STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN EFL ON-LINE CLASS

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Abstract

A closed-ended questionnaire was designated to the English Department students University of Nusantara PGRI Kediri to investigate their cognitive, behavioural and emotional engagement during the English teaching learning processes that were administered in online classes. These online classes were managed to implement the government policy in banning the spread of Covid-19 pandemic. The results showed that students' behavioural engagement was relatively high, however, their cognitive and emotional engagement were not extensively positive in some of their aspects. It was found that the students found obstacles in communicating ideas, helping each other, previewing the previous materials, and overcoming anxiety in making mistake during online class. Findings contributes to an understanding of the various aspects of web-based classes and the EFL student engagement in the virtual classes

Keywords: Student Engagement, Online Class, English as a Foreign Language

I INTRODUCTION

Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) pandemic has altered the system of teaching and learning process drastically. Teachers and students are compelled to conduct the teaching learning process from their homes for the unlimited time as the government is still keeping up with the growth of this pandemic. Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture issued decree Number 4 2020 regarding Education Policy during the Emergency Situation of Covid-19. He stated that teaching learning process from home is administered via online in order to facilitate a meaningful learning experience. In order to implement that decree teachers, have to be prepared to change their conventional classes to online ones. Therefore, it is important for the teachers to elevate their self-competence, point of view, and their interaction pattern to the latest technology.

However, there are several problems faced by both teachers and students in the implementation of online class. Suharwoto (2020) revealed several challenges related to the application of online teaching learning process; (1) a technological gap between schools in the big city and those are in the countryside in Indonesia, (2) limitation of teacher's competence to utilize online teaching applications, (3) the lack of the technology resources such as internet and computer, and (4) the low integration among teachers, students and parents in online learning. Teachers are staggered since they have to change the system, syllabus, and the teaching learning process greatly. Students are stuttered getting piles of tasks while parents are under pressure, since they have to accompany their children to do the school tasks. Previously, teachers saw online teaching learning process as no more than a concept or technical application. They did not consider that online teaching learning process is a certain teaching paradigm. Online teaching can be used to ease the students to access various sources of knowledge, more creativity in creating artwork, and supplement for student's knowledge.

Several solutions have been provided by the government to face this pandemic challenges, such as; accomodating online class into one portal that can be accessed by more than eighty thousand people, cooperating with education application providers such as Ruang Guru Quiper School, Zenius, Office 365, Google for Education, and many others to provide free access to their facilities, and cooperate with national TV station to broadcast education programs that can be utilized by the teacher and the students to study at home in meaningful way. Both in conventional and online classroom student engagement take important roles in the success of teaching learning process. Students who have high engagement in teaching learning process tend to be more active in the classroom interaction and they involve more their feeling and sense in their interaction to achieve the learning objectives. Kuh (2003) stated that students' engagement can be used as assessment of development both of personal and learning process. This means that the more students involve in practising, getting feedback in the teaching learning process, the more they learn. It can also be said that the student achievement can be promoted by a high-level involvement of the students to the teaching learning process.

The evidence for role of engagement in influencing students' academic outcomes such as learning achievement and the teaching learning process have been provided by several former studies. Krause and Coates, (2008) clarified that the objectives of engagement were to achieve students' learning outcomes by devoting their time and effort to do activities that contribute to their learning directly.

Trowller (2010) affirmed that students' engagement with active participation was done by the students through their time in the classroom. Jens (2013); Zohud (2015) confirmed there was significant effect of the student engagement to the student language achievement. Furthermore, Han & Hyland (2015) who conducted their research the student engagement in the area of teaching writing stated that the students' engagement contributes to the students' achievement in writing skill. However, little attention has been put into the students' engagement in the online class. One that focused on it was conducted by Ginting (2020) who reflected his experience in teaching English via online. He proposed the use of inquiry community approach to promote the students' engagement in online class. So far, However, there has been no discussion about the type and the way how the students' engagement in online class. Therefore, this study pictured the types and the way how the students involve in online teaching learning process especially when they learn English as foreign language. Thus, we have a comprehensive understanding on the students' engagement in the online EFL class.

Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) divided student engagement into three aspects such as Behavioural Engagement, Emotional Engagement, and Cognitive Engagement. This study used these three divisions to see the student engagement in the teaching processes that were conducted via online. Therefore, the aims of this study were; to describe what platforms that the teachers used in teaching English via online and how was the student engagement in the implementation of those online teaching learning process.

II   MATERIALS AND METHODS

This qualitative research used case study as the technique of the research as it focused on answering a descriptive question about what happened to the student engagement when they were studying English in online classes. As Ary et al (2010) stated, a case study provides in-depth description of an individual, group, class, site, program, process, institution, or community. It can answer descriptive questions (what happened) or attempt to explain why something happened by looking at a process. The subjects of this study were the students in English Education Department University of Nusantara PGRI Kediri that consists of 120 students. The data about students' engagement in the English teaching learning process of online classes were collected using closed ended questionnaires. The questionnaire was developed using three divisions of students' engagement proposed by Trowller (2010) and Fredrict, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004) as seen in the following table:

	STUDENT ENGAGEMENT CRITERIA	
	Indicators	**Sub-Indicators**
Cognitive	Comprehension	response to the teachers' questions
		do the teacher's task
	Share ideas	communicate ideas to the classroom
		help each other to do the tasks.
	Preview knowledge	answer the teachers questions related to the last materials
Emotional	Interest	eager to join the class
		do the classroom activities
	Worried	be afraid to make mistake
		keep silent
Behavioural	Attention	follow and do the teachers' instruction

	Effort	do the tasks in or out of the classroom
		submit the task on time
	Classroom Participation	participate actively
		be responsible
	Responsibility	follow the lesson on time

Table 1. Student Engagement Criteria

Modified from Trowller (2010) and Fredrict, Blumenfeld, and Paris, (2004)

There were 15 items for each aspects of the students' engagement, five (no.1 up to 5) for the cognitive aspect, five (no. 6 up to 10) for emotional aspect and five questions (no. 11 up to 15) for behavioural engagement. Five options in each question range from strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and disagree were given to get the students' responds. To analyse the data, there were several steps; first, the data got from the questionnaire were turned into scores based on the Linkert-scale in which the score for strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree were respectively 5,4,3,2, and 1 score. Then the computed score was calculated in the percentage score for each aspect. Finally, those scores were interpreted using interval analysis. The following criteria were used to interpret the computed score so the level of the students' engagement can be found.

Interval Criteria:

0% - 19.99% = Strongly Disagree

20% - 39.99% = Disagree

40% - 59.99% = Neutral

60% - 79.99% = Agree

80% - 100%   = Strongly Agree

III   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1   RESEARCH RESULT

This chapter focused on describing the results of the data analysis about student's engagement in EFL online classes that were collected using closed ended questionnaire. The total of ninety participants participated in filling the questionnaire that were conducted via online by using google form.

3.1.1 APPLICATIONS USED IN EFL ONLINE CLASSES

The result of the study showed that the EFL online classes in English Language Department University of Nusantara PGRI Kediri were administered using various applications. We can see those variations in the following graphic:
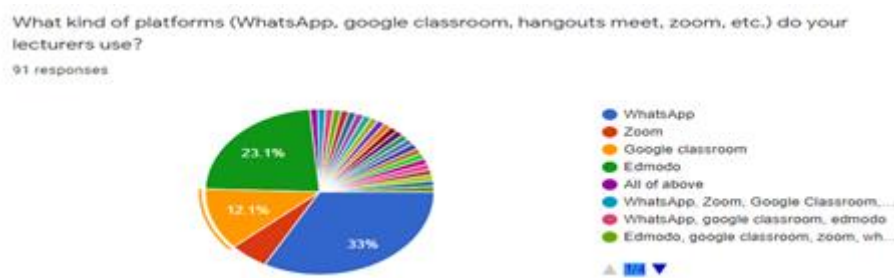
Graphic 1. Application Used in EFL Online Teaching and Learning

From the chart above, we can identify the most popular application to be used to teach online was WhatsApp application in which almost half respondents stated that their lecturers used WhatsApp application to conduct the online teaching learning process. The least popular, in the second number, there was Edmodo application. It was followed by Google Classroom in the third number. In the last

position there was Zoom aplication. However, it does not mean that one lecturer used only one application, since the respondents also replied that their lecturers used more than one application in teaching English.

3.1.2 STUDENTS'S COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT IN EFL ONLINE CLASSES

Cognitive engagement can be displayed in terms of being strategic or self-regulating. It accomplishes the students's understanding or comprehension, sharing ideas and previewing knowledge. The following data shows the details of those aspects from the students' point of view when they were taught English using online media.

3.1.2.1 Comprehension aspect

There were two sub-components in this aspect namely; the way how the students understand the teachers's instruction and they way they do the teacher's task. The results showed that more than half students, about fifty two percent students, could response the teacher's questions and sixty percent students were able to do the tasks given by the teachers. There were only few students, in about five percent of the respondents, had difficulties to answer the teachers's questions and around ten percent students could not complete the tasks. It means during the online class in general there were no obtacles for the students to comprehend the teachers's explanations and materials.

3.1.2.2 Sharing Ideas Aspect

In the second sub-indicator of cognitive engagement, namely sharing ideas, the students found limitation both in communicating their ideas and helping each other in online class. Eventhough only a small number of students, approximately ten percent, stated directly that they could not communicate their opinion during the online class, it was found that there were around half students answered that they were in neutral point. It means they were in some cases may found difficulties to express their ideas in the online EFL classes. However, the rest respondents, approximately fourty percent students, said that online class did not interfere them to communicate their ideas and cooperate with others in doing the tasks.

3.1.2.3 Previewing Knowledge Aspect

In the last sub-indicator of cognitive engagement namely previewing knowledge, there were not more than half students or fifty percent students gave neutral answer. It means they may have difficulty in relating their new knowledge with the previous one. On the other hand, there were thirty percent students who were able to answer confidently that they could relate their previous knowldege with the teacher's new questions during the online class. The following graphic showed the students's cognitive engagement when they followed the English lesson via online.
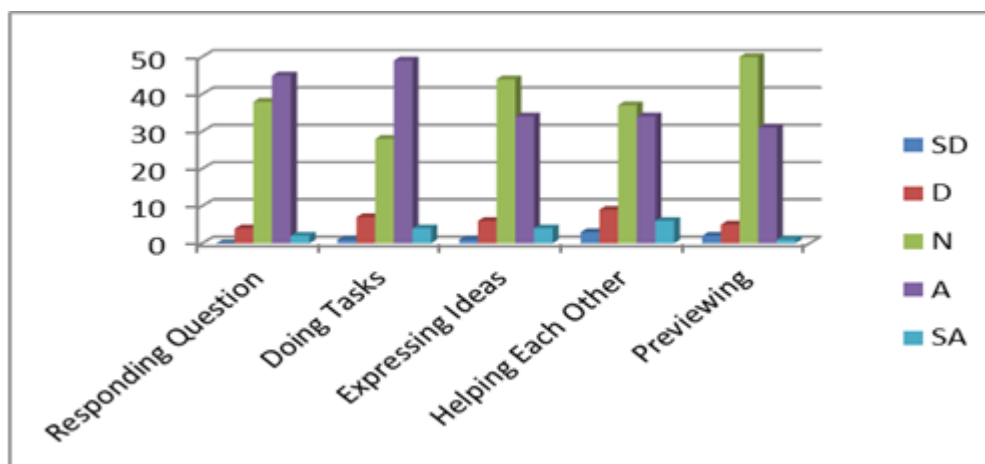
Graphic 2. Students Cognitive Engagement in EFL Online Class

From the graph 2 above, we could see that the student's engagement in almost all of the cognitive aspects such as; in responding teacher's question, expressing ideas, helping each other and especially previewing the teacher's questions, were in neutral position. It means students might have been difficult

to respond the lecturers' questions, communicate their ideas and cooperate with others in the online class. However, they generally didn't find difficulties in doing the tasks.

3.1.3 STUDENTS'S EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT IN EFL ONLINE CLASSES

Emotional engagement related to the students's interest and encompassed positive and negative reactions to teachers, classmates, academics, and school. It is presumed to create ties to an institution and influence willingness to do the work. There were two sub-indicators in this aspect such as interest and worried. The following description shows the details of the students' emotional engagement when they followed the online class.
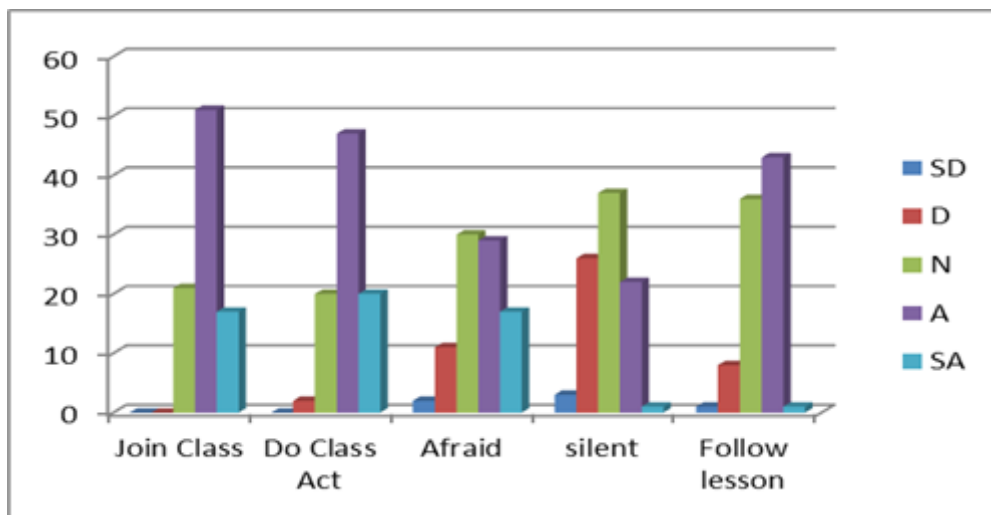
3.1.3.1 Interest Aspect

Online class did not hinder the students' interest to join the class. Almost all or respectivelly eighty percent students stated that they had the same interest to attend the online class as much as their interest to the offline class. In addition, they also had high motivation to do the class activities eventhough they did not have face to face meeting with their lecturers.

3.1.3.2 Worried Aspect

In this sub indicator, worried feeling, however, more than half students said that they had anxiety to make mistake during the online class, therefore they tended to remain silent in the class.

3.1.3.3 Attention Aspect

The students' concentration during the online teaching learning process was not distracted. It is shown from their ability to answer the lecturers' questions and when they had to follow the lecturer' instructions. The data showed that there were only small number of the students or ten percent students who failed to answer the lecturers' questions. It happened at a similar way when the students had to carry out the lecturers' instruction, there were only twelve percent students were unable to do the teachers's instructions. It means online class did not bother the students' concentration during the teaching learning process. Graphic 3 showed the students emotional engagement condition when they followed online classes.

Graphic 3. Students Emotional Engagement

The graph 3 above showed that generally the students' emotional engagement during the online classes were positive especially in the interest and attention aspects. Almost all of the students joined the class, did the class activities and followed the lessson. However, in the aspect of worried, there were almost twenty five percent students answered that they were afraid to express their idea and remind silent when they were in online classes.

3.1.4 STUDENTS'S BEHAVIOURAL ENGAGEMENT IN EFL ONLINE CLASSES

Behavioral engagement encompasses the idea of drawing on the idea of participation; it includes involvement in academic and social activities and is considered to be crucial for achieving positive academic outcomes. In this study there were four sub indicators namely: attention, effort, classroom

participation, and responsibility aspects. The following describtion shows the details of those each aspect.

3.1.4.1 Effort Aspect

The students' attempt to follow the online lesson were also high. It can be seen from the result of the questionnire, which showed that the majority were able to submit the tasks on time. On the contrary, there were only five percent students weren't able to do that.

3.1.4.2 Classroom Participation Aspect

The number of the students' participation in online class were also positive. More than half respondents were active in the class, however, there were still one fourth students or fourty percent students who were in the neutral position. It means they might have been less active in the online class eventhough there were only seven percent students who stated directly that they were not active at all in the virtual class.

3.1.4.3 Responsibility Aspect

The students's resposibility in the online class were also positive. Almost all students or seventy percent students were responsible on the lesson. They were also quite eager to follow the lesson. More than seventy percent students had high motivation to be punctual on following the lesson. Graphic 4 shows the results of the students' behavioural engagement renspond.
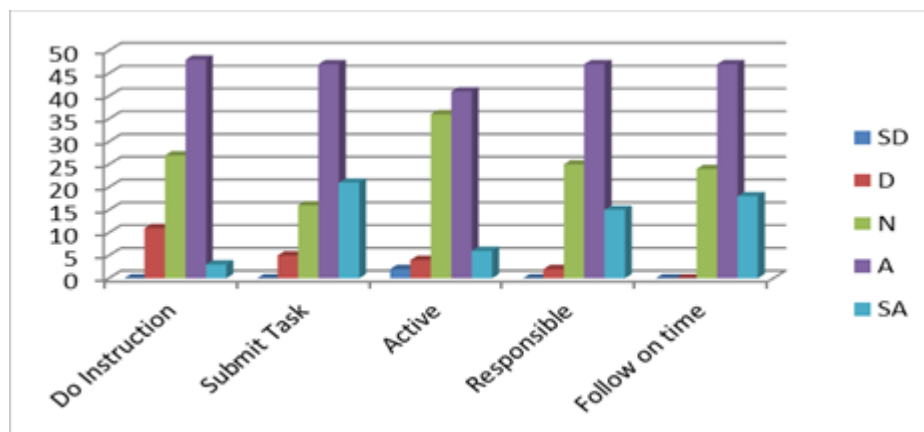
Graphic 4. Students Behavioural Engagement

The graph 4 above showed that generally the students' behavioural engagement during the online classes were positive. Almost all of the students could do the teachers' instruction, submit the class, be responsible and take part in the lesson on time. However, in the aspect of activeness they were confused how they could be active in their online classes. It was shown that there were almost thirty five percent students answered doublty about whether they could be active or not when they were in online classes.

3.2 DISCUSSION

From the research results mentioned above, it can be stated that the student's engagement during the English language teaching that is conducted via online was postive in nature. It is in line with Zohud (2015) who stated that learners became more active and engaged in the learning process and learn better when their teacher use different strategies and media in the class. Dewi et al. (2020) also found that the implementation of Google classroom as a learning aid to improve students' reading comprehension is quite effective, since the students could learn with more access by using their smartphone without being limited by time and place. However, some problems related to the students' cognitive engagement cannot be neglected. The cognitive engagement that were interfered during the online class was the students' opportunity to communicate their ideas and having cooperative and collaborative learning. The students also find difficulties to relate what they have learnt with the materials being discussed. These findings coincided with Coates' (2005) study which found that placing lecture notes or audio streaming on the web is not a substitute for effective lecturing. Students reaction indicate that even when all lecture notes are on the web, they will attend lectures if the lecture is interesting and presented well. Contact with academics and their peers is crucial. To reduce this shortcoming, Ginting (2020) suggested to

mention the names of students who takes online classes since it can build strong social relationship. This strengthen Dewi's at al. (2020) finding about the students' perceptions of using Google Classroom, it revealed that some students still preferred to study in the offline classroom since they could interact directly and easily with the teacher.

The student's emotional engagement especially in handling their anxiety of making mistake was high in the online class. Therefore, they chose to be silent and not active in the class. This coincides with Krause (2005) who said that when lecture material was presented online, academics needed to develop strategies for encouraging student involvement during lectures. For example, integrated activities into the lecture timeslot-in online learning environments, capitalise on the community-building capacities of online discussion forums to connect students to each other and to the learning community. Filius et al. (2018) as cited by Ginting (2020) stated that giving confidence to take over the role of the teacher was relatively effective because this trust made students see themselves positively, increased their self-confidence, and encouraged them to actively interact.

Finally, the only aspect in the behaviour engagement that should be given more attention in online class is in focusing the students' attention to the lesson. It needs suitable strategies to increase the students' concentration to the lesson, as Han and Hyland (2015) stated that the teachers should carefully plan their strategies to enhance the studets' engagement. Furthermore, Ginting (2020) stated that promoting the instructor presence in online class by clarify the rules of the lesson can increase the students' engagement in the way that they actively interacted during the online class. This can be done by, for example, explaining what students have to do and what they should not do.

IV   CONCLUSION

There are several points that can be concluded from this study; firstly, the students' engagement during online class was high in all three aspects; cognitive, emotional and behavioural engagements. They were able to comprehend the lesson, did the task, had high interest and put high efforts during the online class. However, in certain sub categories, such as in the cognitive engagement aspect, the students had difficulties in the way how to communicate their ideas and how to conduct cooperative and collaborative activities in the class. In addition, they also found problems to do previewing activities. They lack the ability to connect previous lesson with the materials being studied. The students also found difficulties both in getting the correct answer and completing the task. Secondly, in the sub category of emotional engagement the students have anxiety in following the online lesson because they were afraid of making mistakes. As a result, they chose not to be active in the class and kept silent. Finally, in the sub category of the behaviour engagement, the students had problems in focusing their attention to the lesson. It is recommended that during the online teaching learning process, the teachers should facilitate the students with opportunities to communicate their ideas by using other additional interactive applications. The teachers also need to create more tasks that can provide chances for the students to have collaboration and cooperation. Regarding to the student's anxiety of making mistake during the teaching learning process, the teachers should give more feedback and reward to promote the student's self-confidence. Lecturers were suggested to follow practical workshop on the strategy in teaching English in online classes then apply those techniques in their teaching learning process. The more appropriate teaching strategies applied by the teacher, the more enganged the students will be to the lesson. For future researchers, there are some aspects that have not been covered in this study such as; the teachers' point of view on the implementation of the online class, the effect of certain teaching techniques or strategies in online applications that can be used to promote the students' cognitive aspect, and emotional as well behaviour engagement in the online class.

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