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THE IMPACTS OF MENTIMETER-BASED ACTIVITIES ON EFL STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN INDONESIA

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Abstract
The effort to enhance students' engagement in the EFL classroom is still becoming an issue. Fortunately, some studies have shown a positive correlation between technology utilization to elevate the students' engagement. Based on that potential finding, this study aims at digging out the impact of Mentimeter, as one of the popular tools in this recent time, on EFL students' engagement. It is a descriptive qualitative study. There are 70 respondents of the non-English students that were selected by using purposive sampling. The results of the study reveal that there are three most prominent students' positive perception towards the implementation of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom, namely practicality, anonymity, and freedom. Those three aspects foster the students to be engaged in the process of English learning. Then, most students perceive that no reason makes them dislike Mentimeter usage in the EFL classroom. The next finding depicts a significant impact of Mentimeter on the students' engagement in English learning by giving opinions and discussion activities. It was proven with the percentage of students' participation, reaching 82% and 91%, above the average of Mentimeter participants' contribution.

Keywords: Mentimeter, engagement, giving opinion, EFL

Introduction
Most foreign language teachers must deal with one of the biggest challenges in English language learning, that is the students' anxiety. Worde (1998) argues that more than half of foreign language learners encounter anxiety in the process of English learning. Students who perceive anxiety may find the process of learning to be less enjoyable (Gregersen, 2005). Even worse, for the anxious English learners, they tend not to engage in any activities that make them anxious (Pappamihiel, 2002).

That occurrence becomes a severe matter to English learning since motivation, engagement, and achievement are related to one another (Mulia, 2020). Lots of teachers find out that their teaching is useless due to the students' low motivation and engagement. The low engagement of the students will significantly impact the students' learning outcome. Irvin, Meltzer, and Dukes (2007) add that engagement plays a crucial role in the learning process because it leads the students to the practice and interaction of the classroom's subject. Thus,

Jung, Kudo, and Choi (2012) state that students must get involved and actively engaged in the classroom to develop their English language skills.

The students' participation in the classroom is believed to be the parameter of the continuous learning process. Various types of students' participation are reflected in their willingness to express opinions, asking questions, working on assignments, and suchlike. One of the activities that successfully draw students' interest in the English learning process is asking and giving an opinion (Harunasari and Halim, 2019). Asking and giving an opinion is believed to be an effective teaching technique for the teachers to foster students' engagement in English learning (Randong, Marbun, and Novita, 2013). However, in these modern days, having a good teaching technique is not enough. Teachers must build such a mood-living-up atmosphere in the classroom to make the students encouraged (Mulia, 2020).

One of the efforts that could be endeavored by the teachers to establish an uplifting learning environment is by utilizing technology. Technology is believed to bring adequate space for both students and teachers to communicate and promote the students' interest through the teaching techniques of asking and giving opinions (Mulia, 2020). Moreover, some studies also reveal that students tend to get more involved in the online collaborative class than face-to-face learning (Pellas & Kazanidis, 2015; Saritepeci & Çakir, 2015 as cited in Mulia, (2020)). Moreover, compared to the traditional classroom, the technology-based classroom provides an excellent opportunity for the students to experience the appealing atmosphere of the learning process that stimulates their engagement (Mulia, 2020). One of the technologies employed in this study is Mentimeter. Mentimeter is an easy-to-use application that facilitates the students to communicate by answering questions anonymously (Puspa and Imamyartha, 2019). Furthermore, it is considered a stress-free application because anyone can join the discussion forum through the online entrance using smartphones, laptops, or tablets.

Positive features of Mentimeter

Mentimeter is an online application that offers significant advantages. It is reported that Mentimeter is an easy-to-use application that is free and does not require any installation nor download (Jurgen, 2018) (Puspa and Imamyartha, 2019). It also provides users with interactive learning to take place with its attractive presentation of the results (John, 2018). Its ability to encourage students' engagement and engagement in the learning process is revealed (Morrison, 2015). Mentimeter has also been a popular online application for teachers and students since 2014 (Mayhew, 2019). Mentimeter promotes collaborative learning that enables the students to share their opinion and post it on the page that could be accessed by the other students and teachers (Quang, 2018) (Lina and Annika, 2015). One of the features that become the students' fondness is anonymity (Heaslip, Donovan, and Cullen, 2014). Students do not need to worry about their identity when they respond to a particular question asked. It is a feature that is not offered in the traditional discussion. Thus, the utilization of Mentimeter in the classroom enhances the quality of learning since it encourages the students to interact and discuss specific topics, even the most introverted students (Crump and Sparks, 2018).

Negative features of Mentimeter

Some obstacles have been identified during the usage of the Mentimeter application. One of them deals with the internet connection. The students cannot contribute to the activities through Mentimeter unless they have an internet connection (Vallely and Gibson, 2018). Thus, the process of learning that is based on Mentimeter will be pointless when the internet connection does not work. The other problem is found in the feature of anonymity. The anonymity makes teacher impossible to identify which students have contributed to the discussion (Vallely and Gibson, 2018). The other limitation of Mentimeter is that when the students have already submitted the responses, they cannot edit or delete them (Vallely and Gibson, 2018). Afterward, it leads to the inappropriate results of students' responses due to the miss-spelling, mother-tongue language, grammatical error, and suchlike.

Prior studies and research gap

Prior studies have successfully discovered several findings of Mentimeter usage in English learning. A study conducted by Wong and Yunus (2020), which involved 40 students in one of the primary schools in Malaysia, showed that Mentimeter is a practical application to improve students' writing vocabularies. A study carried out by Lin and Lin (2020) in one of the universities in China presented that Mentimeter is a useful tool to assist teachers in enhancing students' communication skills that are investigated by using six communication theories. A study conducted by Vallely and Gibson (2018) portrayed the strengths and limitations of Mentimeter by using the SWOT analysis. That study was implemented by involving the participants from students of the Teachers Education Department. Another study managed by Puspa and Imamyartha (2019) showed a finding that there is a positive correlation between the implementation of Mentimeter and students' language production skills.

As previously mentioned above, there is much work that has been carried out overseas to examine the advantages of Mentimeter for English learning. Nevertheless, there is still minimum information about the impact of Mentimeter on the higher education students' engagement in the face-to-face classroom in the Indonesian EFL context. Thus, this study was conducted by answering these two research questions:

1. What are the students' perceptions of the utilization of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom?
2. How does Mentimeter impact the students' engagement in the EFL classroom?

Method

Research design

The design of this study was descriptive qualitative that 'aims to seek thorough information about a particular issue' (Kawulich, 2015). It brings a goal to describe the characteristics or phenomenon. In this study, the researcher endeavored to present the impact of Mentimeter on EFL students' engagement.

Participants

The participants of this research were 70 non-English students of Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, who attended the General English course. Those participants consisted of 46 female students and 24 male students. They were from the 1st semester of the Accounting and Informatics Engineering study program.

Instruments and data sources

The source of the data was in the form of phrases, sentences, and expressions that belonged to the qualitative data. The researcher utilized open-ended questionnaires that were distributed through an online platform. The students were asked to fill out the questionnaire forms. Then, their responses were taken as the data of this study.

Data collecting techniques

This study used open-ended questionnaires as the data collecting technique. There were four questions: (1) What are the things that the students like from the implementation of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom? (2) What are the things that the students do not like from the implementation of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom? (3) What is the preferable method for the students in expressing their opinion? (4) What are the students' suggestions for the future implementation of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom?

The researcher enriched the data with the findings from the documentation. Moreover, the researcher also took note of the observation during the implementation of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom.

Data analysis

The data analysis in this study employed descriptive qualitative analysis. The analysis encompassed three stages. The first stage was the coding analysis done as the initial analysis by examining the qualitative data in phrases, sentences, and written expressions. Afterward, it continued to the second stage, which was pattern coding. In this stage, the qualitative data was classified into some categories based on specific keywords. The last stage was the narrative description. It was the stage in which the researcher provided a thorough analytical description of the research findings (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, 2014).

Findings and Discussion

The open-ended questionnaire yielded qualitative data that was analyzed in this section. As the initial analysis, this study investigated the impacts of Mentimeter on the EFL classroom from the affective perspective. The affective domain dealt with attitudes, motivation, and anxiety (Henter, 2014). Thus, this study started the analysis by examining the students' responses, both positive and negative, towards the use of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom.

Students' positive perception towards Mentimeter

Regarding this section, there were five categories related to the students' positive perceptions of the use of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom. The detailed result was presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Students' positive perception

Responses	Quantity
Amusing, fun	8
Anonymity	18
Attractive (presentation, various types of activities)	6
Practical (paperless, simple method, class is not noisy, fast)	22
Freedom (not speaking in public)	16

According to the result in Table 1, the highest response of the students' positive perception dealt with practicality. It was shown that 22 students considered the use of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom provides practicality during learning. The students found it positive when the activities using Mentimeter was paperless. They also felt that polling or giving responses through Mentimeter was simple due to smartphones that needed no effort to use. It is in line with the research conducted by Vallely and Gibson (2018), with the results showing that Mentimeter was an easy-to-use tool for the students in learning a language.

Moreover, it was also reported that Mentimeter was a simple tool to use since it did not require any installation or download before its usage (Mayhew, 2019). Other responses showed that the students were comfortable due to the practicality in using Mentimeter because it created a conducive class atmosphere when the students presented their ideas. On the regular discussion in class, the students were bothered by the noisy class when they gave an opinion, giving responses, and suchlike. Fortunately, Mentimeter successfully changed the learning atmosphere to be more conducive with less noise. The last response dealing with practicality was about the fast process of Mentimeter. The students found the Mentimeter to be a useful tool for learning since it could collect ideas and presented the result fast. It is in line with a study carried out by Emma (2018) showing that Mentimeter offered the positive feature for learning due to its ability to collect ideas, responses, discussions, feedbacks and presented the outcomes instantly.

The second most substantial category was about anonymity. Mentimeter was an online system with its feature to collect ideas with an anonymous identity. Its feature of anonymity became one of the students' preferences in presenting their ideas. Eighteen responses showed positive responses to the anonymity feature of Mentimeter. Some studies supported this finding, such as the study managed by Heaslip, Donovan, and Cullen (2014), which revealed that Mentimeter encouraged greater engagement and higher participation rate due to the participants' anonymity that was hardly achieved in regular-class discussion. The class atmosphere of anonymous discussion by using Mentimeter triggered students' participation to speak up their mind in a non-judgemental environment that led to a more significant engagement (Vallely and Gibson, 2018).

The third considerable category was about freedom. There were 16 students' responses presenting that the learning process in Mentimeter served them with freedom in expressing their opinion and engaging in a discussion. The students did not have to present their ideas in public speaking that made them anxious. Some studies indicated similar results dealing with freedom in learning that was offered by Mentimeter. A study by Crump and Sparks (2018) showed that Mentimeter supported the learning process by building an atmosphere that encouraged the students' participation, even for the most introverted ones. Besides, another study also showed that Mentimeter became a helpful tool in boosting students' confidence to freely participate in the discussion and express their voices (Vallely and Gibson, 2018).

The next category showed that the students perceived that Mentimeter usage in the EFL classroom brought a delightful and fun learning atmosphere. It was shown from the eight responses in this category. This study was similar to the research finding carried out by Wong and Yunus (2020), which ensured that the students expressed their favoritism towards Mentimeter due to its features that created a fun learning atmosphere. The discussion in learning was shifted into an amusing situation with less pressure for the students.

The last category for this section was about the power of Mentimeter in presenting the outcomes of the students' interaction in an impressive and attractive form. Six students considered the Mentimeter attractive feature to be positive for them. Students were interested and impressed in the results of Mentimeter that was presented in appealing layouts and designs with colorful fonts (Davina and Kelly, 2017). The types of questions facilitated by Mentimeter were also varied. It offered some features such as voting, polling for the winners, open-ended questions, and others. The outcomes of the results were also presented with an animation effect that dramatically presented the results more impressively.

Students' negative perception of Mentimeter

The second section of this discussion investigated the students' negative responses to the implementation of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom. Four categories were presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' negative perception

Responses	Quantity
Internet connection problem	9
Anonymity	2
Not accessible in all smartphone	2
Nothing	57

The most prominent responses showed that 57 students perceived nothing that made them discourage or dislike the implementation of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom. 57 students out of 70 students, or 81% of the total respondents, felt that they liked the learning process by using Mentimeter. This finding became an indicator of the students' high value in the affective domain during the learning process.

Other findings show some minor negative perceptions towards the implementation of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom. The first one dealt with the internet connection problem. Nine students found it trouble-some in using the Mentimeter tool due to the bad internet connection. It is in line with the fact that students can get involved in the Mentimeter interaction platform only if they have an internet-connected device (Vallely and Gibson, 2018).

Moreover, two students stated that they could not access the Mentimeter platform due to a technical problem with their smartphones. Those students found it stressful because they could not use their smartphones to get involved in the learning activities through Mentimeter. As a result, they had to ask their friends to post the answer using their compatible smartphone.

Then, the last finding revealed that two students did not like the feature of anonymity that Mentimeter offered. Those two students were curious about the opinion of givers' identity. It is similar to the research finding done by Vallely and Gibson (2018), showing that one of the limitations of Mentimeter was anonymity that made it possible to identify which students have contributed to the discussion.

Students' engagement in giving opinion through Mentimeter

The third discussion of this study tried to seek the answer to the second research question that was "How does Mentimeter impact the students' engagement in EFL classroom?". The detailed elaboration was presented in the following discussion.

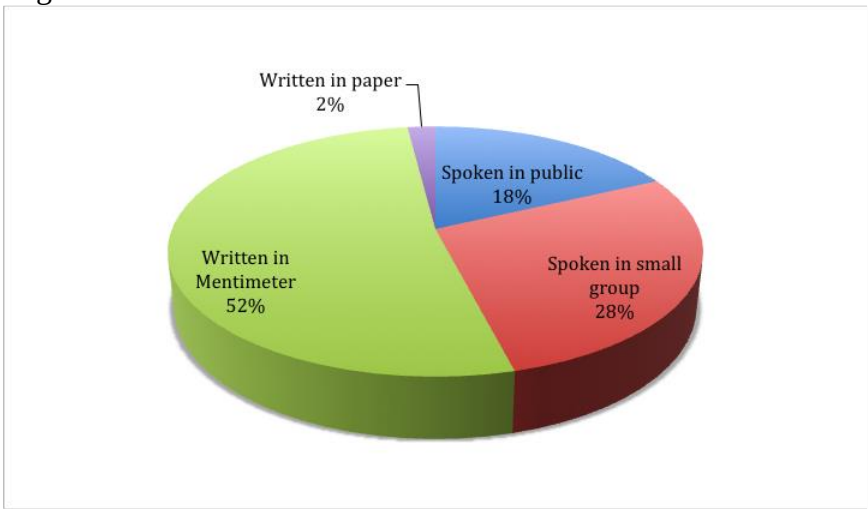


Figure 1. Students' preferable method in giving opinion

As it is seen in Figure 1, the preferable method in giving opinion was through written forms by using Mentimeter tools. There were more than half of the respondents preferred Mentimeter over any other methods. It was supported by a study which stated that Mentimeter, the new teaching tool, made the students intrigued and keen to use it (Walker and Pearce, 2014). Moreover, some studies also revealed that the students were more engaged when utilizing their portable devices during the lecturing time to get real-time outcomes (Wong, 2016 and Funnell, 2017).

Other results showed that there was 28% of the respondent who preferred sharing their opinion by speaking up their ideas in the small group discussion. Then, 18% of the respondents liked to express their opinion by sharing it in public, in front of their classmates, and 2% found it enjoyable to express their ideas by writing it on a paper. Accordingly, the result of this section showed that a lot of students (more than 50% of the students) considered Mentimeter as the tool that could facilitate their opinion sharing with its positive features.

The impact of Mentimeter usage on the students' engagement in the EFL classroom was illustrated in the following figures. Some activities had been recorded during the EFL classroom by incorporating the Mentimeter tool. Figure 2 and Figure 3 showed the detail of the activity outcomes in Mentimeter.



Figure 2. Students' engagement in the open-ended discussion

The activity in Figure 2 showed that there were 37 students get involved in the discussion. The total number of students present in class when that activity took place was 45 students. Thus, 82% of the students were engaged in the discussion. On that activity, the lecturer asked a question to gauge opinion on the fun things of being granted a scholarship abroad. Then, the students freely answered the questions with short phrases. The answers, which were answered by a lot number of students, will get bigger. Based on the observation result, when the layout of the Mentimeter appeared, the students find it fun and appealing.

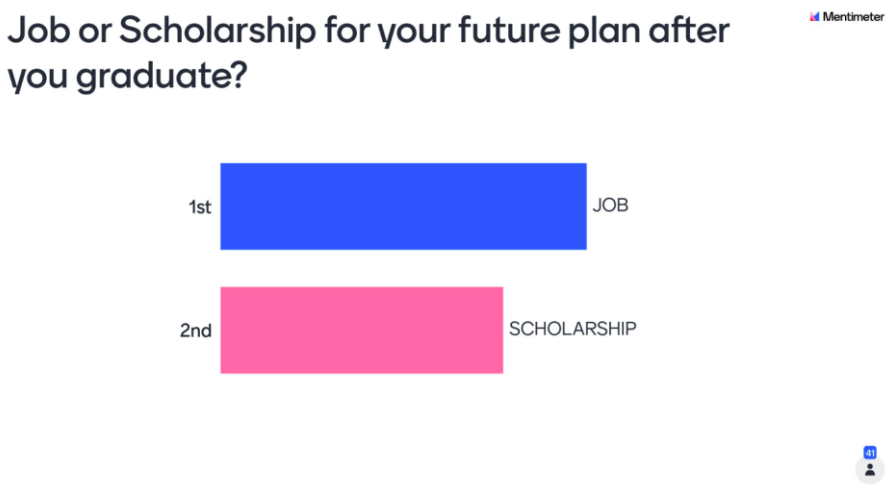


Figure 3. Students' engagement in the polling

Afterward, the activity in Figure 3 presented that 41 students were engaged in the discussion out of 45 students in total. It meant that there were 91% of students were actively engaged in the discussion. On the activity, the lecturer asked the students to choose either job or scholarship for their plan after they graduate. According to those two activities, the students' engagement was above the average of Mentimeter participants' contribution. It was reported that participation in Mentimeter usually varied between 50%-75% (Vallely and Gibson, 2018). It was also supported by Wong and Yunus (2020), convincing that the use of Mentimeter encourages greater engagement and higher participation.

The last finding of this section revealed the students' satisfaction towards the use of Mentimeter in EFL classroom that was appeared in their suggestions. The students were asked about their suggestion dealing with the implementation of Mentimeter in the English classroom. The result was presented in Figure 4.

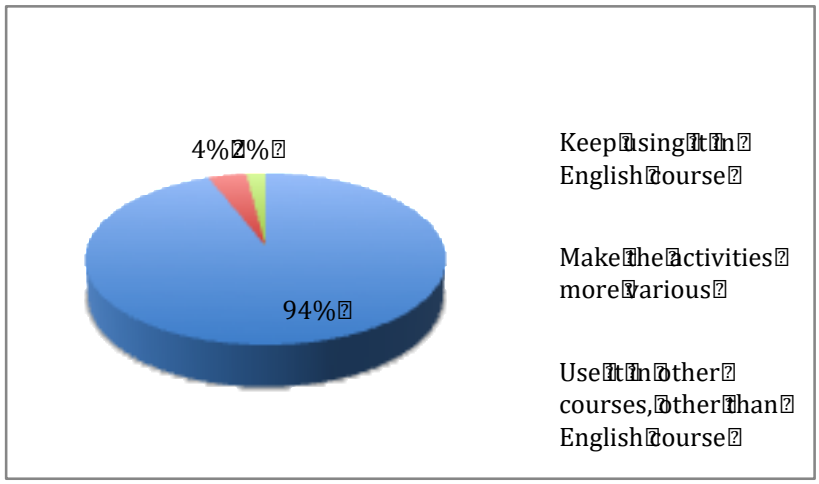


Figure 4. Students' satisfaction that appeared in their suggestion

Figure 4 showed that the majority of the students, 94% of the total students, suggested the lecturer keep using Mentimeter in the English classroom. The students found that Mentimeter was a useful tool that helped them in expressing

their opinion more enjoyably. Moreover, 2% of the respondents suggested using Mentimeter not only in English class but also in other courses due to its advantages. Then, 4% of the students demanded variation in the activities that utilized the English classroom's Mentimeter tool. As reflected in the students' suggestions, it could be inferred that the incredible amount of students' positive suggestions towards Mentimeter reflected their considerable engagement during the learning process. It is based on the theory proposed by Parsons, Thomas, and Wishart (2016), who proposed that students' engagement was primarily about the positive behaviors of the students during the learning.

Conclusion

This study seeks information to answer two research questions by synthesizing the qualitative data in students' responses through the open-ended questionnaires. The first synthesis addresses the students' positive responses to the use of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom. There are three most prominent results showing that the students consider the Mentimeter tool positively impacted English learning due to its practicality, anonymity, and freedom that it offers. Regarding the students' negative responses, most of the students feel that nothing is becoming a matter during the implementation of Mentimeter in the EFL classroom. The second synthesis reveals that Mentimeter impacts significantly on the students' engagement in English learning. It is proven that Mentimeter becomes the preferable media for the students in expressing their opinion that was perceived by 52% of the respondents. Furthermore, the students' engagement in the discussion activities through Mentimeter reach 82% and 91% that is above the average participants' contribution in the usual lecturing. Besides, it is also found that 94% of the students' suggestions indicate a positive tone. Most of all, students suggest the lecturer keep using Mentimeter in English learning. In a nutshell, this study serves the finding that Mentimeter provides considerable impacts on the students' engagement in English learning through the activity of expressing opinion or discussion. Lastly, the researcher suggests that future synthesis could be done to investigate the impact of Mentimeter for improving the four skills of the English language with more various learning activities.

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