



Synchronous or Asynchronous? teachers' preferences in online classes during the pandemic

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Abstract

The growth of Covid-19 over the past two years has driven people to transition from offline to online mode of learning. This study aims to investigate EFL teachers' preferences in and reasons for their online delivery mode during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thirteen English teachers in the town of Purwokerto, Central Java Province, Indonesia participated in this study. The data were collected via closed questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The quantitative data were analyzed using the descriptive statistics, while the qualitative data were analyzed using a thematic approach. According to the current study, 30.8 percent of the teachers preferred synchronous delivery mode in their online class, while all the rest chose asynchronous delivery mode through WhatsApp Group in their teaching. That majority of teachers favored asynchronous delivery mode for any of the following reasons: (1) practicality; (2) flexibility; and (3) effectiveness. The latter-mentioned seems the most exciting and is promising with respect to results of previous studies. Then, recommendations are put forward here related to results of the current study. It is a good idea to decide how to blend both asynchronous and synchronous delivery modes in order to generate the best impact on the students' EFL learning. In addition, it is suggested that teachers in the field of EFL education refer to well-developed asynchronous lessons to be applied in the new normal era.

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Introduction

Technology, especially the internet, has played an important role in education during the Covid-19 pandemic. Online schooling has been an important tool for maintaining skill development during school closures

in the pandemic. Online learning facilitates a multiplicity of language learning styles. However, there are still concerns that online learning may have been a sub-optimal substitute for face-to-face instruction, particularly in the absence of universal access to infrastructure (hardware and software) and a lack of adequate preparation among teachers and students for the unique challenges that online teaching and learning present. A critical requirement is the rapid advancement of technology that aids in teaching and learning activities.

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The use of technology in the classroom is no longer an option; it is now a mandatory requirement in today's schools (Richards, 2015). While the transition to virtual learning may have been abrupt for some, educators in schools will face new situations on a regular basis and must be adept at navigating on-school, virtual, or blended learning environments. Traditional classroom learning requires students to be physically present in class, whereas online learning allows students to access lessons from any location. Online learning, also known as distance learning, is a type of learning that makes use of the internet as a medium for instruction. Students who have completed online learning can re-read the material if they have not yet grasped it. The use of the internet is a boon to students (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018). Developing positive attitudes toward learning can assist students in overcoming some of the potential challenges posed by online learning, such as remaining focused during online classes or maintaining sufficient motivation. They are also critical in assisting students effectively in using information and communication technology (ICT) and making the most of new technologies for learning. Positive attitudes toward learning, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation to learn all play an important role in improving school performance in general, but they may be especially important if online learning is allowed to continue. Education and technology stakeholders must collaborate to create an online learning system that combines synchronous and asynchronous learning so that teachers and students can benefit from both learning approaches while minimizing the drawbacks of each (Henriksen et al., 2020; Henriksen et al., 2021).

Online learning modes are classified into two types: synchronous and asynchronous. (Chávez et al., 2021) argue that asynchronous learning fosters work relationships between students and teachers even when they are not all online at the same time. As long as teachers provide time, students can access the material and assignments in these learning activities. A community of inquiry model with a teacher, cognitive and social presence can be a great aid to both synchronous and asynchronous language learning (McCollum, 2020). Students can send or revise their work at their leisure with asynchronous learning. Synchronous learning activities include students and teachers working on learning activities at the same time via online video platforms or online chat facilities. Synchronous learning space allows for real-time collaborative interaction and the incorporation of e-activities (Salmon, 2021).

Previous research generally discussed the benefits and drawbacks of using Synchronous and Asynchronous

learning models. Furthermore, many studies only looked at how students perceive and evaluate the use of these two learning modes. The review of learning in both modes focuses on how students adapt, use, utilize, interact, and learn to use both modes, rather than how teachers use both and provide assessments whereas this study presents how teachers view the usefulness of the two modes and analyses their assessment of both from several perspectives.

The ability of teachers to innovate in compiling material, as well as which online learning modes they use based on their needs, determines teachers' success in implementing online learning. Many teachers prefer synchronous learning processes in online learning because they are more technologically advanced. Because students and teachers carry out learning activities at the same time, activity in learning appears to be similar to that in a classroom. Because of the presence of teachers and classmates, synchronous learning can generate a high level of motivation to stay engaged in activities (Yamagata-Lynch, 2014). However, a study by (Taraj, 2021) showed that a majority of the students prefer face-to-face learning. Their main concerns were a lack of motivation, a lack of interaction with their instructors and peers, and a sense of isolation. Asynchronous learning, on the other hand, is an intriguing method to implement. Because of its benefits and flexibility, asynchronous mode of learning/teaching has been the most common form of online teaching (Hrastinski, 2009). Given that both learning modes have advantages and disadvantages, it is critical to investigate how both learning modes are implemented.

The purpose of this study was to discover English teachers' preferences in virtual teaching modes, whether they prefer Synchronous or Asynchronous learning modes, and why they choose one over another. In accordance with the objectives, a couple of research questions are addressed as follows:

1. What are the English teachers' online teaching mode preferences?
2. Why do the English teachers opt for online learning?

Literature Review

Synchronous Mode

In the context of learning and teaching, the term 'synchronous' refers to an online learning or teaching mode that uses live streaming devices such as video

streaming, online chatting, and other media to allow teachers to communicate directly with students, similar to classroom learning. A synchronous virtual classroom, on the other hand, is a setting in which instructors and students can interact and collaborate in real time. Clark and Newberry (2019) state that the activities are nearly identical to those in traditional classrooms because teachers and students react simultaneously. (Martin et al., 2018) define a synchronous virtual classroom as a place for instructors and students to interact and collaborate in real-time.

They resemble a traditional classroom by using a webcam and the class discussion feature, but all participants access it remotely via the internet. Due to the presence of teachers and classmates, synchronous learning can generate a high level of motivation to stay engaged in electronic activities (Keane et al., 2018; Yamagata-Lynch, 2014). Students' inability to manage their time effectively is a common issue in the learning process. As long as the material presented is quite interesting and compelling, the concept of synchronous learning is very appropriate to be implemented to overcome this issue. Three advantages can be obtained by utilizing synchronous learning (Hrastinski, 2009). First and foremost, it gives prompt feedback. Real-time interaction necessitates immediate feedback. Rapid feedback is critical in e-learning because it enhances knowledge retention by keeping the audience engaged in the learning process. Second, it highly motivates. Through real-time interaction, a synchronous learning space improves learning by increasing the motivation level of the corporate audience. Third, it fosters a sense of belonging. Social interaction and collaboration are at the heart of synchronous learning. Organizing a series of online group activities encourages teamwork and cooperation because synchronous learning makes the process easier. As a result, the teacher's material is also effective.

Teachers must consider the use of learning tools when implementing synchronous learning. Online Chat and Video Conferencing are two examples of synchronous learning tools. Online chat is a form of communication between two or more people who use media such as smartphones, laptops, and computers. Braun and Clarke (2013) state that online chat communication occurs when users collaborate to access available networks and servers in order to send messages privately or publicly WhatsApp groups, Facebook groups, Schoology, and other similar applications are commonly used in online chat. If the activity takes place at the same time, the application is referred to as synchronous learning. For example,

teachers may send material to students via a WhatsApp group, to which students may respond directly.

Video conferencing, on the other hand, has emerged as an intriguing technological application that is commonly used by teachers. Rop and Bett (2012) define video conferencing as a method of communication between two or more locations in which sound, vision, and data signals are transmitted electronically. Video conferencing allows students and teachers to interact in real time. Zoom Meeting, Google Meet, Webex, and other popular video conferencing applications are employed. There are numerous advantages to using synchronous learning modes. Prijambodo and Lie (2021) argue that it has drawbacks as well. This mode of learning necessitates a certain amount of time as well as an adequate internet connection, both of which are difficult to obtain. Furthermore, because it is more difficult to schedule shared times for all students and instructors, Synchronous learning mode is challenging to use. Some students may also face technical challenges or difficulties if they do not have access to fast or powerful Wi-Fi networks.

Asynchronous Mode

As the opposite term discussed earlier, asynchronous learning or teaching is online learning or teaching that does not necessitate extensive interaction between the teacher and the students. Clark and Newberry (2019) argue that teachers send materials, assignments, and evaluations to the platform, and students attempt to learn independently rather than in real time. Asynchronous learning is the use of media such as e-mail, forums, reading, and writing documents to facilitate indirect online communication or mediation and services in implementing delayed communication (Alghamdi et al., 2020; Shin & Chan, 2004). Asynchronous learning is the most widely used online education method. Students are not faced with time constraints and can respond at any time later on as they wish (Martin et al., 2018).

In this learning process mode, students who are reluctant to participate in discussions can confidently convey their ideas. Besides that, students can also return to a session or the whole lesson. Experts argue the benefits of asynchronous learning ((Hajovsky et al., 2020; E. J. Kim & Lee, 2019; Sun et al., 2021). First and foremost, it is adaptable. The teacher and students do not interact at the same time in an asynchronous class. The teacher typically posts materials or assignments on the platform, so students can access the content at any time as long as it remains available. As a result, it makes students

feel at ease (Northey et al., 2015). Second, it allows more time for reflection. Reflection is an activity that occurs during the teaching and learning process in the form of teacher assessments for students (Kim & Lee, 2019). In an asynchronous class, the teacher and students do not interact at the same time. The teacher typically posts materials or assignments to the platform, so students can access the content whenever it is available. Students are more relaxed, accordingly. Due to asynchronous learning flexibility, the teacher has more time for reflection. Third, it creates greater equality of contributions. In the asynchronous mode, students' contributions are more evenly distributed. They have more time to complete their assignments and double-check them for accuracy (Hajovsky et al., 2020).

This learning process's weakness is that it does not allow for quick communication. As a result, the teacher provides no direct feedback (Kim et al., 2020). Teachers must consider the use of learning tools when implementing asynchronous learning. Discussion boards/forums and email are examples of asynchronous learning tools. Asynchronous collaboration tools include discussion boards and forums. Students interact with the content via discussion boards (Stoten et al., 2018). When using a discussion board, for example, the teacher sends materials and assignments via the Google classroom platform. Students have access to the material at any time 24 hours around the clock. By providing higher quality online discussions through this platform, students have more time to reflect and double-check their responses.

Aside from discussing the materials in the discussion forum, email is another medium that can be used for other learning activities. Email is used to communicate in online learning as a digital message. There are several benefits to using email as a learning medium. First, email can be used to send urgent class announcements. The second point is that assignments can provide students with immediate feedback (Wojcikowski & Kirk, 2013). Asynchronous learning allows students and teachers to communicate even when they are not online at the same time. Teachers post materials and assignments to the platform, and students have access to them until the time limit expires.

Methodology

Research Design

With regard to the proposed research questions, this study aimed to: (1) identify English teachers' preferences

in delivery modes in their online class; and (2) find out their reasons for choosing their preferred delivery mode. To achieve the objectives, a survey study was applied, employing two techniques of data gathering, i.e., questionnaire and interview. Thus, this research is descriptive in nature. (Check & Schutt, 2017) mention that descriptive study is meant to look into the circumstances, conditions, or other matters that have been mentioned. In line with the research approach, Ponto (2015) states that a survey is a type of research that aims to gather factual information in order to describe an existing phenomenon. The methodology used in this study is elaborated in more detail under the following subheadings. The questionnaire distributed to respondents contained ten statements that describe the teacher's preference for synchronous or asynchronous learning modes, as well as the reasons teachers make these choices in terms of practicality, flexibility, and effectiveness. Similarly, in interviews, respondents were asked to provide evaluations and preferences for comfort in using the two learning modes.

Participants

Thirteen English teachers participated in this study. They were randomly recruited from the population, i.e., junior high school (grades 7 to 9 at primary education) English teachers in a town in Central Java Province, Indonesia. The selected participants were from four different junior high schools. Research respondents were English teachers with good qualifications and were recommended by the principal of each school.

They had also implemented technological tools and applications prior to the pandemic so that they were declared proficient in managing offline and online classes. The participating teachers of English agreed to take part in interview sessions taking 15 to 30 minutes per interviewee.

Data Collection

The thirteen participants were contacted after the research paths had been designed and permission to collect data at the research site had been obtained from the faculty administration office. A Likert scale questionnaire was thoroughly prepared in reference to the aspects under study (see Table 1). The questionnaire was intended to gather data on delivery modes applied by teachers in their online teaching, whereas to explore the teachers' reasons for choosing their preferred delivery modes in online class, a semi-structured interview was

conducted. Due to the pandemic, the questionnaire was administered online utilizing Google Form and Spread sheet, whereas the interview was carried out through phone calls and WhatsApp voice notes with those all thirteen participating teachers of English as a foreign language.

Data Analysis

In this study, the quantitative data were analysed using the descriptive statistics, while the qualitative data were treated using an inductive thematic analysis. Responses submitted in Google Spread sheet were calculated to determine the percentage of teachers who used either synchronous or asynchronous teaching mode. Interview recordings then were transcribed, coded, and interpreted. In this procedure, a focus was centred around feedback on reason why a respondent used a delivery mode in preference over another. Further, it was also intended for feedback that convey an evolving story that will inform future course iterations (Sagor, 2016). The data analysis step in this context refers to the connection of the results of questionnaires and interviews based on the personal experience of teachers who are well-qualified to conduct online English learning in their respective schools.

Results and Discussion

The EFL Teachers' Preferences in Online Delivery Mode

Analysis to questionnaire responses generated in the Google Spreadsheet resulted in information in Table 2. The researchers analysed them by calculating the percentage of responses submitted by the respondents. The modes of delivery are represented by symbols x for synchronous and y for asynchronous.

Table 1 Aspects under study

Aspects to Investigate	Indicators
Teachers' preferences in online delivery mode	(1) Synchronous teaching mode (2) Asynchronous teaching mode
Teachers' reasons for selecting online delivery mode	(1) Benefits of synchronous teaching mode (2) Benefits of asynchronous teaching mode

Table 2 Summary of questionnaire data analysis

Delivery Modes	Number of answers of each delivery mode	Total number of answers	Percentage
Synchronous delivery mode	Fx 161	N 357	Px 30.8%
Asynchronous delivery mode	Fy 196	N 357	Py 69.2%

The numerical data displayed in Table 1 shows that 30.8 percent of the English teachers preferred employing synchronous delivery mode in their lessons. Furthermore, a majority (69.2%) of the English teachers chose asynchronous delivery mode in class. Thus, the result reveals that a majority of the English teachers participating in this study preferred asynchronous delivery mode to synchronous one.

The EFL Teachers' Reasons for Employing Online Delivery Mode

From a content analysis of the interview data a few themes emerged. The analysis yields the following themes:

1. Practicality: asynchronous teaching mode allows teachers as well as students to work and learn at their convenience.

The English teachers found it simpler to deliver teaching materials. In addition, with big classes, the teachers found it easier to control individual students. As for students, the teachers noticed them being able to access the materials almost effortlessly. The following are some opinions shared by the teachers during the interview:

Teacher 1: In my opinion, when I use asynchronous teaching mode, the material is more evenly delivered.

Teacher 2: It is easier for me to give assignments using asynchronous mode.

Teacher 3: Synchronous teaching is fine for me, but still, I prefer asynchronous mode.

Teacher 4: Sometimes, I use synchronous mode, however, I do more often with asynchronous mode, as I feel more comfortable with it.

The teachers seemed to favor asynchronous delivery mode because this mode allows for greater opportunities for students to absorb educational content equally. They also preferred this mode because it allows for a location independent. One teacher said that they simply created recorded mini-lectures for students to watch and online quizzes for them to complete.

2. Flexibility: asynchronous teaching mode gives, to some extent, freedom.

According to the teachers, with the asynchronous mode, both teachers and students go through the teaching and learning process which is in favor of their condition and or capacity. For instance, some students live in areas with unstable internet connectivity due to coverage scope and geographical condition. Under this condition, they cannot always attend a class properly. Here are some comments the teachers shared during the interview:

Teacher 1: I think it is flexible, as long as we can motivate students more because online learning is something new, and the students get used to a conventional class.

Teacher 2: I think it is flexible, as long as we can motivate students more because online learning is something new, and the students get used to a conventional class.

Teacher 3: Yes, in my opinion, using asynchronous online teaching gives flexibility to have my course online because its steps are organized well.

Teacher 4: It (asynchronous teaching) doesn't require a high-speed internet, students are more enthusiastic, and enjoy following the lessons.

Result of the interview strongly suggests that the teachers preferred asynchronous teaching mode because it is adaptable, more adaptable when compared to synchronous mode. One teacher noted that with asynchronous mode, students who are hardly able to connect to the internet can still participate in the learning process. Besides, teachers and students living in different geographical areas experienced the flexibility it gives to participate. Teachers can expect to see contributions that they might not have met from synchronous online course students.

3. Effectiveness: asynchronous teaching mode enables students to perform better.

Asynchronous teaching mode allows more time for the students to complete tasks and gain thorough understanding of the materials. Good process under asynchronous is also made possible because the students feel like there is nothing to lose in the "absence" of teachers. They will not suffer if their performance and response is unsuccessful. According to the teachers, most of the time, more students looked enthusiastic while completing the tasks given by the teachers. Their experience is shared as follows:

Teacher 1: It can be seen from students' reactions, ... enthusiastic.

Teacher 2: Students' contributions are more equal, because by this learning mode, most of students follow the learning process well, and do the assignments according to the instructions given.

Teacher 3: The students enjoy the learning process more, because there is no face-to-face activity.

Teacher 4: I can get good feedback from students, like submitting the assignment on time, and showing their enthusiasm by answering my questions in the discussion board.

Teacher 5: Easiness in using asynchronous mode is that the students can easily access the material provided and have more time to learn content of the material.

This type of reason is convincingly verified with data. One or more teachers argued that even introverted students benefit from asynchronous teaching mode because learning in isolation makes them feel "safer". No matter where the students are or how much time they have, they can be interactive. Above all, asynchronous teaching provides a significantly more effective learning experience by allowing students to never miss a class, learn at their own pace, and personalize as well as optimize their learning experience.

It is obvious from the interview data presented that both the teachers and students preferred asynchronous teaching mode to synchronous one. This supports the questionnaire data presented earlier.

Discussion

This section discusses two main themes, namely: (1) the teachers' preferences in the use of online teaching mode, and (2) the teachers' reasons for using the preferred type. The following sub-headings host the discussion of these themes.

The Teachers' Preferences for Asynchronous Online Delivery Mode

The questionnaire responses relating to respondents' preferences in the use of synchronous and asynchronous learning modes in English class revealed that out of 13 participating teachers, 4 teachers (30.8%), preferred using synchronous learning mode, while the rest or 9 teachers (69.2%) preferred asynchronous learning mode. During the Covid-19 pandemic, a greater proportion of teachers preferred asynchronous online teaching mode to synchronous mode. In other words, to a majority of the teachers of English as a foreign language, asynchronous online teaching mode is their favorite. This finding is consistent to the findings of (Swan, 2004; Ullmann-Moskovits et al., 2021), where asynchronous teaching was generally well-accepted. While questionnaire data on respondents' confidence in their ability to organize and plan for the asynchronous environment show that they were generally optimistic, data on respondents' confidence

in enacting pedagogical practices paint a somewhat bleaker picture. This finding is similar to that of (Ó Ceallaigh, 2021), discovering that a majority of teachers reported high levels of confidence in specific aspects of the instructional process.

The English teachers found it simple to use asynchronous teaching mode during the Covid-19 pandemic. The learning mode also provides straightforward methods for delivering materials. It gives students the opportunity to fully comprehend the materials. Despite the fact that there is no real-time communication between teachers and students in asynchronous online learning, the teacher has control over the students' activities (Coogle & Floyd, 2015). Teachers typically distribute course materials, such as videos and documents, to students via the learning management system. Students have unlimited access to these materials and can learn at their own pace by repeating the course materials an unlimited number of times (Jiang, 2017). Teachers can continue to teach and assess students even if they are unable to meet them physically as in traditional face-to-face class. This all is made possible with the technological advancement. Teachers can incorporate classroom best practices from on-the-ground teaching models to generate exciting online learning (Marshall & Kostka, 2020).

Another point is that most teachers gave a positive response to the statement "With asynchronous learning, students' contributions are more equally distributed." This means that some teachers agreed with the statement that students' contributions are adequate in asynchronous learning. It is possible because asynchronous communication can reduce tenseness. In contrast, a synchronous learning space offers real-time knowledge and skill, as well as immediate interaction among classroom participants. On the other hand, this type of environment requires a fixed meeting date and time, which denies the "anytime, anywhere" learning superiority that online classes have traditionally recommended (Skylar, 2009). As a result, asynchronous teaching mode is preferred by both teachers and students. For example, when students are given materials and assignments, they have more opportunities to study the material and respond more appropriately. This is relevant to what (Perveen, 2016) argued that asynchronous delivery mode can be advantageous because it allows students to carefully consider and analyze their responses. With delayed response, students have greater opportunity to think more critically, and the more they think hard about a problem, the more they construct the response rather than spontaneously respond. Besides, the distance reduces shyness, fear, and pressure on the part of students.

The Teachers' Reasons for Using Asynchronous Online Delivery Mode

The results of both the questionnaire and interview revealed that nine teachers frequently used asynchronous teaching mode. They expressed the convenience with asynchronous delivery mode. They stated during the interview that they could easily deliver teaching materials and assignments to students. Consequently, students can easily access them without consuming excessive internet bandwidth. Asynchronous online learning is preferred in online education (Garza Mitchell, 2014) because time is not an issue, where students can access and respond at any time. They also had more time to study the content of the materials provided because they could download them. The students' contributions are more evenly distributed in the asynchronous mode. They have more time to complete their assignments and double-check them to ensure they are correct (Hajovsky et al., 2020). Asynchronous space creates a self-directed, autonomous, personalized learning. Hence, asynchronous online education can create students' prior knowledge by bringing new concepts to them (Lin et al., 2012). Most importantly, asynchronous learning was perceived to be more cost-effective than synchronous learning because it did not require as much data as synchronous learning. This kind of reason associated with practicality is in line with ideas and earlier studies presented in the current study literature framework.

Asynchronous learning, according to the teachers, is chosen for flexibility reason. This can be seen from the teachers stating that by using this teaching mode, they could easily provide feedback and students were able to easily follow the learning process. Another teacher commented that she managed to organize the steps of learning well by using asynchronous learning mode. Furthermore, asynchronous learning is thought to provide more benefits in online learning. This is consistent with (Tabak & Rampal, 2014), despite the fact that using a team for class projects that call for student interaction in synchronous online learning mode can be very beneficial to students, as it copes with time, space, and distance limitations. This sort of reason for selecting online teaching mode is prettily consistent with the previous research studies as exhibited in the literature section.

Asynchronous virtual learning environments, such as group discussions, can become more alive and well-run as students overcome their shyness in expressing their ideas. This result is in line with what (Cahyani et al., 2021) found in their study reporting that in improving students' critical thinking development, asynchronous

online learning acts importantly. Teachers admitted that asynchronous online teaching mode provides the chance for the students to be more active and able to think critically through asynchronous discussion (Bunga et al., 2021). Further, shyness is reduced as a result of the distance mode, which alleviates the teacher's fear (Perveen, 2016). Since less pressure exists as compared with that in face-to-face class, learners may respond more creatively and innovatively. Since there is plenty of time to experiment with virtual activities, the chances of becoming irritated by technological issues such as slowness and lack of connectivity are low. In short, it appears that asynchronous virtual learning is becoming more widely used to address many issues concerning student participation and idea exploration.

Furthermore, nine EFL teachers participating in the present study argued that the success of learning is dependent on how teachers encourage students to build their motivation in learning, rather than solely on the delivery modes employed by the teachers. This relates to previous studies by Giesbers et al. (2014) and Giesbers et al. (2013) stating that in terms of quantity and quality, engagement in asynchronous activities is attributed to higher levels of autonomous motivation.

In dealing with class participation, the engagement of students in asynchronous teaching and learning process is regarded high. The majority of the participating teachers stated that students were eager to participate and effectively communicate in class. One study that contradicts the findings of the present study reported that students enrolled in asynchronous learning were highly dependent on the teachers in many ways (Koehler et al., 2020).

Since there is no face-to-face interaction, in synchronous online class the majority of students follow and enjoy the learning process. Students give them positive feedback for things like filling out the attendance list and submitting assignments on time, and they occasionally answer teachers' questions in the discussion board. The findings of this study highlight one of the advantages of asynchronous learning. A previous study by Wood and Henderson (2010) has found that asynchronous online discussions appear to be suitable for students, as discussions in this mode allow them to take part in a depth interaction and discussion that would hardly be possible in the synchronous online mode. However, in order for the discussion form to be effective and meaningful in fulfilling the learning objectives, it must be well-defined, structured, and monitored. This type of reason for selecting online delivery mode is also consistent with the result of previous studies. However, this might be the most exciting part of the current study

and is a promising issue for online class best practices and future studies. A great number of discussions in dealing with advantages versus disadvantages of online education have not included this point.

The responsibility of teachers then is to use asynchronous learning mode optimally in order to keep the learning process flowing smoothly during this online learning trend. This idea is related to the interview responses, in which all the research participants agreed that asynchronous learning allows them to more easily control their learning paths. Furthermore, they all agreed that using asynchronous learning mode is beneficial because it improves students' performance and participation.

Regarding practicality, synchronous learning mode is easier to implement for both teachers and students. Asynchronous teaching mode is more adaptable than synchronous teaching mode because it allows the teacher to easily organize and manage the class and allows students to access the material nearly facilely. Given the flexibility of the synchronous teaching mode, learning in this manner saves time, space, and energy to access the material, particularly for those who have internet connection issues, while its effectiveness from both classroom process and learning outcome points of view is proportional to students' readiness and motivation to be more participative when they are not forced to participate in face-to-face learning activities.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The present study shows that asynchronous teaching delivery mode was preferred by EFL teachers (making up nearly 70% of the participants) to conduct their online courses during the Covid-19 pandemic. Results of both questionnaire and interview data analyses exhibit a tendency to favor asynchronous over synchronous online teaching mode. Further, from the interview data analysis, three main reasons why the EFL teachers used asynchronous online delivery mode in preference to synchronous mode emerged. Firstly, it is practical. Secondly, it is flexible. Lastly, it is effective.

Since each online teaching and learning has its own strengths and weaknesses, it is always a good idea to decide how to blend both synchronous and asynchronous delivery modes in order to generate the best impact on the learner's education process while considering the real conditions. Regarding especially the current research results, it is suggested that educators refer to the well-developed asynchronous lessons on EFL class as a preferred teaching mode applied in the new normal era. In

addition, a further study is warranted to explore influential factors, particularly motivation, self-efficacy, and performance goals in remote learning where direct contact and supervision are absent. Despite its strong implication, it should be acknowledged that this study has limitations. The most obvious one is that it involved just a small number of English teachers from a particular small area within such a huge Archipelago, Indonesia.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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