

**Research article**

# EFL Preservice Teachers' Engagement with Community Development During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Suhartini Syukri, and Riski Riski

Tadris Bahasa Inggris, IAIN Kendari, Indonesia

**ORCID**

Suhartini Syukri: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8103-5245>

**Abstract.**

The purpose of this narrative study was to investigate the involvement of EFL preservice teachers in community development while participating in the COVID-19 online learning from home program. The data collection technique for this study was based on the photovoices of five EFL preservice teachers who narrated their daily reports while conducting their online service-learning programs. The researchers relied solely on the daily reports page of the academic information system to collect data photovoices. The data from those photovoices were then analyzed using thematic analysis. The researchers also checked their content on YouTube to see what viewers thought about it in the form of responses or suggestions. According to the findings of this study, the five preservice teachers had been involved in community development through a variety of programs or content that they had uploaded to the virtual world. As evidenced by their photovoices, participants engaged in community development by teaching children about the recitation of the Qur'an, providing information in videos about COVID-19 prevention, and using their village as content material. As a result, the teachers have left digital footprints related to community development on YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook.

**Keywords:** EFL preservice teachers, online service learning from home program, photovoice

Corresponding Author: Suhartini Syukri; email: suhartinisukri@gmail.com

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## 1. Introduction

For the past decades, the cases of COVID-19 transmission have been confirmed to appear in the end of 2019 [1]. Also, WHO has declared the plague of COVID-19 as a global pandemic. Hence, enforcing infection control measures is important to prevent COVID-19 transmission to continue [2]. As a result, [3] claimed that several institutions temporarily should remain closed, such as schools and universities.

In the global case, due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, all universities are suddenly locked down and closed. According to [4] stated that most students, teachers, faculties, and staff member have begun to delve and employ online learning medium.


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Based on the issue of COVID-19 transmission, some universities should change learning method temporarily from face-to-face learning switch to remote learning virtually. Several studies have investigated the online learning implementation as the impact of the COVID-19 transmission [5]. In Indonesia context, the case of COVID-19 pandemic impacted on the implementation of community service activities as the Tri Dharma of Higher Education [6]. In another study by [7] explained that the implementation of service community conducted virtually, such as socialization on social media [8].

In the past study by [9] examined the activities of community service in avoiding the COVID-19 infection by using Android applications. Likewise, [10] demonstrated two students' impression while online community service program in the course of the COVID-19. It indicated that the participants were competent to conform to the community service environment even they faced difficulty of network connection. Not only that, the researchers also faced the critical situation during the pandemic which the impact of the virus on the community service activities, including five EFL preservice teachers. They should conduct the program virtually through utilizing digital technology, so that they are indirectly already involved with several online platforms during the transmission. The COVID-19 condition forced them to use digital tool while conducting the virtual program of service learning from home to finish the program well.

Most of recent investigations have concentrated on the students' experiences in utilizing digital technologies based on their needs in personal research amidst the COVID-19 plague [11]. A small number of studies have focus on the application of digital technology in student's program while the community service activities in coping with the COVID-19 pandemic [7]. [10] also examined the students' perceptions of online service learning program in time of the COVID-19 outbreak. Their study found the students have been engaged and faced the community service programs virtually. The study only focused on how the students' emotion of virtual service learning during the pandemic. Hence, very few investigations about the EFL pre-service teachers' engagement with community development during the program of online service learning from home because the researches did not explore more information regarding the issue. Hence, to fill this limitation, this study only focused on to what extent the EFL pre-service teachers' engagement with community development during service learning program virtually amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

These experiences are taken from five pre-service teachers' participation while conducting the online service learning from home program in a time of the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher involved the participants since they have conducted the online service learning from home program (KKN-DR) about a month and engaged with

digital technology amidst the COVID-19 lockdown. Thus, researcher argued that the COVID-19 pandemic has been beneficial for those of the five pre-service teachers who enjoy the process of completing an activity program during a pandemic situation that involves digital technology for the wider community.

## 2. Research Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach using the narrative study method [12] to what extent five EFL preservice teachers' engagement with community development during the online service learning from home program amidst the COVID-19 lockdown. The participants in this narrative study were five EFL preservice teachers who were majoring in English language teaching, at a university in Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia, and taking the online service learning program. The data in this study were collected from participants' photovoice who have narrated on their daily basis in conducting the online service learning from home program amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, the data collection took a month-long period since conducting the online service learning from home. In analysing the data, the researchers used thematic analysis ([12]).

TABLE 1: Participants' Profiles of Online Service Learning from Home Program

No	Participant Name (Pseudonym)	Gender	Place of Online Service Learning	Age (Year)	Semester
1	Tia	Female	Konawe Selatan	21	7
2	Ria	Female	Kendari	21	7
3	Nur	Female	Konawe Selatan	22	7
4	Mita	Female	Konawe	22	7
5	Mila	Female	Kendari	22	7

## 3. Result and Discussion

The implementation of community service had been conducting virtually. This theme appeared from the participants' photovoice regarding their engagement with the technologies in community development during conducting the online service learning from home program in time of COVID-19. Ria (a pseudonym) narrated that she produced content of an animation video about several ways people should order food online outside during the Covid-19 outbreak. Her involvement with the community through the creation of an animated video is useful for them in facing the new normal:

Hari ini saya melakukan perubahan konten dari salah satu program kerja saya terkait dengan animasi pencegahan covid-19. Pada awalnya adalah saya melakukan kolaborasi bersama teman saya dan memang proses editing video nya tidak berjalan dikarenakan sudah banyak teman kelompok diantara kami yang mengangkat tema tersebut. Pada akhirnya hari ini saya melakukan perubahan akan hal itu dengan membuat video animasi terkait cara memesan makanan dimasa pandemi Covid-19. Video ini bertujuan untuk memberikan informasi terkait beberapa tips dalam memesan makanan diluar menggunakan kurir yang mesti masyarakat luas tahu, apalagi bagi sebagian orang yang sering memesan dibandingkan masak dirumah. Vidio ini berisi 6 tips penting dan tentunya menggunakan banyak animasi pendukung didalamnya. Saya sangat senang bisa membuat editing video yang isi videonya animasi, apalagi melibatkan banyak efek transisi yang sangat lucu dan keren. Untuk kesulitan editing kali ini terletak pada gambar animasi yang memang harus saya buat sendiri dengan cara memotong gambar yang sudah didownload menggunakan aplikasi PicstArt. Proses memotong gambar tersebut memerlukan waktu yang begitu lama untuk bisa menyelesaikan sekitar 10 gambar yang akan digunakan didalam video. Hal itu dikarenakan satu gambar harus benar-benar dipotong sesuai dengan garis agar hasil crop nya lebih rapih dan bagus. Meskipun demikian saya mendapatkan lebih banyak pengalaman editing lagi.



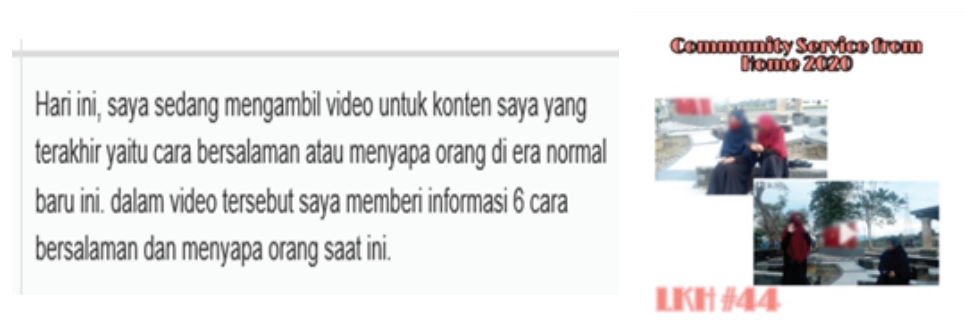
**Figure 1:** Ria’s narrated photovoice, “..... making an animation video related to how to order food amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. This video aims to provide information related to some tips on ordering food outside using a courier that the wider community should know, especially for some people who often order....Video contains 6 important tips and uses many supporting animations. I was happy to be able to make animation video that involved a lot of cool and funny transition effect. The difficulty of editing is I had to cut an image downloaded by myself using the PicsArt application. The process of cutting the image took much time to produce 10 images that would use in the video. That is because an image has to cut based on the line of the image, so that the crop is tidier and better. Even so, I got more editing experience.”

In Figure 8, it can be seen that Ria stated that the condition of Covid-19 transmission has limited community activities so that they had to stay at home. Because of the condition, sometimes they ordered food through the online market, so Ria provided information via video regarding how to order food during Covid-19 period. This is an important way to avoid the transmission of Coronavirus. In addition, this video is expected to be able to help people to keep ordering food by observing health protocols. Thereafter, there was her difficultness in editing this content, such as she needed to cut an image downloaded by using PicsArt independently.

In fact, it took much time for finishing 10 better images and tidier. Although she faced the difficultness, but from the activity she stated that she was happy created this animation video. It is because she experienced how to use transition effect in the video variously. Hence, it indicated that in conducting the activity, she got new experience in editing context. Using her digital skill, she tried to make videos that were as interesting and understandable as possible for the viewer.

Thereunto from Mila’s narrative photovoice in doing the service-learning virtually, she expressed her experience in photovoice by creating content for the community in facing the new normal of Covid-19. The video she made focused on the community who greeting each other by noticing the health protocol:

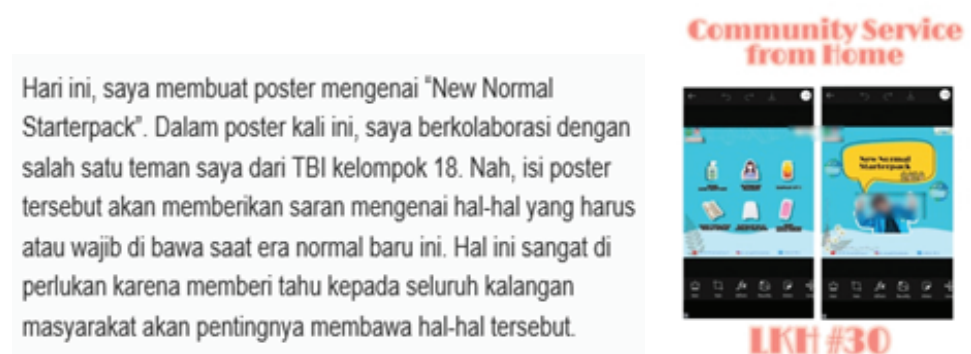
Figure 2 shows that This content involved people attention in facing the government policy that prohibited them from making direct physical contact during the COVID-19 pandemic. The video contains several kinds of greeting people by shaking hands in the



**Figure 2:** Mila's narrated photovoice, "Today, I am making a video for my last content which is how to shake hands in the new normal era. In this video, I provide the information of 6 ways to shake hands and greet people".

new normal era. It aims to provide beneficial information for the wider community on how they implemented new habit in greeting people even in the condition of COVID-19 outbreak.

Not only the content explained above, the next content she made regarding new normal starter pack that people should bring in time of new normal. Mila narrated that the video is important for many people in facing new normal that provides suggestions about some of the urgent items during the COVID-19 pandemic. To anticipate the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak, it is important always be available and carry items, such as masks, hand sanitizers, etc. as part of the health protocol rules:



**Figure 3:** Mila's narrated photovoice, "Today, I make a poster about "New Normal Starterpack". In the poster, I collaborate with one of my friends from group 18 of TBI. The content of the video provides information related to several items that should bring during the new normal. It informs many people how it so important".

Other than that, in Figure 3, she had created a collaboration video with her friends and they were helping each other by cooperating with teamwork. They engaged with the collaboration content for community development because the video informs the wider community in avoiding the transmission of the COVID-19 outbreak. It indicated that the video helped many people to suggest them to bring some important items when they were going outside during the transmission of Coronavirus. Hence, indirectly Mila

has contributed to community development in conducting the service-learning virtually program by creating the beneficial video. Hence, it indicated the participants' photovoice showed they created content (video and mini-poster) by engaging the community and the purpose focus on the public [13]

In another context, Mita has experienced community development in creating English learning for students in her village. She involved students in finishing activity program from home in participating the online service learning by joining the course for free:

Hari ini saya membuat poster yang berisi tentang ajakan khususnya kepada adik-adik SD & SMP untuk bergabung di Fun English Course bersama saya. Kegiatannya yang Insyaallah akan dilaksanakan awal bulan Agustus dan tentunya acara ini gratis untuk adik-adik. Semoga saya bisa menjalankan program ini, karena disini lain saya masih merasa up and down untuk menjalankan program tersebut.



**Figure 4:** Mita's narrated photovoice, "... I made a poster containing an invitation for students of elementary school and senior high school to join the fun English course with me. This program will be held in early August and it is free for children. Hopefully, I can carry out this program because I am still excited and down sometimes."

As shown in Figure 4, Mita involved her English skill to create English class for children who were in elementary school and senior high school. Her class involved 2 levels of students to join the English class. By using her initiative to teach children, she also designed the interesting poster to get students in her village. It signified that her involvement with the program, she has provided her knowledge for those who wanted to learn English. Her goals focused on children who learned virtually in time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, it especially helping students' parents in teaching and guiding their children during school must remain closed temporally. It showed a similar finding with [3] who stated that the impact of the COVID-19 transmission. Moreover, she expressed inconsistent emotions in doing the program, such as she felt happy and sometimes, she felt down.

The finding in this study is line with some previous studies investigated by [14], service-learning student assisted children in remote learning at home during the COVID-19 outbreak through conducting service-learning. According to [15], the service-learning program developed students' advances that are oriented to pro-social behavior. Mita created totality outcomes when service activities are related to the course material [16]. Hence, the use of technology amidst the COVID-19 lockdown has positive impact on learning [17].

Similarly, Tia's narrative showed that she provided the Qur'an learning to children in her village as her program while doing the service community admits the COVID-19 outbreak. She thought them how to recite Qur'an that held three times a week at the mosque of her village:

Hari ini, saya melakukan kegiatan pengeditan video tentang proses pengajaran mengaji selama KKN-DR ini di desa saya sendiri. Pelaksanaan pengajaran tersebut saya lakukan tiga kali setiap minggu pada malam Senin, Rabu dan Sabtu di masjid Nurul Falah desa Adaka Jaya. Sesekali, saya tidak dapat memenuhi salah satu jadwal pertemuan dari ketiganya. Hal ini dikarenakan ada keperluan saya yang begitu mendadak secara tiba-tiba tepat pada malam pengajaran tersebut. Tidak terasa selama sebulan lebih saya bisa membagi ilmu bersama anak-anak setingkat sekolah dasar di desa saya. Saya sangat senang jika diri saya ini bisa bermanfaat bagi orang lain, terutama masyarakat desa, kampung halaman dan tanah kelahiran saya. Ya, besok malam adalah pertemuan terakhir pengajaran saya karena proses KKN-DR akan ditutup besok, tepatnya tanggal 21 Agustus 2020. Saya ingin program kerja saya ini tidak hanya saya dokumentasikan melalui sebuah gambar saja. Saya ingin memiliki kenangan atas apa yang saya lakukan selama KKN-DR ini di desa, yakni melalui pembuatan video. Saya pikir, video merupakan media yang tepat untuk pengumpulan momen yang terbaik dan mengesankan agar bisa selalu dikenang, baik untuk diri sendiri maupun orang lain. Saya yakin rekam jejak digital tidak akan hilang. Karya kita semua bisa dinikmati banyak orang. Terlebih lagi jika mereka sampai menyukainya. Ini adalah bonus.



**Figure 5:** Tia's narrated photovoice, "..... I edit a video about the process of teaching Qur'an during the online service learning from home program (KKN-DR) in my village. I do the teaching three times every week, on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday every evening... I did not feel like for more than a month I could share knowledge with children from my village who were in elementary school. I am very happy if I can benefit others, the community in my village.... I want to have memories of my activities during KKN-DR in the village related to making video.....".

As narrated in Figure 5, Tia revealed her feeling with the program of teaching Qur'an that she was happy provided and shared her knowledge of Qur'an with children in her village. The program of Qur'an recitation has been carried out for a month as a form of community service program during the COVID-19 pandemic she created. Then during that time, her engagement with the community (her village children) made her happy because she been a useful person for children. In short, she has actual engagement to wider community in teaching children to recitation Qur'an. Not only involved herself in teaching Qur'an, but she hoped that it can be memorable for her. Therefore, the program could be a beneficial experience for her in doing service community remotely.

Therefore, it deduced that the preserviceteachers have played a role in community development in time of the COVID-19 lockdown. They also made the program and provided benefit for community [18] regarding their engagement to new realities in community during the COVID-19 period. Another story comes from Nur's photovoice that described how she recorded a video in the location of sand collecting, at the river:

Figure 6 showed while recording, she showed how to collect sand like villagers who usually do it. The activity in collecting sand can be her content with community development. Moreover, she introduced the habit of people in her village who always



**Figure 6:** Nur's narrated photovoice, "Today, I record a video in the river as the location of sand collecting directly. I feel very happy because I can cover directly the sand extraction processes without any obstacles..... the river behind my house was also a place for the sand collecting when the river flooded..... this activity was not easy. Several methods must be done when collecting sand, such as observe the location of the sand, pick it up with a shovel, put it in a sack, and then transport the sand-filled sack using a cart".

use and process sand as a natural resource that they have in the village. Besides on figure above, Nur further described how she was able to continue her service-learning from home with the involvement of community development. By creating this content, she felt so happy to watch how sand collected without facing any obstacles in did it. That was inseparable from the use of the sand extraction location which was behind her house.

While recording the activity, she revealed how the activity was not easy to conduct. It is because the activity needs some tips, such as determined of location, picking it up with a shovel, put it in a sack, and then transport the sand-filled sack using a cart". Accordingly, she has explored her village to be used as useful content for building the image of her village. By the video, it indicated that she has exposed the activity of people in the village, especially in the river. Hence, it showed that the program provided a positive impact for participants despite they faced many obstacles during the COVID-19 lockdown. They became more creative in making useful content for the wider public [10].

As shown in the Figure ?? and 8, there are two examples of the pre-service teacher's digital footprint on YouTube and the Instagram platform. One of pre-service teachers created an educational content video and uploaded it on the YouTube platforms as shown above and others created an appeal virtual poster. The educational video obtained positive comment from viewer. It proven by one of viewers gave her 2 emoticons like in comment box, so that it means the viewer liked the content. Likewise, community service content that has been uploaded on Instagram account received a lot of likes from many netizens.



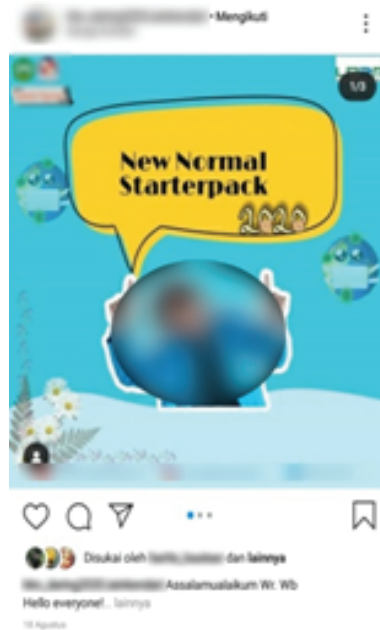


Figure 7: Mini-poster uploaded about new normal starter pack on Instagram.



Figure 8: Video uploaded about the exploration of sand collecting on YouTube.

By using those three online platforms to upload their program, it showed that they completed their activity program well even though in time of the COVID-19 condition. As shown in digital footprints that the participants left, they reflected on some positive experiences shaping their use of social media and their management of digital footprints during the pandemic of COVID-19 [19].

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the findings, this study concluded that there are several programs the EFL preservice teachers created during conducting the online service learning from home as their engagement with community development. As narrated those participants' narrative photovoice, it found that they have engaged with community development

by creating beneficial video or mini poster about the case of avoiding the COVID-19 transmission; how one of the participants involved themselves to teach children to recite of Qur'an; provided information on video about COVID-19 prevention; and also used their village as content material to introduce their village wealth. Hence, dealing with community development, they have left digital footprints on YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook, because they have used those platforms since conducting the online service learning during the pandemic of the COVID-19 quarantine.

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