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**Analysis of the “Deep Listening” Spiritual Pedagogy Approach
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ANALYSIS OF THE “DEEP LISTENING” SPIRITUAL PEDAGOGY APPROACH IN ONLINE LEARNING TO BUILD INTERSUBJECTIVITY

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Abstract

Online learning is often complained about as it makes students uncomfortable and inactive in learning activities because they need to meet face-to-face with classmates and teachers. This article explained how in the online learning model, students could feel involved with all learning components even if they were not face-to-face while using the “deep listening” spiritual pedagogy approach. The practice of “deep listening” pedagogy was carried out on students in the General Basic Course lecture class, namely Religious Education, with 35 students. The goal was to encourage student engagement and the ability to connect with all components in the learning classroom. Data were collected through observation and implementation of “deep listening” practice through focus group discussion, then analyzed with a qualitative approach. The result showed that through observation and practice of “deep listening” in the focus of online group discussions, 1) students could convey their inner voice openly and honestly. 2) It can be observed through conversations that there were changes in students’ perceptions about the meaning of beliefs, human nature, religious experiences, relationships with others, and the development of spirituality. 3) It can be observed that students’ ability to engage and feel connected to all components of learning was a meaning of intersubjectivity through opinions and thoughts conveyed in online learning.

Keywords: *Deep Listening; Spiritual Pedagogy; Online Learning; Intersubjectivity.*



A. Introduction

The education crisis due to the enactment of online learning has made the face of education during the pandemic quite gloomy. Some problems encountered include students who need to absorb learning better, and especially students who enjoy the comfort of classes that are not face-to-face to avoid paying attention to the classroom situation. They can only quibble on good network quality for not participating in discussions or other learning activities. Online learning has received various criticisms regarding the quality of learning compared to face-to-face or traditional learning experiences (Laryea, 2018). However, online learning is likely to open space for student-centered learning. Because with a flexible schedule, students can explore wider learning resources that allow them to learn independently.

Furthermore, (Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006) add that continuous improvements in technological innovation and internet accessibility have increased motivation to learn online since the beginning of the millennium (Joshi et al., 2020) concluded that the learning achievement of online learning is still debated because it causes the absence of face-to-face relations between learners and instructors. The absence of face-to-face relationships makes students who participate in online learning feel disconnected from everything in the online learning environment, so they feel it is unimportant to be involved in learning. To some extent, success in online learning depends on the characteristics students bring to the online learning environment.

How is online learning done as a learning approach that can facilitate the ability of intersubjectivity or the understanding of the close relationship between teachers, learners, and the material discussed? Why question this? Because the ability of intersubjectivity is important where learners or students feel educators not only transfer knowledge but also give values and demonstrate these values that can affect the mindset, knowledge, and ability of students to understand and believe these values (Syihabuddin, 2017). Intersubjectivity skills are important to improve during online learning because they allow people to maintain communication and feel close, feel present amid learning that is not done face-to-face (Laryea, 2018). The connectedness experienced



through this kind of intersubjectivity ability is called spirituality in education (Jones, 2010), and the way an educator teaches by approaching learning within such a spiritual paradigm is called spiritual pedagogy.

That is why building interaction between subjects or interpreting the connection between subjects in online learning is important. This interest is needed because the connection between subjects in online learning wants to be built in conditions of learning subjects that are not face-to-face. Interaction occurs when objects and events influence each other (Su et al., 2005; Murtadho et al., 2022). How is spirituality or a sense of connectedness integrated into online learning or present in the pedagogical process of electronic device-mediated learning? The following study shows doubts about the study of spirituality in learning (Bhagwan, 2011). If spirituality is included in education, then what happens is visible on the surface only, or its application will be seen as something superficial (Bhagwan, 2011).

Another perspective is expressed by (Potgieter, 2015), who sees that long-distance education with e-learning technology sometimes pushes knowledge to become a commodity, where training abilities and vocational skills become victorious over education in general. The emphasis on competence to master theory, practical and cognitive in today's era is demanding. However, it undermines ethics and a sense of nationalism, leading to a spiritual crisis. However, different perspectives on spiritual pedagogy in learning, including in online learning (Laryea, 2018), offer a study of space that can be used for online learning to be more meaningful in terms of connectedness or intersubjectivity ability, namely by practicing "deep listening" spiritual pedagogy. Thus, the problem that will be studied in this paper is how intersubjectivity is improved in online learning by using the spiritual pedagogy of "deep listening".

Based on various problems in online learning as discussed earlier, specifically in highlighting student involvement and connectedness with learning classes, this paper aims to explain how the practice of spiritual pedagogy, "deep listening", is developed in Religious Education Courses in online learning platforms to build or show how the meaning of connectedness



or the ability of intersubjectivity works in interactions between students; teacher-student interaction; and interaction with learning content. This “deep listening” pedagogy practice encourages student engagement and the ability to connect with all components in the learning classroom. This religious education class conducts “deep listening” practice to develop students’ ability to develop intersubjectivity, including understanding their beliefs, religious experiences, relationships with others, and the development of their spirituality.

Why is the practice of spiritual pedagogy carried out in the Religious Education Course? This field is included in character education, where it is important to be developed when learning is not carried out face-to-face. Some of the characters that will be developed feel easy to do during face-to-face learning. However, it is certainly a question of how efforts are made in character development if digital devices indirectly mediate learning.

The study of the importance of the Spiritual Pedagogy approach in learning to shape the spirituality of learners has been widely discussed by several academics (Harlos, 2000; Jones, 2010; Shahjahan, 2004; Syihabuddin, 2017; Miller & Athan, 2007; Masbur, 2022). While the intersubjectivity research study also shows that the trend of discussion is in how intersubjectivity space is increasingly recommended in the Classroom because it provides “known” experiences and “meeting moments” to students to produce transformative learning through the practice of contemplative pedagogy (Schneider et al., 2015).

Meanwhile, the results of Di Gesu’s research (Di Gesú, 2021) explain how intersubjectivity works in online learning according to student perceptions of technology-mediated teachers’ social presence. The article from Lim et al. (Lim et al., 2017) study explores the combination of course structure, prompt type, and characteristics of discussion posts and their relationships with intersubjectivity. This study reinforces the importance of establishing intersubjectivity even when in online learning.



Furthermore, Laryea offers conceptually what things can be discussed when conducting "deep listening" spiritual pedagogy in online classes, one of which is the ability of intersubjectivity. Because when there is such deep listening in a class mediated by computer devices, interconnectivity can be built into it (Laryea, 2018). From several previous studies, this paper will discuss how spiritual pedagogy, "deep listening", encourages the establishment of intersubjectivity work in online classes.

This kind of learning success can be achieved if each party in the learning class, such as the instructor and students, can give meaning to their relationships and roles in the class. This is what the relationship of intersubjectivity or connectedness means because they have a mutual understanding of learning. Interaction in intersubjectivity helps each subject recognize oneself and others because it has a shared consciousness in a common virtual space. That shared awareness arises with emotions that live in the instructor's voice, language, and non-verbal behavior, which becomes as important as the thoughts and skills he wants to convey (Di Gesú, 2021).

This paper will also look at the ability of intersubjectivity or the way intersubjectivity works through a shared understanding of learning activities (Soslau, 2015) and through how each person acts himself transactionally and acknowledges the existence of the other through language (Bruner, 1989), or effective collaborative communication (Soslau, 2015).

Spiritual pedagogy with a deep listening approach is a learning activity by discussing material both between teachers and students, as well as among students through deep listening. Listening engages the sense of hearing at a basic level, but it is also used to describe focused attention that deepens one's presence in the world. Because listening is understood as a physical experience, it may be easier to recognize and connect with a sense of body, i.e., feeling the embodied act of listening. Deep listening can also be a way to know and heal, transcending relationships, including power dynamics, trust in relationships, respect, and mutual respect between individuals (Laryea, 2018).



B. Method

This research is included in descriptive research with a qualitative approach. The study subjects were students of the Religious Education Course at UKSW, in two parallel classes, each consisting of thirty-five students. One class consists of students who are members of several different study programs at UKSW. At the same time, the other class comprises students from the same study program. Considering that this course is a compulsory subject, all students must follow it, even those from different religious backgrounds with noble values from the Christian faith, which is also the basis for organizing academic activities at the University. To be able to provide space and surrender different religious backgrounds, religious education is designed to teach topics that prioritize religious values: such as piety, faith, and surrender; then it can realize human values, including morals and ethics; Realize the value of tolerance, such as the ability to work together, the attitude of respecting religious differences. The spiritual pedagogy developed in this religious subject is based on these values.

The observation method and Focus Group Discussion are ways to collect data in this study during online learning activities with deep listening practice. "Deep listening" is conducted on topics that aim to increase students' sensitivity to their spiritual condition and faith. Practice is carried out on teaching topics about the core value of religious lessons with subtopics, religious nature, religious experience, Human Nature, and spiritual development.

The data that will be generated are students' perceptions of how they feel related to learning materials related to the development of religious spirituality, how they understand and feel connected to the presence of other friends in learning, even if not face-to-face, and how they understand the presence of teachers who are only mediated by computers.

A data analysis using qualitative analysis is conducted with three stages according to the Miles and Huberman model (Miles et al., 2014): Then, the data were described by the focus of this research; deep listening and intersubjectivity. A descriptive analysis technique was performed to analyze



the obtained data. The steps were data collection, data reduction, data presentation, data conclusion, and data verification. Data were analyzed by reducing or simplifying, presenting, and drawing conclusions.

C. Result and Discussion

1. Result

Overall, the implementation of this deep listening pedagogy practice is conducted in the form of virtual meetings. Student reporting on the results of group conversations is collected in the form of videos through *e-learning platforms*. This approach is conducted to build the meaning of a sense of connectedness or intersubjectivity between learning participants and teachers and learning content in online learning (online).

The results of the implementation of learning practices with a spiritual "deep listening" approach, several things are quite visible through observation, namely: 1) The ability of students to convey their inner voice openly and honestly. 2) There is a change in students' perceptions of the meaning of beliefs, human nature, religious experience, and the development of spirituality. 3) The ability of students to engage and feel connected in online learning. 4) Increased empathy from mentors to encourage students to find deeper meaning in life. The following study will discuss how these four things can be seen.

The following is presented how the process of implementing deep listening Spiritual pedagogy through focus group discussion by looking at the work of intersubjectivity, namely: (1) student intersubjectivity with learning material, (2) student intersubjectivity with self-introduction, (3) student intersubjectivity with fellow students, (4) intersubjectivity with the presence of teachers.

a. Student Intersubjectivity with Learning Material with the "Deep Listening" Process

In this session, students discuss the meaning of belief and the purpose of having that belief. This discussion began with why they are religious and their understanding of the Nature of God in students' beliefs. This discussion



is intended for students to understand their beliefs and belief systems fully. Not only do they understand that he is now religious, but they also understand how others also have beliefs that are adhered to, but he still feels connected to them despite different beliefs. This passage allows them to listen deeply to and understand their inner voice. At this time, intersubjectivity is established, so they can understand the meaning of living together with people of different beliefs and feel part of the discussion about their beliefs.

In the discussion “the nature and meaning of belief”, the teacher conducts “deep listening” of all the narratives of students or students and finds that students can express honestly and enthusiastically about their understanding of their beliefs, including students who shared their difficulties in determining their beliefs. This confusion is due to the background of family conditions that have quite diverse beliefs. Students with different faith backgrounds also carry out enthusiasm to convey the conditions and meaning of their beliefs. Some are even triggered to reflect again on whether the beliefs they hold now are decisions from their conscience or just because they follow the advice or advice of those around them. This situation shows that when the practice of “deep listening” becomes an approach in discussing this topic, the ability of students to actively engage and interpret intersubjectivity or feel connected to the learning community can occur. Intersubjectivity in students works through the meaning of material associated with their state of belief. Course supervisors can also identify how the learning objectives of this topic can be achieved through communication, the language of meaning conveyed.

b. Intersubjectivity Related to Student Self-Introduction Through the Process of “Deep Listening”

When discussing who is human in the spotlight of religious beliefs, it is done with inner dialogue to allow students to realize who they are as humans. Students are allowed to hear their inner voice and reflect on who they are as human beings, where students are given questions about their awareness. This aims to allow students to practice listening deeply to their



inner voice. They are also asked questions about the meaning and purpose of life while in this world. It is intended for the student to have a full intersubjectivity awareness of the meaning and significance of his presence in the world through deep contemplation so that he has full awareness that his life must be meaningful and useful to others. Students must understand that their presence is not just "there" and then leave this world. This section is also still in practice on how they can listen deeply to their inner voice seriously and give meaning.

In discussing human nature, teachers conduct discussions with a deep listening approach, letting them express their knowledge and conscience through deep questions about feelings and their understanding as humans created and living in God's grace and gift, the universe's chalk. This question encourages them to explore for themselves, listening to their inner voice about the meaning of life, the meaning of their presence in the world, who they are as human beings, and who their fellow human beings are. Students are all allowed to answer, with responses given directly by the supervisor. There is no answer to the student being blamed or cornered, even if it is a doubt and his inner struggle about life. All expressions are listened to deeply and seriously by the supervisor to provide space for students to feel their presence in the learning through the expression of their heart that is listened to so that they can interpret intersubjectivity with the supervisor and the discussion material. Not many of them realize the meaning and purpose of life in this world. Some say they have never thought about and pondered why they exist in this world and what life goals they want to achieve. Realizing this, the supervisors continued the discussion by exploring what they could mention through life experiences with the community, family, friends, and beliefs held so that students could understand the importance of contemplating the nature of humanity.

In this session, it was quite visible how students tried to ponder the question of the nature of humanity so that they had the opportunity to answer even with simple answers. Intersubjectivity works through the meaning of questions linked to one's state regarding what has been



pondered and done so far. The invitation to listen to their inner voice and explore their experiences is a condition that opens space to listen to their inner voice and ask questions about the purpose of life. The meaning of the essence of humanity is shown through communication and enthusiasm for the ability to share food.

c. Intersubjectivity to the Presence of Fellow Students Through "Deep Listening"

The next session was for students to be able to listen and listen consciously when their friends told their religious experiences. This activity is intended for students to practice listening deeply to what their friends convey. It can take important meaning to realize then that religious experience is important in religious life, to practice and express their beliefs with full independence of consciousness. This section means that intersubjectivity can be awakened when they feel connected to the narrative constructed by friends in synchronous classes and experience a sense of community and connectedness with other friends through listening deeply to stories of religious experiences.

Tell each other the students' religious experiences here; students can openly express their religious experiences, then be listened to and welcomed by others through various questions. With a process of discussion in which there is a practice of deep listening, students can identify their religious experiences and narratives of other friends' religious experiences. Intersubjectivity works through understanding one's own religious experience and feeling meaningful and connected to other friends because each person has his or her own religious experience. The ability seen in identifying religious experience is to explain that in an event, God's help is present when a man cannot do it.

d. Intersubjectivity with Teacher Presence in Online Learning

Students then practice "deep listening" about the development of spirituality together in class with guidance from the teacher on guiding

questions. The purpose of this learning is that through deep listening, the teacher guides them to an understanding of the development of spirituality. Students gain a deep understanding of spirituality that is interpreted and developed so far to have awareness and the ability to develop themselves meaningfully. In the direction of the teacher, they are asked to interpret the understanding of spirituality, either through expressing their own experiences or through the meaning of images. Then students share stories about the spiritual condition by following the question guide. This section intends to build intersubjectivity in the *Classroom* by discussing life's meaning with the teacher.

Spiritual development is discussed in synchronous classes through teacher explanations and discussion of questions asked. After conducting learning activities by listening deeply to the inner voice and narration of friends, students can openly share about the development of spirituality. Students can identify the development of spirituality and explain which spiritual development is the most dominant and which spiritual development still needs to be honed. The ability seen in the identification of spiritual development is the ability to recognize the development of one's spirituality when able to explain the type of spiritual development experienced and the type of spiritual development that has not yet been formed and recognize the constraint factors and causes. Intersubjectivity works through the meaning of the directing questions submitted by the teacher, and the presence of the teacher to give clues to the meaning is felt to be enough to help students recognize the development of their spirituality.

2. Discussion

The results of this study show the implementation of learning practices with a spiritual "deep listening" approach; several things are quite visible through observation, namely: 1) The ability of students to convey their inner voice openly and honestly. 2) There is a change in students' perceptions of the meaning of beliefs, human nature, religious experience,



and the development of spirituality. 3) The ability of students to engage and feel connected in online learning. 4) Increased empathy from mentors to encourage students to find deeper meaning in life. The following study will discuss how these four things can be seen. (5) How intersubjectivity works in student understanding which is seen through the relationship of students with learning materials, themselves, classmates, and supervisors.

The existence of honest and open delivery in virtual learning requires a sense of trust and a sense of connection with each other. This situation shows that the practice of "deep listening" experiences a state that gives the community space to feel "belonging" in the activity. This practice also makes participants feel the same interest and values so that they feel connected in the community, and makes community can be created; this is where intersubjectivity is built. Openness and honesty in religious learning show that students feel they have a learning community with the same values when they experience being "heard". This learning community occurs because the space is deliberately developed through deep listening and not just because of encounters and physical closeness (Lowe, 2010).

Furthermore, it can be seen from the results of the practice of "deep listening" that students' perception changes. Changes in students' perceptions of beliefs, the meaning of life, or the development of spirituality occur because they can connect their understanding formed from the environment with an understanding of the meaning of life that they developed. The relationship between physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and moral conditions occurs here. So there has been a learning condition according to the course's value where students can interpret life according to their physical and mental conditions (Potgieter, 2015). Learning with spiritual pedagogy is indeed to build one's meaning of the deep meaning of life, making meaning and deciphering meaning. The practice of "deep listening" opens a space to build this meaning even better, with students who can listen to their inner voice and teachers who can listen to students' delivery and capture the meaning behind words so that they can encourage study more meaningful.



The ability to experience changes in perception after "deep listening" in online learning allows students to experience transformative learning. Because they can experience self-reflection and listen to each other in the contemplation of other friends, transformative learning is a learning activity that involves "a major change in one's cognitive, emotional, or spiritual ways". As one of the learning alternatives, transformative learning supports the relationship between critical reflection, relationships, and learning contexts and encourages finding stimulating learning experiences and reflection on experience. This is an appropriate tool for a transformative perspective.

How to explain the ability to "feel connected" or intersubjectivity in a virtual classroom? Through the "deep listening" approach, communication is connected based on the similarity of interests and values about the topics discussed. This connectedness is also inseparable from feeling that there is a relationship as a colleague who fights for the same thing in class and the ability to interact, which then occurs through social assimilation through online learning platforms. In this practice, there is a relationship between individuals and society to understand the subject matter. Because understanding is formed through interaction with diverse ideas, people, experiences, and environments, through conversations and exchange of perspectives and ideas, that is the deepened meaning for all learners (Laryea, 2018). This can also happen because "deep listening" involves spiritual transcendence and shared creativity that benefits teachers and students (Laryea, 2018). The results of this study also support the Laryea Study (2018) about several related to "deep listening" pedagogy, one of which is intersubjectivity.

The results of listening deeply with classmates also increase the meaning of spirituality even better. Because there is a correlation between intellectual and spiritual growth, the development of cognitive elements can positively affect the spiritual dimension (Lowe, 2010). When students can identify religious experiences and spiritual development according to theory, then this cognitive work becomes a crucial factor in understanding



their spirituality and the extent of its development. Being open to and explaining each other's conditions can increase spiritual formation due to increased knowledge and personal growth. Connectedness further explains the meaning of intersubjectivity through spiritual conditions; this can also be explained because spiritual understanding cannot be separated from other dimensions in human life, namely physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and moral.

What is experienced by teachers also shows the development of meaning through learning content and is seen from the consistency of taking a deep listening approach. Teachers can develop an empathetic attitude toward each student's delivery and become a reflection for meaningful learning improvement. Teachers can also explore how fully present online learning spaces can enhance transformative learning. This learning is needed in the 21st century, emphasizing higher-order thinking, social intelligence, adaptive thinking, cross-cultural complexity, and transdisciplinary thinking. Self-practice is fully present by doing "deep empathetic listening" and develops the teacher's self-potential because of the relationships built with students. This happens because of the development of various dispositions related to self-knowledge, such as discipline, self-mastery, self-confidence, open-mindedness, presence of mind, attention, and respect for others (Laryea, 2018). So that teachers can encourage students to continue to explore and find the right meaning and can identify the principal value of each learning activity.

Online learning that is not done physically but through learning activities with a "deep listening" approach can form a sense of connection or intersubjectivity and good learning communication. It can also be explained by the epistemology of embodiment (Laryea, 2018). The epistemology of embodiment can explain why intersubjectivity and the formation of learning processes can occur in online learning through a "deep listening" approach. Embodiment is a consciousness to engage. Engagement encompasses all passions whereby knowledge cooperates with the mind, and all the body's experiences of emotions are free. Gs or

movements are simultaneously involved in retrieving and understanding information.

All human dimensions' bodies, channels, hearts, minds, and simultaneously involvedly participate equally in the unfolding of human multidimensionality. Embodiment is the knowledge that privileges experienced knowledge that assimilates physically from the body's capacity to perform. So, when a man appears with his experience, he is tangible; he is actualizing knowledge and doing the work of knowing something because knowing is an aspect of our interaction with the social and physical world. So, the interaction of knowledge with knowledge can produce new knowledge and new ways of knowing. The living body is the rudimentary knowledge about its world; the body, moved by all its dimensions, exists in space that can perceive any object. At the core of inquiry into "deep listening" as pedagogy are aspects of spirituality that must be reconciled with new learning and the creation of new knowledge.

Another thing related to learning with a "deep listening" pedagogy approach is the existence of a communication space mediated with digital devices outside of formal learning hours. Communication is becoming increasingly integral to initiating, developing, and maintaining interpersonal relationships; this is an excellent space to increase intersubjectivity. This environment can be an online learning environment as an alternative. This learning environment is increasingly encouraged because it provides convenience, flexible time and place, and the type of conversation that can be asynchronous and has rich media such as images, video, audio, etc. There is also social equality in the form of "equal access to conversation", which is quite advantageous in learning online.

The explanation that can be put forward about online learning, which is the context of building intersubjectivity, is the importance of adequately planning and preparing for online learning. If well prepared, then online learning can be effective and not just "emergency distance teaching" effective online education consists of improving several research works, principles, prototypes, theories, ethics, and benchmark



concentration assessments on quality online course design (Charles et al., 2020); (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020). Online learning keeps connecting learners and learning resources (databases, teachers, libraries) who are physically separated but interact and communicate and collaborate directly (synchronous) or indirectly (asynchronous) (Sentz, 2020).

Another important thing in preparing for online learning is the interaction conditions, including student-content, student-student, and student-instructor. The presence of each of these types of interactions, when meaningfully integrated, improves learning outcomes. So, careful planning for online learning includes not only identifying the content to be discussed but also carefully taking care of how that preparation also supports several types of interactions or conditions of connectedness or intersubjectivity abilities that are essential for the learning process (Charles et al., 2020) (Hodges et al., 2020).

D. Conclusion

The results of this study show that in online learning that is not face-to-face, students can engage enthusiastically because they can feel connected through the spiritual pedagogy practice of deep listening, as this practice supports students to develop mindfulness, emotional balance, and empathetic connection with one another. "Deep listening" invites students into a space to feel recognized and valued.

The spiritual pedagogy of "deep listening" developed in online learning further clarifies the work of transformative learning. The knowledge produced from various experiences and deep listening to each other, in this learning, becomes the expected result to encourage intersubjectivity can be interpreted, which becomes a transformation in education. Online learning that is well prepared and not only to deal with emergencies because of the pandemic can facilitate students to be able to connect to interpret intersubjectivity.

Intersubjectivity, or a sense of connection from students through a mutual listening approach, makes online classrooms a place for paradigm shifts in learning. Student engagement, and interactivity, if carried out



consistently in online learning, will encourage creativity and learning innovation. The self-development of teachers to continue to explore the practice of listening deeply as pedagogy in an online learning environment encourages educational technology innovation while prioritizing the development of student ethics and spirituality.

Humans need to be heard in general, so if that space is given to them, humans will be fully involved, even in virtual space. Future studies can look at how diversity in learning and knowledge can be fostered, what skills and talents will be valued and demanded in the future, and how transformation, creativity, intuition, and innovation through deep listening practice in online Learning.

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