Bridging Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning through English Presentation Course

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Abstract——**This study investigated students' perceptions of synchronous and asynchronous learning in the context of English presentation skills. A qualitative descriptive design was employed, and data were collected from ten students enrolled in an English presentation course using convenience sampling. A semi-structured interview guide was developed to gather information from the participants' perspectives, ensuring they understood the study and their role in it. Thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the collected data, ensuring reliability and logical sorting of themes. To enhance internal validity, the interview guide was reviewed by experienced researchers, and both interviewers practiced the procedure to ensure consistency. Additionally, the resulting themes from the analysis were discussed with a different group of researchers to minimize potential biases. The study revealed that regular practice in forming simple past tense sentences and memorizing common irregular verbs are recommended and crucial for improving language skills. Contextual considerations are essential for choosing the correct tense. Synchronous learning encourages quick thinking, while asynchronous activities allow students to learn at their own pace and reinforce vocabulary. Consistent practice is crucial, and supplementing synchronous learning with asynchronous activities can enhance language skills. Asynchronous learning offers a valuable platform for pronunciation practice and enables students to progress at their own pace. These findings have practical implications for language educators, providing guidance on how to structure their teaching methods to best support their students' language learning.**

Keywords—**Synchronous learning; asynchronous learning; semi-structured interview; English presentation course.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Today, learners, often identified as Generation Z, are considered digital natives and are highly tech-savvy. Unlike earlier generations, they are more inclined to utilize electronic devices readily available to them anywhere [1], [2]. This behavior shift has led to challenges as many students seek new, flexible, and practical learning approaches. Consequently, the teaching and learning process must adapt to accommodate both traditional and modern [3]–[5]. In traditional classroom settings, students engage in offline or direct learning, typically occurring synchronously. Conversely, modern classrooms, including distance learning, offer students the opportunity to participate in virtual learning synchronously and utilize learning management systems asynchronously [6]. However, many academic settings require a combination of traditional and modern classroom approaches [7]. Consequently, the challenges faced by educators and learners have become more complex, encompassing situational, attitudinal, psychological, pedagogical, institutional, and sociocultural aspects [8]–[10].

Therefore, any course taught now must be designed to meet the challenges, including English for Presentation. Based on the researchers' experience, it is evident that many students lack confidence in practicing their presentation skills, mainly because most university students fear oral presentation [11]. It is observed that in their weekly presentation class, students often demonstrate a fear of live or synchronous presentations and are too shy to perform, often speaking with a low voice. However, it has been discovered that most students tend to present with a louder voice when they are recording themselves for self-assessment or asynchronous presentation [12].

Additionally, a preliminary study was conducted to identify student's weaknesses in the English language elements required for presentations. It was observed that students need more attention to grammar mastery, vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation practice, and comprehension. This study explored students' views on synchronous and

asynchronous learning in English presentation skills to address these issues. It is also anticipated that integrating synchronous and asynchronous learning can be an alternative approach to learning English for presentations. As a result, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the student's views on bridging synchronous and asynchronous learning in the context of students' English presentation skills (including grammar mastery, vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation practice, and comprehension).

One of the significant challenges students face is oral presentations [13]. Many students experience fear when required to present, whether in offline or online classes, although they tend to feel more confident with asynchronous, self-recording presentations. Therefore, creating a supportive learning environment is essential to help students overcome their fears and actively participate in English presentations. Hence, this study seeks to identify the connection between synchronous and asynchronous learning in the context of English presentation skills. The emergence of synchronous and asynchronous learning modes responds to students' expectations, technical/ technological advancements, and concerns regarding presentation skills. Regardless of the learning mode, whether synchronous or asynchronous, it is crucial to provide students with a conducive learning atmosphere [14]–[17].

Synchronous and asynchronous learning modes have evolved in response to these demands, technical advances, and students' problems with presentation efficiency. Today, students have the flexibility to attend class from anywhere without the need to be physically present. They can regularly interact with lecturers and establish relationships with parents, peers, and fellow students [18]–[22]. It was noted that students in synchronous learning should attend class by connecting to a network and participating in class discussions or presentation events. It is appropriate for them to be in a virtual environment within the room. On the other hand, the asynchronous approach does not require students to be in a specific place at one time.

Therefore, to address these challenges, this study investigated students' perspectives on synchronous and asynchronous learning in the context of students' English presentation skills. The researchers formulated the problems in the following questions:

- What are the students' views of synchronous and asynchronous learning through English presentation learning?

II. Materials and Method

A. Materials

The data was collected from the students through interviews using a semi-structured interview guide. The interview guide includes more than just a list of interview questions. It encompasses the entire interview process, from the initial introduction to the closing remarks [23]. At the beginning of the interview guide, the introduction outline is provided, which includes introducing the researchers and explaining the purpose of the interview. The informed consent process is also outlined as part of the introduction to remind the interviewer to obtain informed consent from the participants. The next section of the interview guide consists of structured topics, including general questions, each followed by specific probes (specific questions). These questions and probes are designed and well-crafted to elicit relevant and rich data, allowing participants to freely share their experiences and perspectives. The last section is closing remarks or closing comments and completion. The interview guide provides prompts for the interviewers to follow during the interview.

B. Method

The method in this study is divided into research design, subject of the research, data collection, data analysis, and validity and reliability of research data. A qualitative descriptive design is used, and ten participants are selected as the research subjects. The data were collected and analyzed simultaneously to ensure reliability. Other experienced researchers reviewed the interview guide to enhance the study's internal validity. Additionally, both interviewers practiced the procedure and ensured their methods were consistent. The resulting themes were discussed with different researchers to eliminate any potential biases. The process details are presented in Fig. 1, followed by the description of each stage.
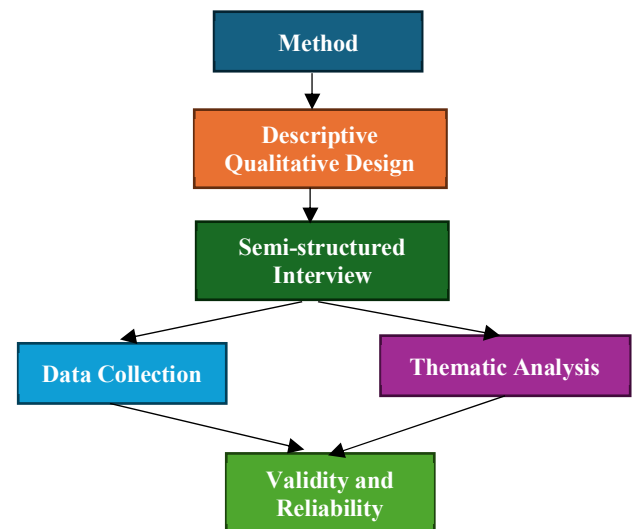

Fig. 1 Research Method

1) Research design:

This research employed a qualitative descriptive design. Qualitative descriptive research is a method that involves collecting descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from individuals or actors who are involved in the study [24]. Semi-structured interviews were used as part of the qualitative research design. The work benefits from this type of interview in many ways. The semi-structured interview (the interview guide approach) is the most common format for qualitative interviews. An interview guide was formulated and strictly adhered to, ensuring the exact wording of questions and the predetermined order in which questions were asked. Braun and Clark have argued that while researchers may have a list of questions formulated, there is room for the participants to raise concerns or anxieties that the researcher may not have considered. This is a common characteristic of qualitative research interviews. The interview was used to gather data to explore students' views

on synchronous and asynchronous learning in terms of students' English presentation skills.

2) Research subject:

This research involved ten students who were taking the English Presentation course. Participants were selected using convenience sampling. According to Braun and Clarke [25], in qualitative and quantitative participant-based research, convenience sampling indicates a sample chosen because it is readily available to the researcher. Further, Saunders and Townsend [26] revealed that convenience sampling (also known as availability sampling) is a non-probability sampling technique that gathers data from members of the population who are readily available to participate in the study.

3) Data collection:

The semi-structured interview guide was thoroughly reviewed to ensure comprehensive data collection from the participants' perspectives. Before asking any questions, participants were provided with detailed information about the study and their role in it. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, wherein the purpose of the interview was explained, confidentiality was assured, and their agreement to participate was obtained. Data were collected through interviews with ten students enrolled in the English for Presentation course. These interviews were conducted individually, utilizing Zoom video calls and direct face-to-face interviews. The lecturer and the students were informed about the interviews, as multiple interviews were conducted. Additionally, each participant was provided with simple definitions of synchronous and asynchronous terms to ensure a clear understanding. Video recordings were made during the interview process for further analysis in the study.

4) Data analysis:

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis, a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data [27]. The data, identified codes, found themes, and finalized themes were identified and familiarized with each theme, and analyzed documents were reviewed. Thus, the analysis results were compared to the research questions and previous literature investigated in this study.

5) Validity and reliability:

Each theme was investigated for reliability and to ensure all data was sorted logically. To achieve sufficient internal validity for the study, the interview guide was reviewed by other experienced researchers. Also, both interviewers practiced the procedure and ensured that their methods were consistent. In terms of data analysis, the resulting themes were discussed with a different group of researchers to eliminate any potential biases during the thematic analysis. The data were deemed reliable or consistent after the results indicated data saturation; this was done by simultaneously running the analysis and data collection.

Braun and Clarke [25] revealed that using two or more data sources, techniques, or researchers to achieve a more complete or multi-faceted understanding of a topic is known as triangulation." Further, Braun and Clarke [25] stated that there are three forms of triangulation: via data (collecting from different sources), via methods (using various methods of data collection and, possibly, data analysis), via researchers

(using a team of researchers to collect and analyze the data)."In this case, we used the triangulation via researchers. Triangulation data was used to test the validity of the data. Two sources of information from two researchers were gathered to ensure the data's integrity.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section includes students' views on synchronous and asynchronous learning through English presentation courses. Some language elements, including grammar mastery, vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation practice, and comprehension, were investigated for synchronous and asynchronous learning. Only the relevant responses to the questions are analyzed in this study. The outline of the results is presented in Fig. 2 below.
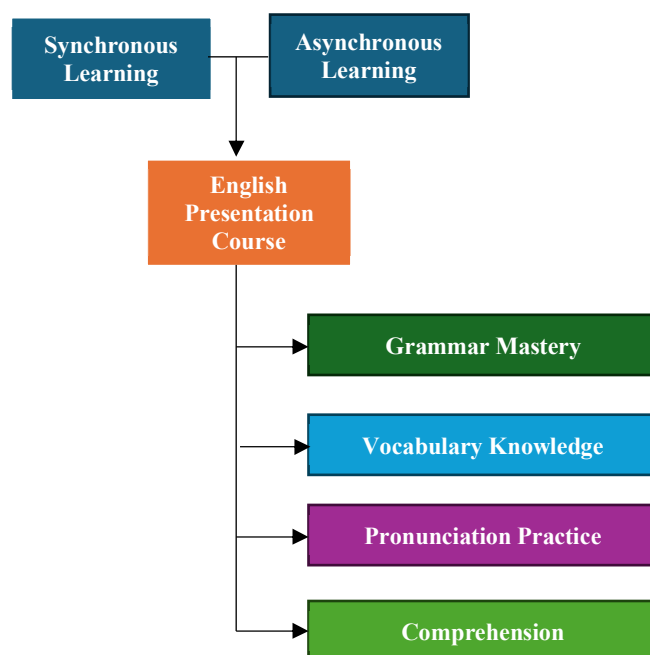

Fig. 2 The outline of research results

A. Synchronous Learning through English-Presentation Course

1) Grammar mastery

This study showed students' views on grammar mastery in synchronous learning during the learning process of English Presentation. The students responded that their grammar mastery is poor due to limited time in synchronous learning.

My grammar score is poor in synchronous learning" (Interview, Student 1).

Simple past tense is difficult for me. I find it difficult to change the tenses in synchronous learning, which has a very short learning time (Interview, Student 2).

The students reported poor grammar because delivering a presentation grammatically in a limited time was challenging. Specifically, the students had difficulty producing "simple past tense." They needed a longer time to change the tenses. Some students struggle with grammar and tense changes during synchronous learning [28]. The simple past tense can be tricky, especially when transitioning from other tenses.

Synchronous learning refers to real-time interactions like live classes or video conferences. Students may feel pressured to respond quickly in this context, making switching between tenses difficult.

The limited learning time during synchronous sessions may not allow thorough reflection or practice. To address this challenge, it is recommended to 1) regularly practice forming sentences in the simple past tense. 2) Memorize common irregular verbs and their past tense forms. 3) Consider the context of the conversation to choose the correct tense. 4) Take a moment to think before responding during synchronous sessions.

2) Vocabulary knowledge

Students reported the need to be challenged to remember difficult words and become more familiar with them. However, activities to build familiarity with challenging words through synchronous learning may take longer. These activities challenge students to recognize and practice new vocabulary in English presentations.

"I need challenges to practice new vocabulary, but the learning time is not enough in synchronous learning" (Interview, Student 3).

"If lecturers talk to us in synchronous learning, we sometimes have difficulties understanding the vocabulary." However, lecturers do not have enough time to challenge us to become accustomed to difficult words (Interview, Student 4).

Vocabulary learning can be challenging, especially in synchronous learning environments that require limited time. Synchronous learning often involves real-time interactions, leaving little room for extended vocabulary practice. When lecturers introduce new words during synchronous sessions, students may struggle to comprehend them. However, lecturers can challenge students to improve their vocabulary by using virtual reality games in synchronous learning. Vocabulary acquisition can be enhanced through virtual reality game [29].

Students can also create digital flashcards with new words and their meanings and review them during breaks or downtime. Connecting new words to familiar concepts or experiences can aid memory retention. Interacting with classmates asynchronously to discuss new vocabulary and share insights is also helpful. Participating in language forums or social media groups to discuss vocabulary challenges is vital. Before synchronous sessions, students can review any vocabulary lists provided by the lecturer. Students who do not understand a word during class should not hesitate to ask for clarification. After class, students seek additional resources (e.g., dictionaries, language apps) to deepen their understanding.

3) Pronunciation practice

In this study, students reported their pronunciation performance through synchronous learning. It is revealed that students made mistakes in pronouncing the words. However, repeated practices are limited through synchronous learning.

"In synchronous learning, I need longer to improve my pronunciation" (Interview, Student 5).

"I am interested in pronunciation practice, but there is not enough time to practice more in synchronous learning" (Interview, Student 6).

Improving pronunciation in synchronous learning is insufficient because it takes time and consistent effort. It requires dedicating a few minutes each day to focused pronunciation practice. In maximizing practicing pronunciation in synchronous learning, students should have phonetic awareness by paying attention to individual sounds (phonemes) in words. Before or after the class, students should practice minimal pairs (words that differ by only one sound) to distinguish similar sounds. Word stress and intonation can be practiced by understanding word stress patterns (which syllable is emphasized), practicing stressing the correct syllables in longer words, and working on intonation (rising and falling pitch) to convey meaning. All these challenges can be solved by the use of learning technology to improve pronunciation practice, for example, Computer Assisted Pronunciation Teaching/Training [30], [31], Audio-synchronized textual enhancement [32], and synchronous CMC [33].

Before the class begins, pronunciation practice can be improved by listening to native speakers, podcasts, and songs, mimicking their pronunciation and rhythm, and focusing on stress patterns and connected speech. It is essential to join language exchange groups or find a language partner, get feedback on students' pronunciation from native speakers, and correct any mispronunciations promptly. Therefore, this study suggests that improving pronunciation practices requires a hybrid approach [34].

4) Comprehension

This study proved that students found it challenging to understand the learning material explained through synchronous learning. Due to limited time for learning, many students have yet to have the opportunity to practice familiarizing themselves with new words.

"I do not understand the materials lecturers explain during synchronous learning" (Interview, Teacher 7).

"We can ask lecturers directly if we do not understand the material in synchronous learning, but it seems we lack confidence" (Interview, Student 8).

Synchronous learning limits the lecturer's time to explain materials. It also limits the student's ability to ask questions regarding the materials they do not understand. This condition may lead students to lack confidence in asking lecturers questions. Understanding materials during synchronous learning can be challenging [35], especially when faced with complex concepts or unfamiliar terminology.

Therefore, students should pay close attention during lectures to minimize distractions and actively engage with the content. Note-taking is also helpful for jotting down key points, definitions, and examples. Also, if students are unsure about something, they should ask the lecturer directly and politely request clarification on specific points or terms. Building confidence takes time, but active learning through asking questions is essential. After class, it is beneficial to revisit notes, and any provided materials (slides, handouts) are helpful. Using textbooks, online resources, or videos can

reinforce learning. Forming study groups with classmates, discussing concepts, sharing insights, and explaining concepts to others can strengthen understanding. Asking for clarification is a crucial part of the learning process. As confidence grows, students will gain a deeper understanding.

B. Asynchronous Learning through English Presentation Course

1) Grammar mastery

This study reported that the students' grammar is excellent in asynchronous learning. Most students repeat their self-presentation recording assignments several times, improving their grammar proficiency.

"Our grammar mastery is excellent in asynchronous learning because we have time for our assignments. Thus, we try to do our best on our assignments. It makes the grammar not matter" (Interview, Student 9).

This study investigated students' perceptions of asynchronous learning, particularly concerning grammar. Asynchronous learning has become increasingly prevalent with the shift to online education, especially in grammar classes. Students in this study found success with asynchronous learning and excelled in grammar. Their dedication to assignments and self-presentation recordings likely contributed to their mastery in grammar. While individual experiences may vary, the positive outcomes observed in this study are encouraging. Asynchronous grammar learning allows elf-correction [36] which further enhances the learning process.

2) Vocabulary knowledge

This study found that students can easily understand vocabulary assignments through asynchronous learning. They have much time to revise the assignment before submitting it online, which allows students to familiarize themselves with new vocabulary.

"In asynchronous learning, we have much time to search the Internet to find out the meaning of difficult words to become new familiar vocabulary" (Interview, Student 10).

It is interesting to see how asynchronous learning allows students to explore and understand vocabulary more thoroughly. Vocabulary acquisition is a crucial aspect of language learning. Spending more time to engage with new words can significantly impact a student's language proficiency [37], [38]. Asynchronous learning allows students to manage their time effectively [39]. When encountering unfamiliar words in asynchronous learning, students can take the time to explore their meanings, usage, and context without the pressure of immediate deadlines. Students can use online resources, such as dictionaries, thesauruses, and language learning apps, to look up word definitions, synonyms, and example sentences. Students can use electronic textbooks on mobile for vocabulary development [40]. This independent exploration fosters a deeper understanding of vocabulary. Searching for word meanings helps students become familiar with new vocabulary [41], [42]. Repetition and exposure of vocabulary contribute to retention and integration into their active lexicon [38], [43].

Asynchronous learning in a vocabulary context often involves reading texts, watching videos, or listening to recorded lectures. Students encounter words in context, which enhances comprehension and retention [44], [45]. Students actively engage with vocabulary when they search for meanings, create flashcards, or discuss word usage with peers. These interactions reinforce learning. The absence of real-time assessments reduces anxiety related to vocabulary assignments. Students can focus on understanding rather than rushing to complete tasks. The quote from Student 10 highlights the advantage of asynchronous learning: having ample time to explore difficult words. By utilizing online resources, students can enhance their vocabulary and build a strong foundation for language proficiency.

3) Pronunciation practice

This study found that the students have no difficulties understanding the lecturers' pronunciation through asynchronous learning in English presentation skills.

"We can read the materials and practice the pronunciation repeatedly in asynchronous learning." (Interview, Student 1).

Asynchronous learning offers several advantages in English presentation skills: Asynchronous learning provides students ample time to practice pronunciation. They can revisit materials, repeat pronunciation exercises, and focus on improving their spoken language skills. Repetition is essential for mastering pronunciation. Students can listen to recorded lectures, practice speaking, and refine pronunciation. Asynchronous learning allows students to learn at their own pace; they can prioritize pronunciation practice based on their needs and preferences. Students may feel less anxious about pronunciation without the pressure of immediate assessments. This relaxed environment encourages exploration and experimentation, leading to a deeper understanding and improved pronunciation skills. Students can access online resources, such as pronunciation guides, videos, and audio clips, to enhance their knowledge of English sounds. Students can diagnose their pronunciation needs accurately through Computer Assisted Pronunciation Training (CAPT) [31].

However, it is essential to note that pronunciation involves more than just individual sounds. Effective presentations also require clarity, intonation, stress patterns, and appropriate pacing. Students can record themselves delivering presentations and analyze their pronunciation. Self-reflection based on video recordings can help identify areas for improvement [46]. Interaction with peers, even asynchronously, allows students to receive feedback on their pronunciation. Discussion forums or collaborative platforms can facilitate this. Incorporating pronunciation exercises within the course content ensures students receive targeted practice aligned with presentation skills. In summary, asynchronous learning provides a valuable platform for pronunciation practice, but integrating additional methods can further enhance students' delivery and overall presentation skills. For example, looking for words' meaning can improve vocabulary and pronunciation practice [41].

4) Comprehension

The questions helped the students understand the material quickly in an asynchronous learning course through the English presentation course.

"Comprehension seems easier in asynchronous learning because we can find time to study." (Interview, Student 3).

"I think asynchronous learning is easier than synchronous learning because we have much time to practice our assignment" (Interview, Student 4).

"Asynchronous learning is simpler. It allows the lecturers to design the material that meets our comprehension" (Interview, Student 5).

This study investigated valuable insights from the students' perspectives on asynchronous learning and how it impacts comprehension. Asynchronous learning provides students with the flexibility to allocate time for learners to study and for teacher to prepare the materials [47]. They can revisit materials, review concepts, and engage in deeper understanding without the constraints of real-time sessions. The quote from Student 3 highlights this advantage: "Comprehension seems easier in asynchronous learning because we can find time to study." Student 4 emphasizes that having more time for practice contributes to the perceived ease of asynchronous learning. When students can practice assignments repeatedly, they build mastery over the material. However, the repeated assignment practice is derived from repeated feedback designed by the lecturer [48]. This extended practice time allows for better retention and application of knowledge. Student 5 points out that asynchronous learning simplifies the process for lecturers to design materials that align with students' comprehension levels. Lecturers can tailor content, provide additional resources, and adapt to individual learning needs. The absence of real-time assessments in asynchronous learning reduces pressure and anxiety [49]. Students can focus on understanding rather than rushing through assignments. Asynchronous courses allow students to progress at their own pace. They can delve into topics deeply or revisit challenging sections as needed. While asynchronous learning lacks real-time interaction, discussion forums, email exchanges, and collaborative platforms still enable communication among students and lecturers.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the brief duration of synchronous sessions may limit reflection or practice time. Nevertheless, there are several strategies students can employ to enhance their language skills during synchronous learning. Regular practice of forming sentences in the simple past tense, memorizing common irregular verbs and their past tense forms, and considering the context of the conversation is recommended. Additionally, taking a moment to think before responding during synchronous sessions can improve overall performance. Synchronous activities differ from asynchronous activities in allowing students to learn at their own pace and fit learning into their schedules. Students can revisit materials multiple times, reinforcing vocabulary. Interactive games and activities can boost motivation and engagement. Consistent practice and exposure are vital to improving vocabulary. While synchronous learning has limitations, supplementing it with asynchronous activities can enhance students' language skills. Asynchronous learning provides a valuable platform for pronunciation practice. However, integrating additional methods can improve students' delivery and presentation skills. The absence of real-time assessments in asynchronous learning reduces pressure and anxiety, allowing students to focus on understanding rather than rushing through assignments. Asynchronous courses allow students to progress at their own pace. They can delve into topics deeply or revisit challenging sections as needed. While asynchronous learning lacks real-time interaction, discussion forums, email exchanges, and collaborative platforms still enable communication among students and lecturers, facilitating a supportive learning environment.

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