limited internet data plan, and a non-conductive environment the students were in. These drawbacks led to the students perceiving the use of Zoom as challenging.

While the previous studies mentioned above did shed light both on EFL teachers' and students' perceptions towards online emergency remote teaching as well as the benefits of using synchronous video conferencing platforms, a few gaps can be identified. Firstly, elementary EFL teachers' perception had a tendency to be overlooked. For instance, previous Astuti and Sholikah's (2021) focused on junior high school EFL teachers. Additionally, students' perception tended to be the focus instead of the teacher's (Cakrawati, 2017; Baron, 2020; Mu'awanah, Sumardi, & Suparno, 2021; Jatnika, Zainiah, & Azzahra, 2021). The studies mentioned previously also focused on the online emergency remote teaching itself and tended to not put emphasis on the instrument, namely video conferencing platforms. Although such a medium was examined, these studies rarely focused on Google Meet despite it being a widely available video conferencing platform. Hence, the present study intends to explore two areas that previous studies rarely covered, specifically primary EFL teachers' experiences of and perception towards using Google Meet in English language teaching.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Approach

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach where data was gathered and analyzed qualitatively and descriptively. The data collected in this study were also coded and interpreted by the first researcher.

Research Setting

The present study took place in Jakarta, Indonesia, where the online learning and teaching process had been performed since March of 2020. While the beginning of online learning very much resembled emergency online learning, as soon as the following academic year began, the academic year 2020/2021, the teaching and learning procedure shifted towards planned online learning and teaching which resembled the characteristics of online learning suggested by Hodges et al. (2020). This was seen through the school's actions in designing a structured lesson schedule for each grade, socializing it to the teachers, and instructing them to design lessons, assessments, and feedback provision with Google for Education features as the foundation. The specific setting of this study was a private elementary school in the city that chose Google Meet as their medium of school activities. Hence, English lessons conducted by the teachers had also been utilizing the same video conference software.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of three Indonesian EFL teachers working at a private elementary school in Jakarta. The teachers had been teaching English using the online video conference software, Google Meet, for over a year. The sampling of the participants were done through purposive sampling based on specific criteria. In this study, such criteria included whether or not the educator taught English as a foreign language, the city where the school is located, and if Google Meet was used.

All of the three teachers participating in this study were female EFL teachers coming from backgrounds where English was a foreign language. Furthermore, the teachers' ages ranged from 26 to 29. One teacher was from Jakarta while the other two originated from outside of the city. All participants held a bachelor's degree in English education. Additionally, they had been coworkers for more than one year; this would be essential in the aspect of the data collection procedure. Each teacher taught different grades; one participant was an EFL teacher for grade 1 (Trisa), one taught grade 2 (Dwima), and one was in charge of grade 5 (Eka). All are pseudonyms. All participants were sent a consent form in which they were informed of the present study's purposes. Moreover, through the form, they were assured that they were free to withdraw from the study at any point.

Research Instrument

The instrument utilized in this study was a focused group discussion. The questions were based on and adapted from the questionnaire items in a study by Nakhriyah and Muzakky (2021). The adaptations were made to fulfill the present study's qualitative approach as the original items were geared towards a quantitative approach. Furthermore, in the present study, the questions were open-ended whereas Nakhriyah and Muzakky's questionnaire items were statements, each accompanied by a five-point Likert scale. The discussion revolved around six questions that elicited each participants' experiences of English teaching through Google Meet. The first until the fourth questions all elicited the participants' perception through their experiences of teaching English through Google Meet overall as well as specific skills taught at the elementary school level, namely listening, reading, speaking, and writing. These questions were followed by an open-ended question asking for their ways of coping with the challenges they face in the teaching process. Moreover, probe questions for each discussion item were asked should their answers be short or vague. Additionally, an instruction for the participants to write down five words that came to their minds regarding teaching English using Google Meet was also designed. This method was inspired by the Internal Representations Questionnaire as the principle behind IRQ is that language is "a mechanism to augment mental representations into a more

categorical form, which promotes reuse and compositionality” (Roebuck & Lupyan, 2020). Therefore, it is believed that the internal representation performed in the data collection may be useful to triangulate the participants’ utterances during the discussion.

To triangulate the data collected from the focused group discussion, each participant was asked to write a brief reflection based on four questions. The questions were inspired by a reflection template suggested by Welch (1999) and focused on how the participants felt regarding EFL teaching using Google Meet and what caused said feeling.

Data Collection Procedure

The data of this study were collected through a focused group discussion as suggested by Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick, and Mukherjee (2017), an internal representative questionnaire, and participants’ reflective writing. Such a technique was chosen as it was suitable for eliciting perceptions towards a phenomenon, as the four researchers suggested. Before the discussion session, all participants were contacted and informed about the research purpose as well as the data collection procedure, which accompanied the consent form elaboration and distribution. After agreeing to participate in the study, all participants were invited into a WhatsApp group message room in order to discuss their available schedule to set up an

appointment and the discussion session schedule. The date and time for the session were then agreed upon.

Before the focused group discussion session occurs, a pre-discussion stage was established by the researcher by asking an ice-breaking question related to their daily life. However, the pre-discussion session was not recorded in order to ensure the participants' comfort. After they were comfortable with each other in the pre-discussion stage, the focused group discussion session occurred. Furthermore, each participant was instructed to type 5 words that crossed their mind upon hearing the phrase "synchronous English teaching through Google Meet" in the chat box of Google Meet. They were also instructed to send their words to the chat box simultaneously on the researcher's mark in order to increase the validity of their responses as well as to avoid peer influence. This method was inspired by the Internal Representations Questionnaire as the principle behind IRQ is that language is "a mechanism to augment mental representations into a more categorical form, which promotes reuse and compositionality" (Roebuck & Lupyan, 2020). Therefore, it is believed that the internal representation performed in the data collection may be useful to triangulate the participants' utterances during the discussion. Afterward, the participants were asked questions that elicited their experience in teaching English using Google Meet. Each question was addressed first to one of the three participants randomly

followed by encouraging responses from the others. During the session, all participants were free to build on each others' responses. Whenever a participant's response was vague or rather short, probe questions were asked. Furthermore, any of the 5 words previously written by the participants were brought up during the discussion session to confirm the validity of their responses whenever possible or to elicit more responses. However, words that were obvious in terms of meaning or repetitions of the online learning context words were ignored. The session was recorded using a program called Open Broadcaster Software (OBS) which was capable of recording video and audio. The recording was then transcribed manually by the researcher. It is also important to note that the entire discussion session was conducted in Indonesian to ensure the participants' comfort.

Data Analysis Procedure

Each participant's transcribed answers were coded using the inductive thematic coding technique (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This technique was chosen in order to open more possibilities for the study's findings, making the research data-driven. During this process, the transcribed utterances were read, and themes relevant to the focused group discussion questions were identified while responses that were irrelevant to all questions were ignored. Such themes were related to the participants' experiences which were

divided into two sub-themes, namely positive and negative experiences, as well as their thoughts on said experiences. The sub-themes mentioned earlier were determined based on the data. After that, the coded answers from all participants were taken and compared. In the comparison stage, patterns from the participants' experiences and what they thought of them were identified in order to answer the research questions.

In terms of focused group discussion data triangulation, each participant's reflection was analyzed for statements that are in line with the results of the discussion analysis. The participants' feelings and the cause of said feelings were checked if they supported the utterances during the discussion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the participants' responses, themes of their experiences could be identified and divided into sub-themes illustrated in Figure 1 below.

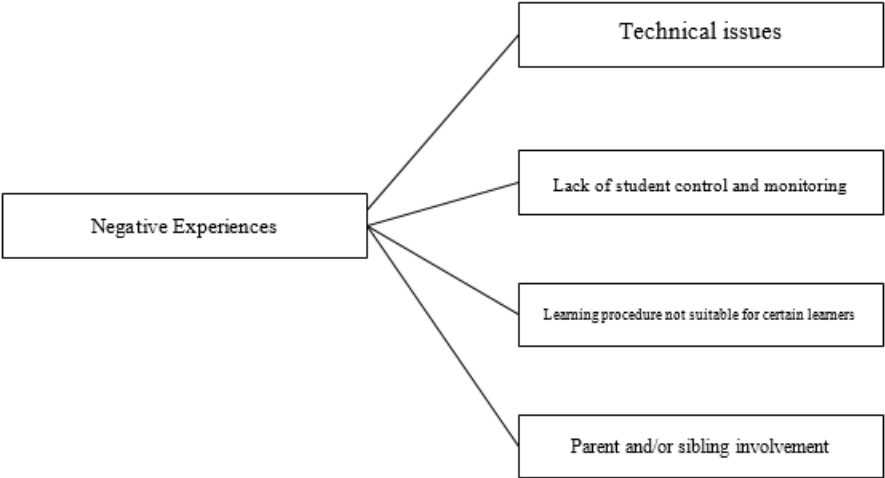


Figure 1: Sub-themes of participants’ negative experiences during the online learning process

Participants’ positive experiences are also presented and illustrated in Figure 2 below.

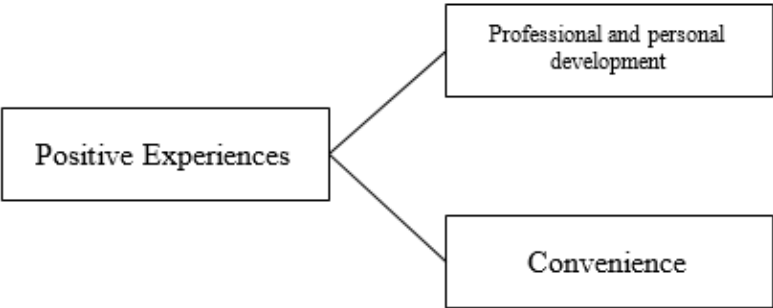


Figure 2: Sub-themes of participants' positive experiences during the online learning process

After the sub-themes of negative and positive experiences are presented, the participants' confirmation of responses through the five words they thought of is raised along with their relations to their statements during the discussion session.

Negative Experiences

In this section, negative experiences mentioned by the participants are categorized and presented in subsections. Such experiences include occurrences that may disrupt classroom activities, impede students' learning, and/or obscure students' actual academic progress.

Technical Issues

The three participants mentioned their having technical issues during their online teaching sessions. Said issues were related to the stability and availability of internet connection. For instance, Eka recalled her challenge when conducting a listening exercise with a listening attempt limit due to her students' or even her own connection (see Excerpt 1) and Dwima experienced challenges due to technical issues on the students' end which made it rather difficult for her when collecting students' work (see Excerpt 2)

Excerpt 1.

Eka: Well, sometimes my connection is stable, but the students' are (unintelligible), so I had to be flexible with the listening attempt limit, from three times to four or five. At times, they completely get disconnected.

Excerpt 2.

Dwima: . . . for example, during an on-the-spot listening exercise, students would tell me their issues, such as internet connection, something wrong with their keyboards, or not being able to access the Google form, . . .

Meanwhile, Trisa mentioned her not being able to check her students' writing during synchronous meetings (see Excerpt 3). She recalled instructing them to show their writing on the camera though she still could not see the results as they were not readable. This was due to the Google Meet interface showing a smaller video display from each student as there were numerous users connected to the meeting at the same time (see Excerpt 3).

Excerpt 3.

Trisa: I have instructed them to show their writing on their camera, but they were still too small. I could only say "Oh, good job," despite not being able to read them and had to trust they wrote properly.

From the internal representation, Eka and Dwima each mentioned a word worth investigating, ‘limited’ and ‘connection’ respectively. Both teachers referred to the internet connection problems and the device that her students had, which made them unable to perform certain tasks (see Excerpts 4-5). Furthermore, not all students had access to a desktop or laptop; they could only use mobile smartphones (see Excerpt 4).

Excerpt 4.

Eka: Sometimes my students said, “Miss, I’m using my mobile phone, so I can’t access Google Forms while having my camera turned on.” That is an example of the limitation. Sometimes my internet connection is unstable, yet another limitation. It’s difficult to have things under control.

Excerpt 5.

Dwima: . . . we couldn’t predict if the internet was stable or, uhh, having some issues, and well, it was really affecting my teaching, especially during online teaching. Whenever suddenly, uhh, my connection worsened, I ran out of time and couldn’t teach optimally. The same applied to the students; they were unable to learn well with a bad connection.

In addition, Trisa mentioned ‘quota’ and ‘complicated’. These, she explained, respectively referred to a hefty expense of

internet data and challenges she faced when learning to use and teaching online learning features as she not only had to teach the students but also parents (see Excerpt 6). It can be implied that both teachers and students may not always be able to subscribe to a monthly paid internet provider, while factually, the former need to learn new applications (or search for materials as well as evaluate the students' work online) and the latter need to do many of the assignments online. With regard to technology use, not only students, but also parents, especially those who are not familiar at all with the online learning application or who use very limited internet applications at work, need to learn how to operate the applications used by the school or the teacher.

Excerpt 6.

Trisa: I spent so much internet data each day. . . . often, I didn't realize I ran out of data and got disconnected from the meeting. . . . It's complicated as there were numerous features. . . . I had to learn them one by one. Not only that, I had to teach my students and their parents about them. They were still dependent on their parents.

Lack of Control and Monitoring

During the focused group discussion, all of the participants repeatedly mentioned the lack of control and monitoring. They claimed that it was not possible to fully control students'

participation during synchronous and asynchronous sessions. When teaching listening skills, for instance, Eka and Dwima stated that they were not sure if the students actually did the tasks themselves (see Excerpt 7-8), something that rarely happened in the traditional class, where they can come to their students and see whether or not they have done their tasks.

Excerpt 7.

Eka: I wasn't sure if they were actually doing the tasks or were just pretending to do so.

Excerpt 8.

Dwima: I could not check if their answers were really theirs, like, if they did the task honestly or if they were pretending to do it.

Besides that, Dwima and Trisa mentioned that some of their students were unresponsive to their calls. While some students still responded, others did not, which presumptively was not always caused by the slow internet connection. However, because it was important the teaching and learning went on, the participants had no choice but to have talks with students who often gave quick replies or responses during the synchronous sessions (see Excerpt 9-10).

Excerpt 9.

Dwima: When I called some students, they stayed silent or pretended to not have a working microphone, or simply were slow to turn it on. . . . so I had to choose those who were responsive and willing to answer.

Excerpt 10.

Trisa: Some students, even after being called repeatedly, didn't respond, so I moved on (chuckles) and chose others. So I tended to be like Dwima, just choosing the responsive students.

Similarly, during the synchronous speaking sessions, Eka saw that her students were reluctant to speak. Additionally, whenever she instructed them to submit videos for the completion of a speaking assignment, submissions were tardy, and some students spoke in a very low volume (see Excerpt 11).

Excerpt 11.

Eka: So, it seemed like they were reluctant to speak. . . . they submitted their videos late too. If they submitted at all, and when they did, I could not hear their voice.

In the writing session, Trisa questioned whether the students' writings were theirs. Knowing the quality of her students' writing, she could see the differences of their writing before and after the online classes which made her wonder whether it was their writing

or others' such as their parents' (see Excerpt 12). Dwima, having a similar experience, added that it might be difficult to be sure that the writing tasks that students handed in was theirs provided that she had taught them before and therefore knew their writing ability or level (see Excerpt 13).

Excerpt 12.

Trisa: . . . when I saw that the writings were good, I wasn't sure if those were the parents' or the students'.

Excerpt 13.

Dwima: . . . especially if we have never taught those students, . . . we wouldn't know if those are their writings or their parents' . . .

Parents and/or Sibling Involvement

When conducting listening tasks where students were required to listen to an audio file and answer questions afterward, Eka and Dwima recalled occurrences in which the students were assisted by their parents. Eka recalled that a student's parent was present next to the student, and the parent used their mobile phone to record the audio that she was playing for the class (see Excerpt 14). Afterward, the parent played the audio for the student, bypassing the listening attempt limit already set by Eka. In Dwima's

recollection, however, at times the parents did the assignment for their children (see Excerpt 15).

Excerpt 14.

Eka: The parents used their mobile phone to record the audio when I played it, and then, since there was still time for the students to submit, they played the audio again. . . . they did that during the synchronous session.

Excerpt 15.

Dwima: Yes, sometimes the parents were next to the students (chuckles), helping them answer, like, through repeating the content of the audio.

In addition to the parents' involvement above, Eka mentioned an occurrence where a student's sibling was seen next to the said student during reading lessons. In this case, she remembered seeing the student was turning to the sibling to get some help with the questions she gave (see Excerpt 16).

Excerpt 16.

Eka: The sibling was always there; I could see because the student's camera was turned on. When asked, he looked at the sibling. Suddenly, he knew the answer.

Positive Experiences

In this section, the positive experiences mentioned by the participants are categorized and presented in subsections. These experiences include occurrences that benefit both students and teachers, enhance teaching procedures, and allow teachers to develop themselves professionally.

Professional Development

The three teachers experienced professional development in various ways. Eka, for instance, broadened her repertoire of teaching methods by discussing ideas about teaching with other teachers and browsing the Internet. She also mentioned that as a teacher, she felt the need to become a more creative teacher and to be able to design more interesting learning materials as the possibilities arose (see Excerpt 17).

Excerpt 17.

Eka: , . . . I also asked my teacher friends if they had good ideas for uh, teaching certain materials. As for another thing I do, it's browsing. Though, I prefer asking (laughs). . . . I felt encouraged to be more creative and to design more interesting materials. . . . Now, there are many conveniences for me, and it is essential for a teacher to be creative.

In the same vein, Dwima claimed that she was more used to being creative in her teaching. This drove her to utilize more media in teaching though she did not specify examples. Trisa had a similar experience as she frequently browsed Youtube to look for new teaching strategies. She also mentioned looking for educational games on websites (see Excerpt 18-19).

Excerpt 18.

Dwima: . . . I became more used to looking for creative teaching ideas, . . . And, I used more media in my teaching. Before the pandemic, I mostly used Power Point slides, books, or hands-on games. This time, it's more modern.

Excerpt 19.

Trisa: . . . I often browsed Youtube too for ways to make games using the jam board and other things; there is a lot there. . . . also looked for interesting websites with educational games for kids.

Convenience

Dwima and Trisa claimed that there were conveniences available due to the online teaching using Google Meet. Dwima stated that there was a lot of media she could use in her teaching, including videos, audio files, and pictures. Additionally, such media could be presented quite easily on the video conferencing platform (see Excerpt 20).

Excerpt 20.

Dwima: . . . well, there is a lot of media I could use, such as videos, audio recordings, and pictures. . . . I could just present them directly, uh, the slides or the recordings themselves, or even videos from Youtube . . .

Moreover, unlike in the offline classes, Trisa claimed that she did not have to project or raise her voice so that students at the back of her class could hear her, or to get their attention. During online teaching, it was the students who controlled the volume in their devices (see Excerpt 21).

Excerpt 21.

Trisa: As a teacher, I didn't have to shout (chuckles). In a classroom, I usually had to speak loudly so all students could hear me. Whereas through Google Meet, my normal volume and intonation could be heard as long as the students' device volume was loud enough.

Participants' Thoughts Regarding Their Experiences

During the discussion, participants' utterances showed their thoughts regarding their experiences teaching EFL through Google Meet. For instance, Dwima felt that the teaching process was different from classroom teaching. Moreover, the participants repeatedly mentioned that they viewed Google Meet as a video conferencing platform that possesses weaknesses, especially when it

is used for teaching various skills of the English language. All three participants also mentioned that teaching the writing skill was a challenge for them. They recalled having difficulties in monitoring their students. Despite the participants' negative views, they still had positive beliefs towards Google Meet. For instance, Trisa, Dwima, and Eka believed that the platform provided various conveniences. However, their negative feelings towards Google Meet, which are results of the limitations the platform brings, still overpowered the positive ones. Specifically, this was mentioned by Trisa during the focused group discussion (see Excerpt 22-24).

Excerpt 22.

Dwima: Uhh, first, (pause) it was really different from teaching at school. ... I agree with Ms. Trisa. This is a weakness of, uhh-, uhh, a weakness of using Gmeet for online teaching. ... Uhh, yes, I agree. ... the biggest challenge in online teaching was that I couldn't monitor the students. ... The positive aspect is that, for example, when answering questions together, I could show them where the answers were taken from in the text.

Excerpt 23.

Trisa: I see this as a weakness actually. ... There is a major weakness, because there are a lot of things I could not control. ... It was just as difficult (as classroom teaching); if not, more difficult. ... Not all of them are negative; there is a positive

one too. Like, uh, as a teacher, I didn't need to raise my voice (chuckles). ... The negative ones (chuckles).

Excerpt 24.

Eka: I also agree with Ms. Trisa and Ms. Dwima. ... I think it was difficult. ... I wasn't sure how they answered and were always correct. ... Mine is more or less the same with Ms. Trisa and Dwima.

Participants' Reflection

In her reflection, Eka mentioned that in spite of feeling grateful for being able to teach the four skills of the English language using Google Meet, she also claimed that she felt the existence of challenges in conducting listening lessons. She added that one of the difficulties involved slow internet connection (see Excerpt 25).

Excerpt 25.

Eka: I am happy enough to be able to teach the four skills. Though, I felt that difficulties occurred when I was teaching listening and had slow internet connection. Otherwise, G-meet supported the learning process.

Additionally, she claimed that although she could still see her students' faces, it was limited only to the ones who turned on their camera. Hence, she stated that she was only sufficiently content since there were students who still had their camera turned off for a

particular reason, either because of slow internet connection or the students not following instructions (see Excerpt 26).

Excerpt 26.

Eka: ... some students did not turn on their cameras, either because their internet connection was not good or they did not pay attention to instructions.

Dwima's statements in her reflection were quite different as she mentioned she felt that not only EFL teaching using Google Meet was interesting, it was also challenging. She could neither control students' progress nor check their work until it was submitted (see excerpt 27).

Excerpt 27.

Dwima: ... I cannot control the students' progress. It is a bit hard for me to know whether the students really understand or not I could not see their work until they upload their assignment

Additionally, she wrote about her experience when she asked her students questions. Instead of having the entire class being active and answering the questions, she stated that only a few students actively answered (see excerpt 28).

Excerpt 28.

Dwima: Moreover, when I asked several questions related to the material ..., only a few students could answer.

In spite of the challenges she faced, she still felt that using Google Meet for EFL teaching was interesting. She elaborated that not only could she find learning materials more easily, but she also was able to present said materials without difficulty (see excerpt 29).

Excerpt 29.

Dwima: ... because it is easier to get the source and to present the video or audio that will be used for listening. For reading, the teacher could also present the text and discuss it together with the students.

Similarly, Trisa expressed that she also felt the experience was interesting and challenging, thus generating curiosity and positive feelings. This was caused by the convenience she felt whenever she needed to find online games and learning materials, as well as presenting them to her students (see excerpt 30).

Excerpt 30.

Trisa: I feel good and curious, because this is a new thing, interesting, and challenging. ... in teaching listening skill, the teacher can present the audio or video easily. In teaching grammar, there are many online games provided.

However, Trisa added that the use of said video conferencing platform entailed the fact that adults' assistance for some students was necessary. Said students, according to her, required more attention as well as special treatments (see excerpt 31).

Excerpt 31.

Trisa: However, it doesn't really work for special students who need more attention and special treatment, like some students who need adults literally beside them to teach and accompany them in learning.

Participants' Experiences

Participants' experiences in EFL teaching through the use of Google Meet were mixed. All of the teachers agreed that they lacked student control, leading to their doubt of students' academic achievements. This further confirms Nakhriyah and Muzakky's (2021) findings as most participants in their study also believed that controlling and involving students in online teaching is difficult. Despite this, the current study's participants admitted that EFL teaching using Google Meet as a synchronous video conferencing platform also raised conveniences such as the ability to present learning materials with ease.

The lack of student control may have been caused by the nature of online learning itself; teachers and students did not meet each other directly. As a result, teachers could only provide

instructions, and the decision to follow said instructions were still up to the students. Whenever a student was behaving passively, it may not have been possible for the teacher to directly intervene and encourage the student to participate, and the same applied for synchronously performed tasks. This also confirms Nakhriyah and Muzakky's statement that students have a tendency to be passive during online learning sessions. Furthermore, this echoes with their findings claiming most participants in their study believed that controlling and involving students in online teaching is difficult.

Technical issues also posed a challenge during the teaching process for the three teachers. These included unstable internet connections and Google Meet's interface. Firstly, the participants' internet connection would at times worsen or even disconnect entirely, resulting in them having to find solutions or alternatives in order to be able to reconnect and continue teaching, which led to the waste of time. In addition to this, the problem also existed on the students' side, which likely positioned the students in a condition similar to the teachers' whenever they were disconnected from the meeting. This is similar to the findings in Astuti and Sholikah's (2021) as well as study which revealed that students had limited internet connection. The limitations of outdated device capability that the teachers saw among students were similar to what Mu'awanah, Sumardi, and Suparno (2021) found in their research. Secondly, the Google Meet interface was raised as a problem by the

teachers as the more users were connected to the meeting, the smaller each user's display became, especially in tiled layout interface mode. Therefore, while the participants could see all of the students at the same time, they were unable to see each of them clearly due to the small display. This led to the teachers' difficulty in monitoring the students' activity.

In Jakarta, some schools provide free internet connection, which can be used by the teachers and students should they come to school. At homes, it seems that not many families can easily decide to subscribe to an internet provider. Additionally, each teacher's and student's internet connection stability may differ, leading to some students and even the teacher struggling with their connection. On the student's end, this may be the cause of their passiveness and might be the reason why their cameras were turned off. This issue of unstable internet connection was also reported in Nakhriyah and Muzakky's (2021) study.

The participants also mentioned that there were positive ones. Firstly, they were encouraged to develop professionally, specifically through the increase of their creativity since the circumstances allowed them to implement more media in their teaching. This is in line with the results of Nakhriyah and Muzakky's study which suggested that most of their participants felt an improvement in their teaching skills and were encouraged to become

more innovative. Secondly, the present study's participants experienced conveniences such as the ease of learning material presentation and not being required to increase the volume of their voice. The prior was possible through the use of Google Meet's screen sharing feature, enabling teachers to open learning materials on their device and present them directly to the students, enabling students to view the materials on their device screen. This confirms Kessler, Loewen, and Trego's (2021) suggestion that the screen-sharing feature would prove to be useful in online teaching. The convenience related to the participants not being required to raise their voice was a result of internet connection and device capabilities in recording the teachers' voice and transferring it to the students.

Participants' Perception of EFL Teaching Using Google Meet

The perceptions of participants were found to be mixed. On one hand, the participants viewed Google Meet as a video conferencing platform that not only allowed EFL teaching to take place in spite of the distance between them and their students, but also provided convenience in terms of learning material searching and presenting learning materials. A good example of this convenience was being able to search for videos on other websites such as Youtube and presenting them directly to the students. This also applied to other media such as audio files. They also had positive perception towards the use of said platform as using it was a new and interesting experience for them as the shift towards online

teaching using Google Meet meant they were required to learn and use software they had not used before, especially during traditional classroom teaching. They felt that this experience was different from traditional EFL classroom teaching. It is worth mentioning that this perception contradicts Atmojo and Nugroho's (2020) as well as Safira, Hadi, and Zaitun's (2021) suggestion that online teaching and learning activities remained identical to their classroom counterparts, thus supporting Mardiana's (2021) suggestion that is differences do exist between online and face-to-face teaching. The positive perceptions identified may indicate that Google Meet, a piece of technology widely available to numerous teachers around the world, might be a platform that could assist teachers in continuing EFL teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic. In spite of the positive perceptions towards Google Meet, the platform was still perceived as having limitations. As a matter of fact, participants expressed their negative feelings towards the platform's weaknesses, such as technical issues that disrupted classroom sessions and lack of student control. The participants believed that although the platform was helpful, it also was not without problems. Their responses also suggested they believed EFL teaching using Google Meet could not replace traditional classroom teaching as the latter is believed to provide meaningful interaction. This could be evidence supporting Astuti and Sholikah's (2021) suggestion that English language

teaching by means of online platforms was believed to be problematic.

Participants' reflections were in line with their focused group discussion responses. All participants wrote about their negative and positive perception along with occurrences that caused them. Negative perceptions towards the use of Google Meet in EFL teaching were caused by the limitations of the video conferencing platform such as lack of student control which caused students to not turn on their camera and passiveness, as well as technical difficulties which could hinder the teaching and learning process, for instance, slow internet connection. Positive perceptions were results of the video conferencing platform's strength, which was mostly related to the convenience it provided. A good example of this was the ability to present digital learning materials.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In conclusion, primary EFL teachers perceived EFL teaching through the use of Google Meet as being different from classroom teaching and having limitations. While they perceived it as a video conferencing platform that allowed EFL teaching to take place with various conveniences, they also perceived it to possess its own limitations in doing so. This is due to the negative experiences consisting of technical issues related to internet connection and a lack of student control. This lack of control led to a degree of

academic dishonesty involving parents or other family members of the students.

This study also generated some implications regarding the role Google Meet plays in enabling EFL teaching to continue in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Though the video conferencing platform may be considered useful for teachers as a result of its merits, such as being able to provide convenience in presenting learning materials, it might not be able to entirely replace traditional classroom settings in which teachers and students can meet directly and have meaningful interactions. Unlike virtual interaction, direct meetings may not be hindered by technical difficulties involving unstable internet connection, for instance, and teachers are believed to be able to have a better management of their students throughout the teaching process. This may imply that they would have more effective means for monitoring students' progress as well.

The present study, although managed to confirm primary EFL teachers' perception toward the use of Google Meet in their teaching, is far too small in terms of scope to be generalized into other contexts. Further research in the perception towards the use of Google Meet as a medium for synchronous EFL teaching at a larger scale with more participants through an experimental approach is highly suggested. The implementation of narrative inquiry approach, which was not possible due to the present study's limitations, would also prove to be useful as it may elicit more in-

depth qualitative data. A similar study conducted in the context of primary schools in the rural areas of Indonesia may also shed light on whether or not the teachers perceive Google Meet as a suitable platform for carrying out English lessons at said locations.

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