

TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH ONLINE CLASSES IN PANDEMIC ERA: A PERSPECTIVE OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS IN PALEMBANG

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Submission date: 01-Apr-2022 10:37AM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1798528762

File name: Fanny_Tifano_Thesis_Full_update_1_April_2022.docx (1.71M)

Word count: 17638

Character count: 96686

**TEACHING ENGLISH THROUGH ONLINE CLASSES IN
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A THESIS

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2022

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 pandemic has been influencing all aspects of life, and the educational aspect is not an exception. Since COVID-19 transmission occurs by having direct contact with the infected people, maintaining physical distance is considered necessary to avoid the spread of the virus. Due to this situation, school closures were implemented to prioritize the health of all school's members. Henceforth, to maintain the educational process amid the pandemic, online classes were implemented. The aim of the present study was to explore Palembang high school English teachers' perspective on the online classes implementation, especially while conducting the online ELT, including: (1) how they taught four English language skills through online class; (2) benefits and challenges emerging during its implementation; and (3) potential solutions they can offer to deal with the challenges. This study employed a survey design followed by in-depth interviews. Fifty-five English teachers teaching at senior high schools located in Palembang city participated in filling out the online questionnaire, and four selected teachers who met specific criteria participated in the interview sessions. The findings of the study revealed that the participants had varied ways to teach English language skills through online classes; they opined that the online classes implementation possessed both benefits and challenges, and conducting online ELT during the pandemic was easy and effective enough. Additionally, the participants apparently enjoy teaching through either face-to-face or online, but for the preference, teaching face-to-face was still favorable.

Keywords: *ELT, online classes, English teachers, perspective, COVID-19 pandemic.*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents (1.1) the background of the study, (1.2) the problems of the study, (1.3) the objectives of the study, and (1.4) the significance of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

The world first encountered coronavirus in December 2019, in Wuhan, Hubei Province of China. The COVID-19 outbreak did not take a long time to spread worldwide as it was declared as a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (World Health Organization, 2020). Pandemic is defined as the result of a disease outbreak widespread from the transmission of human-to-human infection (Qiu et al., 2016-2017). Furthermore, based on the WHO website (2022), by February 25, 2022, there were 430,257,564 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been giving a significant impact on all aspects of life, all over the world. Harapan, et al. (2020) state that the transmission of the virus occurs from one person to another (person-to-person) by having close contacts, primarily by the respiratory droplets of the infected person, especially while coughing and sneezing. Therefore, controlling the infection sources, protecting the susceptible people, and cutting off the chain of the virus transmission are the best efforts to cope with COVID-19 (He et al., 2020).

COVID-19 outbreak affecting the educational field is a matter that must be considered. Since stopping the rapid transmission of coronavirus is necessary, maintaining social distance is required. Hence, to reduce physical contacts, as the worldwide first response, school closures were implemented (Yucesoy-Ozkan et al., 2020). This is in line with what has been mentioned by Mikušková and Verešová (2020) that one of the ways to slow down and prevent the COVID-19 transmission was school closures, from kindergarten to universities. Similarly, Sahu (2020) stated that as the effort to diminish the spread of coronavirus disease, the widespread of educational institutions closures in many countries were promoted.

However, the educational process, specifically teaching and learning, must go on. Since no one knows when the pandemic will end, educational institutions globally chose to utilize the available technology to create the online learning material for students (Kaur, 2020, in Adnan & Anwar, 2020). In line with this statement, due to this global pandemic, in the educational field, Louis-Jean and Cenat (2020) stated that it was a must for teachers to modify their way of teaching from face-to-face learning to web-based distance learning.

In Indonesia, the coronavirus first encountered in May 2020, and it resulted in *PSBB* policy and SFH program. As cited in *The Jakarta Post* (2020), the first two cases of COVID-19 in Indonesia were confirmed by President Joko Widodo on the 2nd of May 2020. Due to this condition, since COVID-19 is transmitted through a close contact among humans, the Indonesian government decided to implement the Large-Scale Social Restriction (*PSBB–Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar*) which was first announced and implemented in Jakarta, in April 2020, as an attempt to prevent the spread of the virus. As the solution for Indonesian education system, School from Home (*Belajar dari Rumah*), a program migrating the learning process from school to home, was applied, to keep students, teachers, school staff, and the school community, healthy and safe (Rasmitadila et al., 2020). In addition, Fauzi and Khusuma (2020) stated that the original face-to-face learning system had turned into online learning system that utilized technology, and due to this situation, teachers had to make the teaching transition, from physical learning to online learning (Rahayu & Wirza, 2020).

During the past decades, teachers and students used to meet face-to-face, and the lessons were taught directly at school. Sujarwo et al. (2020) stated that before the pandemic, the teachers usually taught the lesson in front of the class, continued with the feedback session, and it usually ended with students' assignment. Additionally, at the same time, virtual learning has been spreading widely and quickly over the past 15 years (Hart et al., 2019) which means that it apparently has been being implemented since years ago, but not dominantly, in order to support the physical leaning process. In line with this, Yükselir and Yuvayapan (2021) also stated that before COVID-19 outbreak emerged, online

learning apparently has been conducted as the supplementary to face-to-face learning.

Contrarily, during the pandemic, the teaching and learning process was totally done through online platforms without having to meet physically. The various choices of the available online platforms assisting online classes usually used in Indonesia were *WhatsApp*, *Zoom (Cloud Meetings)*, *Google Classroom*, *Telegram*, *Edmodo*, *Google Meet*, *YouTube*, *Google Forms*, *Quizizz*, *Kahoot*, *Schoology*, *Google Drive*, and so forth (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Safira et al., 2021; Sujarwo et al., 2020), and there was still a plenty of platforms that can be utilized, such as e-learning websites, learning applications particularly designed by the educational institutions, social media, and so forth.

Managing online learning, of course, possessed both advantages and disadvantages, and conducting the virtual classes for English Language Teaching (ELT) in this pandemic era was not an exception. Firstly, a study conducted by Mathur and Singh (2020) entitled “The Perception of Teachers on Unlocking Technology by Redesigning Education System during and after COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown” revealed that even though using technology to teach had several benefits, there were also some disadvantages which negatively impacted teachers’ satisfaction towards unlocking technology by redesigning education system. The advantages mentioned were being helpful in syllabus completion, equipping students with better learning materials, varying students’ knowledge, and allowing a better time usage and problem solving. On the other hand, the disadvantages stated were the improper communication between teachers and students (the primary one), technical skill needs, the lack of appropriate learning sources, bad internet connection, and privacy issues.

Secondly, in line with the previous study, a study conducted by Lestari et al. (2021) entitled “English Teachers’ Perspective on The Implementation of Virtual Classes During COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Palembang” found that there were some both advantages and disadvantages from the online classes implementation. The advantages included the increase of teachers’ and students’ awareness on technology, well-organized class

management, enhancement on students' learning interest and self-directed learning, accessibility of time and place, and the efficiency of the material delivered by the teachers. On the other hand, the barriers mentioned were the bad internet connection, the lack of digital facilities, passive participation of the students, parents' lack of knowledge and skill to operate the technology (to assist their children's learning), and teachers' difficulty to observe students' performance during the class.

Additionally, a library research conducted by Efriana (2021) entitled "Problems of Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic in EFL Classroom and the Solution" found that the problems of online learning in the pandemic era were the students' difficulty to appropriately understand the online material, the incapability of some teachers to use technology, and the limitation of learning controlling. Regarding these teachers' perspectives, some students' points of views about the limitations they had in virtual classes were also reviewed, such as the unavailability of digital devices to support their learning, the lack of enthusiasm to participate in the online class (which leads to the late task submission), and the unavailability of good internet access. Henceforth, the solutions that can be offered to teachers to deal with those problems were: trying to present the learning material more interestingly; using simpler platforms to facilitate online classes (e.g. *WhatsApp*), and having a personal a talk or counselling with the students (or their parents) who were passive during the class to find out the reasons and solutions of their passiveness.

Following those previous related studies, the present study necessarily focused on high school English teachers' perspective on the implementation of online classes to conduct ELT during the pandemic era. Specifically, since the studies aimed to investigate the online English language skills teaching are still rarely found and limited, the author expected to explore more on the (four) English language skills teaching including listening, speaking, reading, and writing during the COVID-19 outbreak which was held through online.

Hence, the current study was aimed to find out Palembang high school English teachers' perspective and insights including several aspects, namely their

general opinion about holding the online classes during the pandemic, the way they teach the four English language skills through online classes, the benefits and the barriers emerging while implementing the online classes, and the solutions they can offer to solve those barriers based on their teaching experience.

1.2. The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems aimed to be explored were formulated into four research questions.

- 1.2.1. What is the perspective of English teachers on conducting the online classes in the pandemic era?
- 1.2.2. How do they teach the four English language skills through online classes?
- 1.2.3. What are the advantages they can take from the online class and the challenges they face while conducting it?
- 1.2.4. What are the solutions they can offer to solve those challenges?

1.3. The Objectives of the Study

In relation with the research questions, therefore, the purposes of this study were to find out:

- 1.3.1. The perspective of English teachers on conducting the online classes in the pandemic era.
- 1.3.2. How they teach the four English language skills through online classes.
- 1.3.3. The advantages they can take from the online class and the challenges they face while conducting it.
- 1.3.4. The solutions they can offer to solve those challenges.

1.4. The Significance of the Study

The present study was conducted to give meaningful contribution for educational field, especially for English Language Teaching (ELT). It is expected

that the results of this study will be beneficial for teachers, specifically for English teachers; students; and future researchers.

Firstly, for teachers, this study may provide useful insights related to online teaching, for example, the appropriate technology and methods used in the online classes. This article also can be a spot for teachers to share their opinion about online English teaching and to offer solutions for the obstacles they face while having the class virtually throughout the pandemic period.

Secondly, for students, it is expected that they can see and consider from their teachers' points of view, and hopefully they can be more open to participate more actively in virtual classes and to have a great synergy with their teacher for a better learning process in the future.

Lastly, for the future researchers, more various related studies which always have the novelty within, with different research methods, instruments, or participants, are expected to be explored and conducted, in order to give varied positive contributions for education. At the end, it is sincerely hoped that this study will be advantageous to all the readers.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the literature review of (2.1) coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), (2.2) online classes, (2.3) ELT during the COVID-19 pandemic, and (2.4) previous related studies.

2.1. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

The first case of Coronavirus Disease 2019, or more commonly known as COVID-19, was discovered in China, by the end of 2019. In December 2019, a cluster of unknown cause of severe pneumonia cases was reported in Wuhan, Hubei province, China (Lauer et al., 2020). Prompetchara et al. (2020) similarly stated that an outbreak of a new coronavirus causing respiratory-related illness was reported in Wuhan at the end of 2019, however, the world priorly had experienced global pandemic by Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) in 2011 and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2002-2003.

The journey of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) to spread over the world began. After being unknown for days, the novel coronavirus was finally able to be identified from a patient by the Chinese scientists on January 7, 2020 (Hui et al., 2020). On January 30, 2020, World Health Organization respectively declared COVID-19 outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (Harapan et al., 2020; He et al., 2020; Lauer et al., 2020; Wu & McGoogan, 2020). Then in February 11, 2020, the virus was officially named as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV), and the related diseases caused by the virus were called as Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) by the World Health Organization (Wu et al., 2020). As it continued to spread worldwide, the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic on March 11, 2020 (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020).

The virus rapidly transmits through direct contacts among humans. Prompetchara et al. (2020) state that COVID-19 primarily transmits through

human-to-human close contacts, specifically while the infected one sprays his droplets while coughing or sneezing to another. This is in line with Singhal (2020) mentioning that the transmission of the disease occurs by direct contact or inhalation with the infected droplets, and the disease's incubation days ranges from two to fourteen days. Furthermore, COVID-19 general symptoms are fever, fatigue, cough, sore throat, and breath shortness, which are almost similar to the infected cases of SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV (He et al., 2020; Prompetchara et al., 2020).

The global pandemic certainly influences people and their activities all over the world. According to WHO website (2022), per February 25, 2022, there were 430,257,564 of COVID-19 cases globally reported. According to Wu et al. (2020), it is necessary to avoid the virus transmission since there is no standard medication for COVID-19. For daily individual precautions, people are encouraged to always wear mask in public. In addition, the other precaution efforts are avoiding crowded places, avoiding contact with sick people, and washing hands regularly for approximately 20 seconds with soap and water especially after touching public places' surfaces (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020). Furthermore, to control and prevent the spread of the virus effectively, He et al. (2020) stated that governments should promote people to stay at home, diminish mass gathering, postpone or cancel public events, and shut down public institutions.

COVID-19 pandemic affects almost all countries worldwide, and Indonesia is not an exception. The first two confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Indonesia were announced by President Joko Widodo on the 2nd of May 2020 as cited in *The Jakarta Post* (2020). Additionally, according to the website of Ministry of Health Republic of Indonesia (2022), there were 5,564,448 positive cases of COVID-19 confirmed in Indonesia per 28/02/2022.

As the virus prevention effort, according to Muhyiddin and Nugroho (2021), by following standards and criteria in COVID-19 prevention and control guidelines from World Health Organization and based on the Government Regulation (*PP-Peraturan Pemerintah*) Number 21/2020 about Large-Scale Social Restriction (*PSBB-Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar*), Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Regulation (*Peraturan Menteri Kesehatan Republik Indonesia*) Number

9/2020 was published, and it regulated about: (1) school and workplace holidays; (2) religious activities restriction; (3) activities restriction in public places and facilities; (4) socio-cultural activities restriction; (5) transportation mode restriction; and (6) other activities restriction related to self-protection aspects. Furthermore, the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restriction (*PSBB*) also followed by other regulations, like Community Activities Restriction Enforcement (*PPKM–Pemberlakuan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat*) and vaccination program (Muhyiddin & Nugroho, 2021) which were also implemented in other cities and provinces in Indonesia to cut down the virus transmission.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced many activities to be adjusted with the current policy implementation within merely a short time, and one of those was teaching and learning process at schools. Therefore, for Indonesian education, a program migrating the learning process from school to home called “School from Home” (*Belajar dari Rumah*) was conducted, to keep all school members healthy and safe (Rasmitadila et al., 2020). The prior face-to-face learning had been substituted with online learning that utilizes technology (Fauzi & Khusuma, 2020), and due to this change, teachers had to make a breakthrough of teaching way, from physical mode to online mode (Rahayu & Wirza, 2020).

2.2. Online Classes

This section is divided into three parts including: (2.2.1) definition of online classes; (2.2.2) advantages of online classes; and (2.2.3) challenges emerging in online classes. The first part is aimed to define the meaning of online classes, while the second and the third part are aimed to see the implementation of online classes from two opposite ways, its positive sides and its limitations.

2.2.1. Definition of Online Classes

Online class is one of the types of distance education, and it can go by several terms, such as e-learning, internet learning, distributed learning, networked learning, tele-learning, virtual learning, web-based learning, computer-assisted

learning, and distance learning (Ally, 2008; Mansour & Mupinga, 2007). Furthermore, Ally (2008) states that all those terms refer to a learning process where the teacher and the learners are at a distance, and they utilize technology to access the learning material and interact with each other with some of supports provided. More specifically, he defines online learning as the use of internet to access learning materials, to communicate with the educator and peers, and to get support throughout the learning process, in order to gain knowledge, build personal meaning, and grow from the learning experience. In addition, according to Priyadarshani and Jesuiya (2021), online class is a framework where students learn, have discussions with their peers and teachers about the lesson, and verify their academic progress with the assistance of internet-based technology. Hence, in the present study, the term *online classes* was used interchangeably with online learning, virtual learning, virtual classes, and distance learning as can be seen in some sections of the study.

Rasmitadila et al. (2020) mention that online learning focusing on internet-based courses can be conducted either synchronously or asynchronously.

1. Synchronous learning is a learning process with direct interactions among teacher and students simultaneously through live online platforms, such as video conferencing and online texting.
2. Asynchronous learning is a learning process where the interaction among teacher and students occurs indirectly, not at the same time, by using independent learning approaches.

Additionally, Gunawan et al. (2021) state that real time platforms, such as *Zoom Meeting*, *Google Classroom*, *Google Meet*, live chat, etc. are usually used for synchronous learning, while texting application, like *WhatsApp*, is usually used by teachers for asynchronous learning to give students assignments and to mentor and monitor them while doing the task.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the education process was totally done though online with a variety of sources and media, and almost all educators and students worldwide have had experience with it. Therefore, throughout its sudden implementation process, there must be benefits and limitations within.

2.2.2. Advantages of Online Classes

Educators and learners must be able to notice and take benefits from the implementation of online classes even though it was a new experience for them during the pandemic period. According to Karkar-Esperat (2018), online classes facilitate learners an interactive learning environment in which they can exchange information, get knowledge, and diverse experience through social context. Similarly, Yükselir and Yuvayapan (2021) also state that nowadays, where life is mostly relied on the internet and technology, online learning is noticed as an efficient medium for instructional delivery.

After reviewing several articles, there are three beneficial points of online classes implementation. The first advantage is related to the flexible access. Ally (2008) states that online delivery method provides the access of flexibility anywhere and anytime along with the appropriate instructional design principles. Mansour & Mupinga (2007) also mention that one of the advantages of online learning over face-to-face learning is there is no barriers of time and space. Additionally, Mukhtar et al. (2020) mention that online learning is flexible and effective since it eases the distanced learning administration and accessibility with merely less usage of resource and time.

The second advantage is related to low expense. The distance learning costs less than full-time learning since it does not require travelling, and it consequently can save a lot of free time too (Djalilova, 2020). In line with this, Mukhtar et al. (2020) and Davidovitch and Wadmany (2020) state that online learning can save transportation resources as well as other expenses. Furthermore, Dung (2020) explains that virtual learning can help institutions offer instruction capaciously with many students participating through online lecturers and video conferencing media with lower budget. Similarly, Lie et al. (2020) also mention that online learning can develop education value by allowing learning opportunities to broader population with less cost.

The third advantage is related to independent learning. According to Purwadi et al. (2021), students perceive that online learning can help them become

independent individuals in education. In line with this, Mukhtar et al. (2020) state that online classes implementation leads to student-centered learning, and students become self-directed learners since they can learn asynchronously at any time, in a day. Additionally, Wilson (2020) states that with the accessibility and flexibility of online learning applications, learners can encourage themselves to learn independently without always relying on their teachers.

In conclusion, according to several researches' findings, the implementation of online classes is beneficial due to its accessibility and flexibility, affordability, and students' independence of learning. This is in line with Çoban and Vardar (2021) stating that the time and space flexibility, lesson's recordings availability, self-paced learning, affordability, convenience, wide-ranged resources sharing, and quick feedbacks are all considered as the positive opinions regarding distance learning.

2.2.3. Challenges Emerging in Online Classes

In the process of conducting online classes, based on some studies, there are also several challenges faced by teachers since the online teaching and learning process can be considered as a new experience for them. The first challenge is related to teachers' factors including their knowledge and skill to operate technology. One of the primary obstacles of conducting an efficient online class experienced by teachers is the lack of digital literacy (Almazova et al., 2020). Noor et al. (2020) and Sher Ryn and SC (2020) also state that the lack of ICT literacy and expertise in online teaching becomes one of the major challenges for teachers to conduct online classes. Similarly, Mathur and Singh (2020) mention that the need of technical skill is one of the negative factors affecting teacher's satisfaction toward teaching using technology. Additionally, without online teaching experience and the difficulty to use ICT tools, teachers usually find it challenging to conduct online classes since it requires them to master various teaching and learning applications (Rasmitadila et al., 2020).

The second challenge is related to the unavailability/lack of technical tools/devices. Fauzi and Khusuma (2020) state that the lack of facilities is also

included as one of the problems emerging in the online learning process. This barrier occurs since not all students have their own smartphones/laptops/other tools to support the distance learning (Rasmitadila et al., 2020), and this may be due to their financial condition (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). In line with this, according to Nambiar (2020), one of the concerns in virtual learning is the inaccessible online facilities and tools for learners coming from disadvantaged economic background.

The third challenge is related to the poor internet connection (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Bahasoan et al., 2020; Efriana, 2021; Lestari et al., 2021; Mardiah, 2020; Mathur & Singh, 2020; Nakhriyah & Muzakky, 2021; Noor et al., 2020). In most researches, the unstable internet access becomes one of the major problems during online classes since it is uncontrollable and distracting enough. This problem can be caused by the unaffordable internet access for students coming from middle to lower economic classes and the internet access difficulty in certain places, such as in rural and remote areas (Efriana, 2021).

The fourth challenge is related to students' factor such as unmotivated students since they do not directly interact with their teachers who can motivate, guide, and provide them vivid instruction like in the classroom mode (Mardiah, 2020) which can lead to the absence and late task submission (Nakhriyah & Muzakky, 2021). Distractions from students' home environment (Rasmitadila et al., 2020) and uncooperative/passive learners (Noor et al., 2020) are also included as students' factors negatively affecting online classes implementation. Therefore, those factors can be considered as challenges that should be solved by both educator and learners since a successful distance learning requires good collaboration and meaningful communication between both of them.

The last challenge is related to the support from schools/institutions. This is in line with several studies stating that the availability of the electronic environment and support (Almazova et al., 2020) and funding from institutions for teachers to conduct e-learning (Mardiah, 2020) are important to encourage the implementation of online classes.

Conclusively, the presence of teachers' digital literacy, appropriate digital devices/tools, good internet connection, active learners, and support from schools

or institutions are still considered as limitations within online classes implementation which surely need to be dealt with.

2.3. English Language Teaching (ELT) during the COVID-19 Pandemic

As it has been mentioned in the first section of the literature review, the uncertain situations due to COVID-19 outbreak had led government to officially elaborate several new regulations aimed to prevent the spread of the virus. As the result, educational institutions across the world had to stop face-to-face learning and continue the education process through online (Erarslan, 2021; & Syafi'i, 2021). Therefore, this section briefly reviews how English was taught through online classes during the pandemic period.

According to Atmojo and Nugroho (2020), in EFL online classes, teachers divided the activities into two modes, synchronous and asynchronous mode, and they also employed several applications and platforms including Learning Management System (LMS), texting media, video conferences, content makers, assessment, videos, online learning providers, and additional sources. Furthermore, Putri and Sari (2021) mentioned that, in facilitating virtual learning, applications, such as *Zoom (Cloud Meetings)*, *Google Classroom*, *Google Meet* and Learning Management System (LMS) including e-learning platform, e-learning Madrasah, *Moodle*, and *Edmodo* were usually used by English teachers and students. Moreover, in her research on students' experiences in using online learning applications, Famularsih (2020) stated that most students opined that the use of those applications in English learning was effective and efficient in the urgent situation of COVID-19 outbreak, and *WhatsApp* application was one of the most favorite platforms since it required lower cost.

In implementing online classes, poor connection and technical problem often could not be avoided. According to Putri and Sari (2021), to deal with this problem, teachers usually conducted more asynchronous activities and used *WhatsApp* group more to communicate with students while, for examples, the internet was unstable and the learning website was down. Furthermore, in general, most activities in online classes were carried out in similar ways to the ones in face-

to-face classes (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). In other words, the teachers tended to move the face-to-face learning mode into an online learning environment.

In addition, there were also some researches relating online classes implementation to four English language skills enhancement, but they apparently showed varied results. In Karatas and Tuncer (2020), the results found that in online classes, writing was the most improved skill among the other skills because it was frequently used for almost all learning tasks and projects, and it was consecutively followed by listening skill, reading skill, and speaking skill. Almost similar with this, in Famularsih's (2020), the findings showed that writing skill (which ranked first) and reading skill were improved better rather than listening skill and speaking skill since the learning tasks mostly focused on articles reading which then would be discussed in writing forms. Contrarily, in Hazaymeh (2021), the results of the study showed that reading skill was ranked first as the successful acquired skill by learners through online learning activities, followed consecutively by listening skill, speaking skill, and writing skill.

In summary, during the COVID-19 pandemic phase, the ELT process still ran well with the assistance of technology and various learning media and applications. The ways of teachers delivering the lesson to students were also varied depending on their methods of teaching, either synchronously or asynchronously. At last, as stated in several studies (Famularsih, 2020; Hazaymeh, 2021; Karatas & Tuncer, 2020), learners' English skills were successfully improved during the online ELT implementation although each study showed different results.

2.4. Previous Related Studies

There were numerous studies that have been conducted related to the topic of the present study, either in worldwide context or solely in Indonesian context. Among those researches, there were three studies that would be reviewed in this section. The first study was conducted in 2020 by Mathur and Singh with the title "The Perception of Teachers on Unlocking Technology by Redesigning Education System during and after COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown" in Indian context. In this study, the data was collected through questionnaire, and 250 teachers participated.

The result of the study showed that there were some both benefits and drawbacks of using technology in teaching. At some points, it was beneficial to create syllabus, provide learners better materials, diversify learners' knowledge, manage time, and solve problems. Contrarily, the drawbacks stated were the improper communication between educator and learners (the major one), technical skill needs, lack of good learning sources, bad internet access, and privacy issues. Additionally, even though those drawbacks had significant impacts on teachers' satisfaction towards unlocking technology by redesigning education system, teacher's current satisfaction positively supported the continuation of the future unlocking technology for education. The similarities between this previous study and the present study were both studies used questionnaire as the instrument to collect the data, and the participants of both researches were teachers. On the contrary, the differences between both studies were the scope of the participants and the additional collecting data instrument used. The previous study was a national-scaled study which included teachers in India, from primary to higher education, while the present study's participants only included high school English teachers from Palembang city. Additionally, the present study conducted in-depth interviews after distributing the online questionnaire, while the previous study only collected the data through questionnaire.

The second study was conducted in 2021 by Lestari et al. entitled "English Teachers' Perspective on The Implementation of Virtual Classes During COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Palembang". The participants of this study were two out of seven English teachers teaching at MTs N 1 Palembang who had different genders and years of teaching experience. One teacher was female with six years of teaching experience, while another teacher was male with 15 years of teaching experience. Based on the data collected by a survey and in-depth interviews, the findings of the study showed that there were both advantages and disadvantages from the virtual class implementation. The advantages included: the raise of technology awareness from teachers and students; good class management; enhancement on students' learning interest and self-directed learning; flexible learning; and the efficiency of the learning materials

delivered by the teachers. Moreover, the barriers found included: bad internet connection; limited digital facilities; students' passive participation during the learning process; parents' lack of digital knowledge and skill (to help their children's learning); and the difficulty to observe students' performance during the class. Additionally, this previous study and the present study similarly collected the data with both questionnaire and in-depth interviews. Contrarily, what differentiated both studies was the research participants. The participants of the previous research were two English teachers teaching at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 1 Palembang, while the present study had a broader scope including senior high school English teachers in Palembang city.

The last study was a library research conducted by Efriana in 2021 entitled "Problems of Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic in EFL Classroom and the Solution". Through the data collected from online and printed textbooks, articles from journal websites, law regulations, and other sources, which were qualitatively analyzed with several steps, the study found out that the problems emerging in online classes during the COVID-19 outbreak were the students' difficulty to properly comprehend the online material, the inability of some teachers to utilize technology, and the limitation of learning controlling. Related to those teachers' opinions, students' views about the challenges they faced during the online learning were also reviewed, such as the lack of digital devices to facilitate the online learning, less enthusiasm to take part in online classes, and poor internet access. Hence, to deal with those problems, the solutions that can be offered to teachers were: presenting the lesson more interestingly; using less complicated platforms for online classes (e.g. WhatsApp), and having a personal talk or counselling with learners (or their parents) who did not actively participate in online classes to find out the reasons and solutions of their passiveness. The similarity between this study and the researcher's study was both studies were aimed to find the challenges faced by the EFL teachers while holding online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic and the solutions to cope with them. Contrarily, the differences between both studies were the research types and the scope of the studies' subjects. In this previous study, a library research was conducted, while in the present study, an

empirical research was conducted with an online survey and interview as the data collection instruments. Moreover, the previous study focused on the perspective of teachers, students, and parents, while the current study solely focused on the perspective of teachers.

Conclusively, teachers' opinions towards online classes implementation were varied. Based on the three related studies reviewed, the findings also similarly showed that the implementation of online classes possessed both advantages and challenges during the process. In addition, there were also similarities and differences between the present study and the three previous related studies in the terms of (scope of) participants, research design, research instrument, and so forth. Hence, from the differences, it was expected that the findings of current study would discover novel insights.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents detailed information related to the methodology used in the present study. This chapter includes (3.1) research design, (3.2) operational definition, (3.3) participants, (3.4) data collection method, (3.5) validity, and (3.6) analyzing data method.

3.1. Research Design

A survey research design was employed to conduct the present study. According to Creswell (2012), survey design is one of the quantitative research procedures where the researchers conduct a survey to a small group of people (sample) to picture trends in attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of a larger group of people (population). The use of this research design was in accordance with the objectives of the current study in which English teachers' perspective on conducting online classes in the pandemic era was investigated.

The survey was also followed by in-depth interview to gather additional information in order to get the whole picture of teachers' perspective on the online classes implementation during the COVID-19 outbreak, including the ELT process of how teachers teach the four English language skills through online classes, benefits and challenges emerging during conducting online classes, and potential solutions that can be offered to deal with those challenges.

3.2. Operational Definition

The title of the present study is "Teaching English through Online Classes in Pandemic Era: A Perspective of High School Teachers in Palembang". Firstly, the term *teaching English* can be understood as English Language Teaching (ELT). According to Harmer (2007), English is a language spoken among people who do not share the same language, either native language or second language, and English was already popular to be a genuine *lingua franca* since the end of the

twentieth century. In Indonesian context, English language is regarded as a foreign language (EFL) since most of Indonesian people rarely have English as their mother tongue or second language, and this is in line with Abrar et al. (2018) stating that English is known as one of the famous foreign languages in the multicultural and greatly diverse country, Indonesia. In the present study, the ELT focused on four language skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which was held through virtual classes.

Secondly, the term *online classes* means the distanced teaching and learning process had by the teacher and the students by utilizing technology. According to Dhull & Sakshi (2017), online class includes a set of technologies, such as world wide web, e-mail, chat, text, audio, etc., ran through computer networks to hold the teaching and learning process. The COVID-19 outbreak has led the educational process to be implemented through online classes to maintain the teaching and learning activities due to school closures aimed to stop the virus transmission. In addition, the term *online classes* is used interchangeably with online learning, virtual learning, virtual classes, and distance learning as can be seen in some sections in this study.

Thirdly, the term *pandemic era* refers to the COVID-19 pandemic. At the end of December 2019, Coronavirus Disease-2019 or COVID-19 was first found in Wuhan, China, and it caused a formidable outbreak in most cities in China and continued to spread worldwide (Wu et al., 2020). Due to its rapid transmission, World Health Organization (2020) finally declared it as a global pandemic in March 2020.

Fourthly, the term *a perspective of high school teachers in Palembang* refers to opinions or thoughts of English teachers teaching at senior high schools located in Palembang city. In particular, according to Cambridge Dictionary (2022), the word “perspective” means a certain way of considering something, and more generally, it refers to a feeling or opinion about something or someone. Furthermore, it is stated that some words which have similar meaning to “perspective” are viewpoint, point of view, frame of mind, outlook, etc. (Cambridge Dictionary, 2022).

Finally, regarding those terms' definitions, the aim of the present study was to explore Palembang high school English teachers' perspective while teaching English through online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic era.

3.3. Participants

The present study involved senior high school English teachers in Palembang city since they are considered as population, which refers to a group of people to which a research can be generalized (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009). Furthermore, Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009) state that a sample is a part of a population who participate in a research. Hence, the participants of this study were 55 English teachers who had voluntarily filled the online questionnaire shared through *WhatsApp Group*. In addition, for the interview sections, there were certain criteria to choose the participants so that among the interviewees; they must be male and female teachers; they must teach at different schools (including both private and public schools); and they must have varied years of teaching experience ranging from 5 to 30 years. Hence, four teachers (out of the 55 teachers) who met those criteria were interviewed the in-depth interview sections.

3.4. Data Collection Method

3.4.1. Questionnaire

At the first step of data collection, an online questionnaire was employed to collect general information from Palembang English teachers about the implementation of online classes during the pandemic. According to Creswell (2012), in survey design, a questionnaire is a form completed by participants of a study by choosing answers to questions and also by adding basic personal or demographic information before it is collected back to the researcher(s). Therefore, *Google Forms* was utilized to design the online questionnaire and collect its responses.

Random sampling method was used to collect the data. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), conducting a random sampling means that each individual of a certain population has equal probability to be chosen as the study participant. Hence, the link of the online questionnaire was shared to Palembang English high school teachers through *WhatsApp Group*.

The questionnaire included questions related to respondents' demographic information, such as name, gender, date of birth, institution, years of teaching experience, and contact number, and they were followed by 41 close-ended questions. The questionnaire's items were divided into six categories including: (1) English Teachers' General Perspective on the Implementation of Online Classes during the COVID-19 Pandemic; (2) Teachers' Personal Factors of Online Teaching; (3) Students' Factors in Online Classes; (4) Advantages of Online Classes; (5) Disadvantages of Online Classes; and (6) ELT through Online Classes. The items of the questionnaire were adopted and adapted from the following related studies:

- (i) "The Impact of Online Learning during COVID- 19: Students' and Teachers' Perspective" by Nambiar (2020).
- (ii) "Challenges and Opportunities for Russian Higher Education amid COVID-19: Teachers' Perspective" by Almazova et al. (2020).
- (iii) "Online Teaching Learning during COVID-19 Outbreak: Teacher's Perception at Junior High School of Fathimatul Amin Jakarta" by Nakhriyah and Muzakky (2021).
- (iv) "EFL Teachers' Perception on Online English Learning Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic at High Schools in Padang" by Nursalina and Fitrawati (2021).

Since the Likert-scale is one of the most famous types of scale in social science, and it includes the type of response choices in which participants are allowed to indicate their degree of agreement by the stated attitudes or judgements (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009), the Likert-scale approach was chosen to represent the questionnaire's responses. Therefore, the participants could have five

possible responses including: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neutral; (4) Agree; or (5) Strongly agree, to answer the close-ended questions.

The data of the questionnaire was collected by the assistance of *Google Form* (to create the online survey and collect its responses) and *WhatsApp* application (to distribute the link of the questionnaire). From 14/01/2022 to 23/01/2022, there were 55 English teachers who participated in filling out the questionnaire.

3.4.2. Interview

At the last step of data collection, interview sessions were carried out to explore the questionnaire's responses deeper. According to Adhabi & Anozie (2017) interview is one of the qualitative collecting data methods, and it shapes the fundamental of primary data collection. Hence, in this section, in-depth interviews were conducted with the teachers who have filled out the online questionnaire at the first place, agreed to be interviewed as they had chosen the response "Yes" for the statement "I am willing to be interviewed for further information related to my responses in this survey" on the last page of the online questionnaire, and met certain criteria that have been described earlier. The interview method was employed by the researcher to collect the qualitative information because it allowed participants to share their personal experiences and ideas more open and detailed.

Purposeful sampling method was used to choose the participants for the interview section. This sampling method was utilized since it belongs to nonprobability sampling which allows researchers to select participants because they are available, convenient, and able to represent several characteristics investigated in the study (Creswell, 2012). Specifically, Creswell (2012) further describes that through purposeful sampling, researchers are able to purposively select the participants and sites to either learn or understand the core phenomenon.

In this section, the semi-structured interview, or also known as unstructured interview, was employed with ten questions within. This type of interview was chosen since it has no strict adherence, and its process flows depending on the

responses of the participants by the main questions or topics asked by the researcher (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). Hence, the researcher believed that by conducting semi-structured interviews, it would be helpful to collect the additional qualitative data to meet the purposes of the present study.

The interviews were done through online video conferencing, considering that during the pandemic, maintaining physical distance was important to avoid the virus transmission. Therefore, *Zoom (Cloud Meetings)* application was used to hold the interview process. The interviews were conducted four times on 29/01/2022, 31/01/2022, 01/02/2022, and 05/02/2022 after all of the online survey's responses were collected, and the interviewees were four teachers who met specific criteria that have been mentioned previously. Each interview took approximately 30 to 45 minutes, and during the process, the interviewee was allowed to choose either English or Indonesian language, or even switch between the languages so that he/she could comfortably answer the questions. The whole interview process was recorded since all of the participants allowed it for the need of research documentation. Additionally, to protect the confidentiality of the teachers' identities, acronyms T1, T2, T3, and T4 were used to state the interview results.

3.5. Validity

Validity is an aspect which is considered very important in a research. In accordance with this, Golafshani (2003) states that validity and reliability are general things for quantitative study, but now they are also considered in the paradigm of qualitative research. Furthermore, Nha (2021) recently stated that validity and reliability are necessary concepts to justify the quality of a research.

In the current research, both questionnaire and interview items needed to be validated since they were adopted and adapted from several studies. According to Anderson and Arsenault (1998), validity refers to an extent to which what is measured reflects what is expected to be measured. In other words, an instrument is valid if it successfully measures what it is intended to measure (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009). Therefore, to verify the validity of the instruments' items, the experts judgement method was utilized. The items of both questionnaire and

interview were validated by two lecturers. One of the lecturers was from Sriwijaya University, and another lecturer was from PGRI University.

As the results of the validation process, for the questionnaire items (see Appendix C), three items of the questionnaire were deleted since they were considered redundant, so the prior 44 items were cut off into 41 final items. Then, for statement 13 of the questionnaire, “It is difficult for me to adapt online teaching model”, the word “model” was suggested to be changed into “mode” because it might refer to “Syntax, Social System, Principles of Reactions, Support System, dan Effects of the Model” by Joyce et al. (2004). Additionally, it was also suggested to arrange the questionnaire items’ order based on *Input-Process-Output-Outcome* by Branch (2009).

For the interview questions (see Appendix D), it was suggested to add a starting question asking about teacher’s perspective toward the sudden transition of the teaching and learning process, from face-to-face classes to online classes. For the rest of the questions, overall, they were considered appropriate to be used. In addition, similar to the questionnaire items, it was also suggested to arrange the order of the interview questions based on *Input-Process-Output-Outcome* by Branch (2009).

At last, based on several comments and suggestions from the validators, some items of the questionnaire and interview were revised, and then all items were finalized and used as the instruments of the present study (see Appendix A & B).

3.6. Analyzing Data Method

3.6.1. Questionnaire

After the participants completed the online survey, the submitted responses were automatically analyzed by *Google Forms* into the forms of pie diagrams and percentages to represent each item’s response. Therefore, the results of the questionnaire were simply presented in tables for each category, with percentages for each item’s response, to show the trends of the study.

3.6.2. Interview

After the general viewpoint was represented by the questionnaire results, further qualitative information was collected through in-depth interviews to complete the findings of the present study. Since the qualitative data collection usually depends on interpretation and explanation, thematic analysis is considered very appropriate for researches aimed to find something by using interpretations (Alhojailan, 2012). Furthermore, Jugder (2016) also mentions that thematic analysis is commonly one of the qualitative analysis approaches, and it is widely used to analyze interview results. Therefore, the result of the interview section was analyzed and interpreted by using the thematical analysis technique. Additionally, according to SAGE (2019), this method allows researchers to identify general recognized patterns and relationships which is helpful to answer research questions of a study.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), there are six steps involved in thematical analysis: familiarizing with the data; coding the initials; searching the themes; reviewing the themes; defining and naming the themes; and finalizing the report. Hence, these steps were conducted to analyze the interview results. Firstly, the researcher carefully listened to the interview's recordings and typed the transcription. Secondly, the interview transcript was read and understood. Thirdly, from the transcript, the codes and the themes were highlighted. Fourthly, those themes were reviewed, classified, and named. Lastly, with the arranged data, the interview results were stated and interpreted.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents (4.1) findings of questionnaire, (4.2) findings of interview, and (4.3) discussion that interprets both questionnaire's and interview's findings.

4.1. Findings of Questionnaire

The aim of the questionnaire was to identify Palembang high school English teachers' perspective on online classes implementation during the COVID-19 pandemic. The questionnaire was made with the assistance of *Google Form*. The link of the online questionnaire was shared through *WhatsApp* to English teachers teaching at senior high schools located in Palembang city. The survey was distributed from 14/01/2022 to 23/01/2022, and 55 teachers from 37 different senior high schools (see Appendix E) participated in filling out the questionnaire. There were 13 male teachers and 42 female teachers who completed the online survey with varied years of teaching experience ranging from two to 40 years. In addition, among the 55 participants, 32 of them are teaching at public schools, while the other 23 are teaching at private schools.

Table 4.1 Participant demographics

Demographic Information	Participants (N=55)	
Gender	Male	(23.6%)
	Female	(76.4%)
Institution	Public schools	(58.2%)
	Private schools	(41.8%)
Years of Teaching Experience	≤ 5 years	(12.7%)
	6-10 years	(12.7%)
	11-15 years	(11%)
	16-20 years	(34.5%)
	≥ 21 years	(29.1%)

The questionnaire had 41 items in total, and they were divided into six categories including: (1) English Teachers' General Perspective on the Implementation of Online Classes during the COVID-19 Pandemic; (2) Teachers' Personal Factors of Online Teaching; (3) Students' Factors in Online Classes; (4) Advantages of Online Classes; (5) Disadvantages of Online Classes; and (6) ELT through Online Classes. Each item was answered by the Likert-scale approach with the five responses' choices including: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neutral; (4) Agree; and (5) Strongly agree. With the utilization of *Google Forms*, after the participants submitted their responses, the percentages representing each item's response were automatically shown.

Table 4.2 English teachers' general perspective on the implementation of online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	I have experience in using technology to teach online classes	1.8%	1.8%	5.5%	60%	30.9%
2.	I have sufficient knowledge and skill to use technology to teach online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic	1.8%	5.5%	10.9%	56.4%	25.5%
3.	I still need to learn how to use technology for online classes	3.6%	1.8%	9.1%	56.4%	29.1%
4.	I have troubles designing learning materials for online classes	1.8%	27.3%	32.7%	32.7%	5.5%
5.	I find it difficult to educate students using online learning media	7.3%	29.1%	21.8%	29.1%	12.7%
6.	I feel that conducting online classes during this pandemic is not convenient for me	9.1%	30.9%	25.5%	29.1%	5.5%
7.	I feel that implementing online classes is easier than face-to-face classes	12.7%	49.1%	27.3%	9.1%	1.8%
8.	I feel that online classes are more effective than classroom mode	14.5%	54.5%	20%	7.3%	3.6%

9.	I feel that conducting online classes during the COVID-19 outbreak brings more advantages than disadvantages	7.3%	32.7%	36.4%	14.5%	9.1%
10.	I prefer online classes rather than face-to-face classes	18.2%	49.1%	21.8%	7.3%	3.6%

Based on Table 4.2, almost all of the participants agreed that they had experience (item 1) and sufficient knowledge and skill (item 2) to teach classes through online. However, at the same time, as stated in item 3, 85.5% of them felt that they still needed to learn how to use technology to conduct online classes. In addition, relating to teachers' preference between online class and face-to-face class as stated in item 7, 8, and 10, more than half of the participants opined that face-to-face classes were easier to conduct, more effective, and favourable.

Table 4.3 Teachers' personal factors of online teaching

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
11.	I easily get distracted during online classes	3.6%	40%	34.5%	20%	1.8%
12.	I have low motivation to teach through online	7.3%	52.7%	18.2%	18.2%	3.6%
13.	It is difficult for me to adapt online teaching mode	7.3%	54.5%	25.5%	10.9%	1.8%
14.	Conducting online classes helps me think innovatively and creatively	1.8%	3.6%	16.4%	56.4%	21.8%
15.	Conducting online classes improves my teaching skill	0%	5.5%	16.4%	60%	18.2%
16.	Conducting online classes enhances my confidence as a teacher	0%	7.3%	36.4%	49.1%	7.3%

According to Table 4.3, almost half of the participants (43.6%) disagreed that they could easily get distracted during online classes (item 11). As indicated in the responses' percentage results of item 12 and 13, teachers tended to have high

motivation to teach online, and adapting online teaching mode was not very difficult for them. In addition, as stated in item 14 to 16, most of them agreed that along with the implementation of online classes, they could improve their creative-innovative thinking, teaching skill, and confidence as teachers.

Table 4.4 Students' factors in online classes

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
17.	My students have sufficient knowledge and skill to use technology in online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic	1.8%	14.5%	20%	50.9%	12.7%
18.	My students have appropriate devices and good internet connection for the online classes	5.5%	30.9%	20%	38.2%	5.5%
19.	My students face some technological problems while taking part in online classes	5.5%	10.9%	23.6%	49.1%	10.9%
20.	My students have low motivation to study online	5.5%	29.1%	21.8%	27.3%	16.4%
21.	My students do not take online classes seriously	9.1%	21.8%	23.6%	32.7%	12.7%
22.	My students are enthusiastic to take part in online discussions	7.3%	25.5%	32.7%	30.9%	3.6%
23.	My students are able to perform tasks in the platform(s) chosen for online classes and meet the deadlines	1.8%	14.5%	27.3%	47.3%	9.1%

In Table 4.4, the percentages' results of item 17 showed that more than half of the participants (63.6%) agreed that their students had sufficient knowledge and skill to use technology to attend online classes during the pandemic, but at the same time, some of them were also facing technological problems during the process (item 19), therefore, they tended to have low motivation to study online (item 20) and take online classes unseriously (item 21). However, besides those unenthusiastic students, according to item 22, some teachers opined that there were

also students who actively participated in online classes. At the end, related to students' task completion, 56.4% of the teachers agreed that their students were able to finish the task assigned on the online platforms on time.

Table 4.5 Advantages of online classes

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
24.	I feel that online classes can help teachers and students understand the technology use for learning process	3.6%	1.8%	3.6%	65.5%	25.5%
25.	I feel that online classes help students learn better	7.3%	21.8%	40%	27.3%	3.6%
26.	I feel that online classes are good for students' independent learning	1.8%	7.3%	23.6%	58.2%	9.1%
27.	I feel that online classes can save costs	1.8%	45.5%	32.7%	20%	0%
28.	I feel that online classes are flexible and helpful to manage time effectively	1.8%	20%	32.7%	40%	5.5%
29.	I feel that online classes are effective for both teachers and students	1.8%	34.5%	29.1%	30.9%	3.6%

For the category of online classes advantages, as Table 4.5 shown, 91% of the participants agreed that online classes implementation could help teachers and learners understand more about the technology utilization to assist the learning process (item 24), and 67.3% of them agreed that it was great for students' independent learning (item 26). Moreover, 45% of teachers felt that its flexibility was also good for the effective time management (item 28). Meanwhile, almost half of the participants (47.3%) did not agree that online classes were affordable (item 27).

Table 4.6 Disadvantages of online classes

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
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30.	I feel that online classes can be distracted because of the poor internet connection	1.8%	3.6%	7.3%	54.5%	32.7%
31.	I feel that online classes require high costs	1.8%	5.5%	20%	56.4%	16.4%
32.	I feel that online classes reduce students' motivation to learn	3.6%	9.1%	16.4%	56.4%	14.5%
33.	I find it difficult to communicate with students in online classes	3.6%	5.5%	16.4%	60%	14.5%
34.	I find it difficult to evaluate students' knowledge and skill through online classes	1.8%	14.5%	25.5%	49.1%	9.1%
35.	I find it difficult to control and regulate sinful activities like cheating in online classes	3.6%	5.5%	14.5%	54.5%	21.8%
36.	I find it difficult to teach students through online classes	3.6%	23.6%	32.7%	32.7%	7.3%

Based on Table 4.6, as can be seen in the percentages' result of item 30, almost all participants (87.2%) agreed that online classes could be interrupted by the bad internet connection. Furthermore, as indicated in statement 31 and 32, more than 70% of the respondents also agreed that online classes implementation was expensive enough, and it could decrease students' learning motivation. In addition, based on statement 33 to 35, over 50% of the them agreed that during the online classes, they had difficulties communicating with their students, evaluating their students' knowledge and skill, and monitoring sinful activities.

Table 4.7 ELT through online classes

No.	Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
37.	Teaching listening skill is more interesting through online classes	7.3%	12.7%	38.2%	36.4%	5.5%
38.	Teaching speaking skill is more interesting through online classes	7.3%	29.1%	23.6%	36.4%	3.6%
39.	Teaching reading skill is more interesting through online classes	7.3%	18.2%	29.1%	40%	5.5%

40.	Teaching writing skill is more interesting through online classes	7.3%	23.6%	32.7%	30.9%	5.5%
41.	Teaching English is more effective through online classes	5.5%	34.5%	40%	16.4%	3.6%

From Table 4.7, it can be seen that there was no specific tendency on each item for the relationship between English language (skills) teaching and online class implementation since the responses nearly showed neutral. Hence, this question was further asked in the in-depth interview sessions. However, from the percentages' results of item 37 to 40, it could be stated that reading skill (45.5%) was the most interesting skill to be taught through online classes, and it was consecutively followed by listening skill (41.9%), speaking skill (40%) and writing skill (36.4%).

4.2. Findings of Interview

The aim of the interview session was to investigate deeper about Palembang high school English teachers' perspective on online classes implementation during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially to know about: how they perceived the sudden transition of teaching and learning process (from face-to-face to online); their preparation for the online ELT; how they exactly taught four English language skills through online classes; advantages and challenges during online classes; potential solutions to deal with those challenges; and finally their general perspective on the implementation of online classes amid the pandemic.

The interviews were conducted from 29/01/2022 to 05/02/2022 via *Zoom Meeting* application. There were four teachers interviewed, and all of the interviews' process was recorded. Among the four interviewees, there are two male teachers and two female teachers, with varied years of teaching experience ranging from five to 26 years. They are from four different schools, where two teachers are teaching at public schools, and the other two are teaching at private schools.

Additionally, in stating the interview results, the first teacher (male) who is teaching at a private school with 21 years of teaching experience was mentioned as T1 (Teacher 1). The second teacher (female) who is teaching at a public school with 26 years of teaching experience was mentioned as T2 (Teacher 2). The third teacher (female) who is teaching at another private school with five years of teaching experience was mentioned as T3 (Teacher 3), and the last interviewed teacher (male) who is teaching at a public school with 16 years of teaching experience was mentioned as T4 (Teacher 4).

Theme 1: Teachers' Perception on the Sudden Transition from Face-to-Face Classes to Online Classes

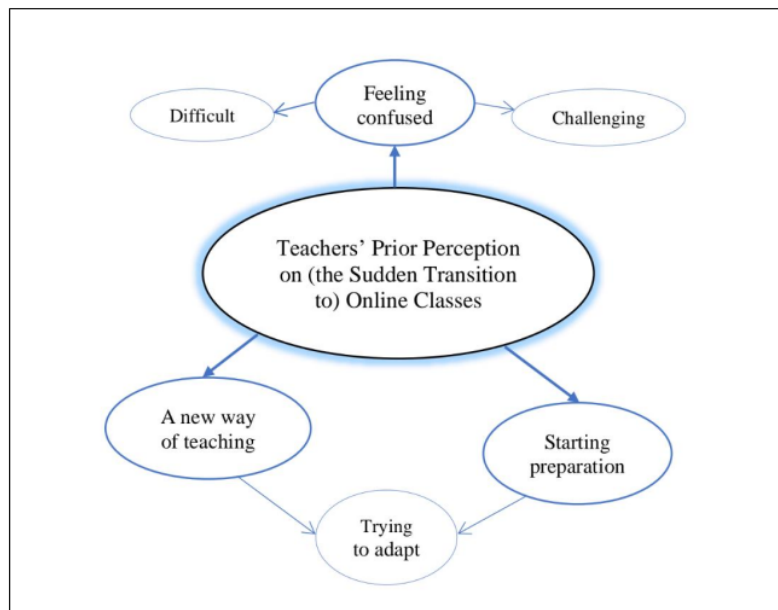


Figure 4.1 Teachers' perception on the sudden transition of the learning process from face-to-face to online

Based on Figure 4.1, there were several opinions emerging from teachers when the online class was first implemented due to the COVID-19 outbreak. At the beginning, they apparently found that conducting online classes was confusing

enough. However, at the same time, they were naturally forced to manage the preparation and adapt the online teaching method as a new way to deliver the lesson to their students amid the pandemic.

Here what Teacher 1 and 3 said about their perception on the sudden online learning implementation.

T1: Firstly, we were confused about how to teach students and give the material to them because we didn't meet for the teaching and learning activities at school or in the classroom, so that's why as teachers, we had to study again.

T3: Actually, it was quite challenging and difficult for me because I had to design all of the things related to (online) ELT, especially the materials I'd like to teach to the students ...

However, Teacher 2 mentioned that being ready to employ of the latest way of teaching (online teaching) was required since it was teachers' responsibility to keep educating students in every situation.

T2: In my opinion, at the beginning, of course we had to adapt since it was a must for us to conduct the teaching and learning process through online, not the face-to-face learning anymore as it used to be. Therefore, ready or not, we, as teachers, especially English teachers, still had to deliver the material to the students.

Theme 2: Preparation for the Online ELT

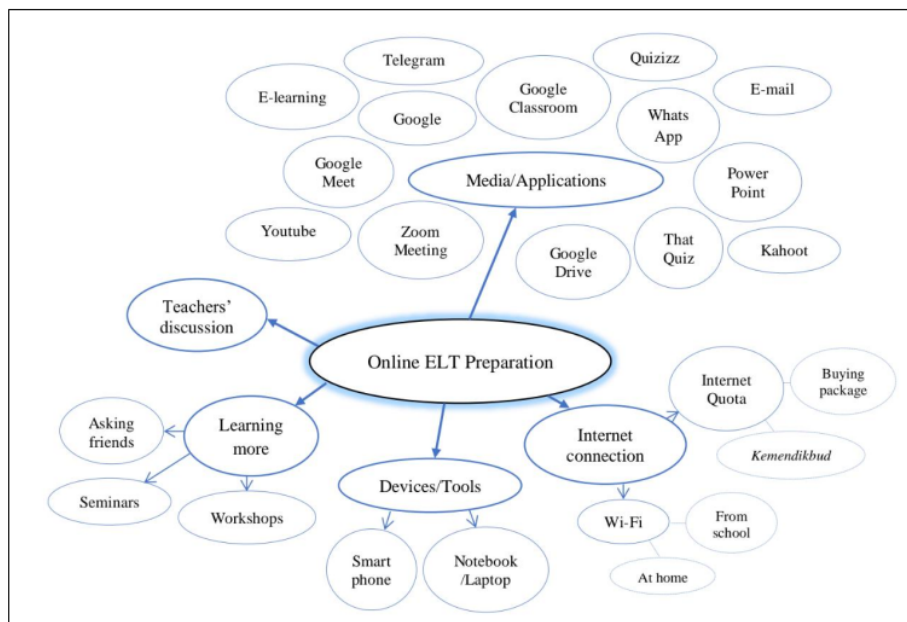


Figure 4.2 High school English teachers' preparation for the online ELT

In the terms of preparation, there were many things needed to manage before conducting ELT through online. Based on the interview results, as it has already been summed up in Figure 4.2, the preparation included: media and applications used to facilitate the English learning; good internet connection; digital tools/devices; and digital knowledge and skills to utilize technology to conduct the ELT through online.

Here what Teacher 1 said about the online ELT preparation.

T1: Of course, we had to prepare the tools and applications used for the teacher and the students, so we had to join the seminars, for example, a seminar talking about how to use the application of Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom Meeting, and so on. Therefore, we had to prepare well and chose which one was the easiest way for teachers to teach, give the materials, and evaluate the students by using the latest method/way in teaching and learning activities.

For the internet connection, all teachers mentioned that their schools provided them the Wi-Fi access. Besides the Wi-Fi access from school, to facilitate online classes, both teachers and students also got the internet quota assistance (*bantuan kuota internet*) from the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (*Kemendikbud–Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Indonesia*).

T1: Yes, of course. There was Wi-Fi connection at school, especially for the teachers, since the students were studying at home.

T2: When the pandemic first started, both teachers and students were teaching and learning from home. At that time, there was internet quota assistance from the government for both teachers and students for the online learning.

T4: When the teachers started teaching at school, the school facilitated us (for the internet access), but for the students, since they were studying from home, they still had to provide it (the internet access) themselves.

In addition to the digital devices, Teacher 3 stated that her school also provided teachers notebooks to conduct the online teaching.

T3: For the preparation itself, starting from the internet connection and the devices, actually the school provided us, so the teachers didn't have to buy their own laptops or (internet) data.

Furthermore, related to the material for students, Teacher 2 added that the preparation to teach online classes literally was almost similar to face-to-face classes.

T2: For the preparation, even though we were teaching face-to-face, we surely needed to make preparation. Sometimes, when we were in the (real) classroom, we

usually used Power Point presentation or Youtube videos related to our learning material. So, almost similar to the online classes, we still used the same sources, like Youtube, ... Therefore, the difference (between the offline and online classes) is merely we are not facing the students directly. For the materials, still, they were the same with the face-to-face classes.

Overall, based on the interview results, all teachers showed positive responses related to the preparation for the online ELT since it ran well, and there was no serious problem found during the preparation process.

Theme 3: Teaching Four English Language Skills through Online Classes

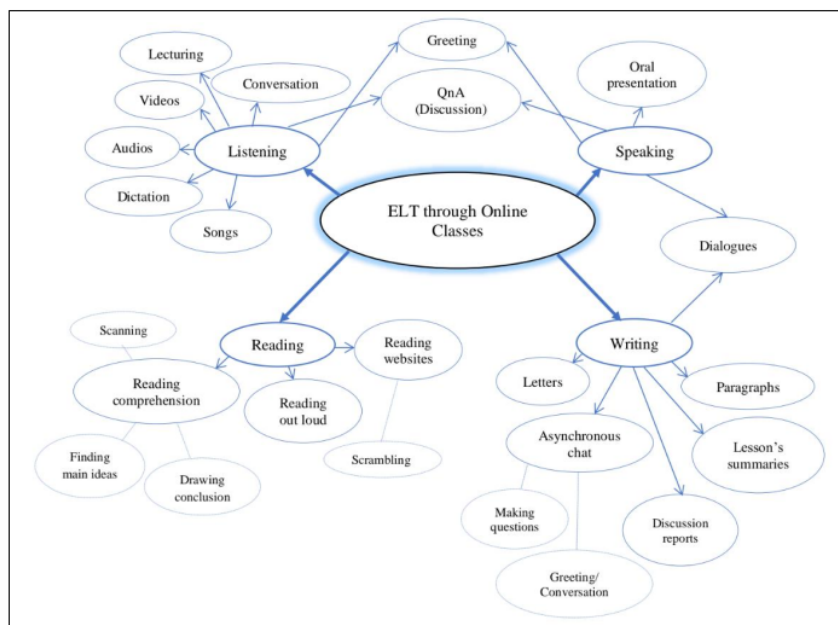


Figure 4.3 Teaching English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skill through online classes

As English teachers, teaching four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) is very necessary since those four aspects cannot be separated, and they are hand to hand in ELT context. As can be seen in Figure 4.3, based on

the interview results, there were various ways to teach English skills through virtual classes, and fortunately, one method also could be applied to develop several skills, such as doing discussion (QnA session) and creating dialogues.

Firstly, in teaching listening skill, the most favourable source was from *Youtube*, and the most used media were videos, audios, and songs. Additionally, the simplest way to teach listening was by lecturing in English, including greeting the students, explaining them the material, giving them direction/instruction, and assigning them task.

Here are the excerpts of the interview results from Teacher 1, 3, and 4 about how they taught listening skill in online classes.

T1: Because we were using learning applications, it was very easy for us (teachers) to give the students the worksheet and the material. They also could search the material from the internet or Google, or watch the material from Youtube Channel. It was very easy because we didn't have to prepare a lot for the learning materials, and we just shared the audio-visual materials, like the videos. So, when I taught them listening skill, I think they didn't have problems because they could listen to the audios/videos not only once, but they could play them twice until three times. Everything was running well as the students could follow the learning activities I gave them. Additionally, when we had a virtual meeting, there was "question and answer" activity between teacher and students. They could listen to my explanation, instruction, and questions well, so they could do the exercises given.

T3: Whenever you want to speak up in English, you have to listen first, right? So, I used Youtube. I took anything like videos and also songs from Youtube, and then I shared to them, and we did a kind of listening together and guessing (related to the video/song). So, that's it, the things that I did during the online classes.

T4: For listening skill, when we began the lesson, we greeted each other, for example, I said "Hello guys, how are you? Is everything okay?". When they responded to my questions, I would consider that their listening (skill) was already

good enough. That's for the initial step, by greeting. Then, for the following step, when I was playing a video or presenting the Power Point, there would be "question and answer" session, where the students could ask and answer the questions, therefore, through that process, I also considered it as a part of the listening skill. Lastly, for high school students, there was a chapter "Sing a Song", so the process of how they completed the song by listening to it could be also counted for the listening skill, along with the writing skill.

Secondly, in teaching speaking skill, the teachers interviewed tended to have varied answers.

T2: During pandemic, when we were having classes through Zoom Meeting or Google Meet, I asked students to speak in English even though not 100%, and they still could switch to Bahasa Indonesia. For the speaking material itself, I tended to give a situation. Then, from that situation, they could work in groups to create dialogues, paragraphs, or even share stories. So, the "speaking" would be at the end, when they reported their final works (discussion results) orally.

T4: For speaking, it usually simply came from simple thing, like "how to respond" after they listen to something. For this, there were two aspects: their pronunciation (was already good enough or not) and their willingness to respond. For example, a student gave responses when I asked "Anybody wants to ask?" Then I would consider that she/he had something good enough to show that she/he can speak in English. That's it for speaking skill.

However, Teacher 1, 3, and 4 agreed that speaking could be considered as the most difficult skill to be taught through online classes as it is included as productive skill where it totally relies on students' willingness to speak up. Moreover, the difficulty was also due to the limited time for the teaching and learning process during the pandemic, especially to conduct synchronous meetings in which speaking skill could only be practiced.

T1: Yes. I think this was the main problem for us, both students and teachers because of the limited time. Sometimes when I taught them speaking skill, some of the students wanted to speak English, but some other students just listened to them. Then I think it's okay since all students understood about what I said to them, and I also understood what they said (in English). So, it was rather different from face-to-face class in real situation.

T3: For the speaking part, I think I didn't really teach it because it was quite hard for them to do speaking skill through online classes. Maybe only 10% for speaking skill.

T4: For speaking and writing, in term of "how to produce", we needed students to be active because the products would come from the students themselves, and sometimes, that was the difficult part.

Thirdly, in teaching reading skill, teachers tended to focus on developing students' reading comprehension ability.

T2: For reading, especially during pandemic, we tended to use the textbook. If there was a text with several paragraphs within, I usually asked them to find out the main idea of each paragraph by scanning and then to conclude what the text was about. If there was a passage, I usually divided them into groups. For example, if the text consisted of five paragraphs, I divided them into five groups, so one paragraph for each group, and one text was usually for the whole class.

T3: So, usually I used a strategy by presenting them Power Point presentation, and I also used several kinds of websites for reading, but sorry I forgot the names (of the websites). In the website, students could scramble for the text, and they had to find out the verbs, the objects, etc. from the passage. It was done through online.

So, I used that kind of ways, and they tended to be highly interested while learning with that.

T4: For reading, I usually showed them a text at the first place. Then I asked them to read it out loud where it actually was part of speaking skill too. After they read the text, I would see whether they could quickly understand what they have read or not, so it would show their abilities of reading skill.

In addition, for reading skill, most teachers argued that it was the easiest skill to be taught in online classes.

T1: For reading skill, it was very easy to be taught. For example, when students were reading, I could easily notice when they made some mistakes in pronouncing the words, and I could directly correct them. Additionally, for reading comprehension, students could understand and answer the questions related to the reading text.

T3: For the reading part, it was the most interesting part because my students always responded to my questions in reading even using Bahasa Indonesia or English. ... So, that's why, whenever I taught the reading part, they usually said "Oh, Miss. I'd like to read this part for us," so, yeah, it was, what we call it, quite alive ya. So, quite alive for the reading part.

T4: Yes, for the easiest skills, they were listening and reading since they belong to receptive skills, so students only need to receive (the material).

Lastly, to teach writing skill, teachers also had varied ways. Teacher 1 preferred to use online chat via *Google Classroom*, Teacher 3 preferred to use online board, while both Teacher 2 and 4 preferred to assign their students writing task, such as writing letters, discussion reports, or lesson's summaries.

T1: For writing skill, in Google Classroom, I greeted the students first, for example. I said "Good morning, class," and so on, and the students had to reply me by writing too, for example, they replied "Good morning, Sir.", "I'm fine, and how about you?" I also asked them to write about their conditions/situations at home, about the material studied last meeting, etc., and at the same time, they could reply my questions and read their friends' replies too. Also, when I assigned them to write a short paragraph, they could write and see each other's paragraphs. So, for writing, they could do well because they had to write a lot for online conversation and the task given, and they should write the questions in English too when they didn't understand something during the class.

T3: For the writing skill, I usually tried to use the strategy or variations by allowing them (students) to write on my online board directly. It was based on the topic discussed actually, so they could type on their own, and then they could show it (the writing) directly to their peers during the online classes. So, I used that kind of strategy.

T2: Yes, based on my experience, while teaching them about "Writing Letters". At that time, I asked them if they had pen pals or long-distance friends so that they could send letters to them via e-mail. For their writing practice, I tended to give them a situation, for example, to tell their holiday's experience to their friends through the letter.

T4: Okay. After showing a video or Power Point slides, I sometimes gave them an assignment to write a short summary about what we have learned that day, at the end of the lesson. I asked them to hand-write and send it to me, so from the summary, I could focus on their writing (ability), and I could also see whether they got the lesson or not.

At last, teachers also shared their opinion about the hardest and the easiest skill to be taught through online classes. Teacher 1 opined that reading was the easiest skill to be taught, while the most difficult one was speaking.

T1: Reading skill was the easiest skill to be taught to the students, while the most difficult skill to be taught was speaking skill because some students didn't want to speak although they could speak in English.

Meanwhile, according to Teacher 2, all four skills were the same, and they had equal opportunity to be taught through online class. In other words, there was no tendency for the easiest and the most difficult skill to be taught through virtual classes.

T2: I think all skills had the same opportunity to be taught in online classes.

Similar to Teacher 1, Teacher 3 stated that the most difficult English skill to be taught was speaking, while the easiest one was reading.

T3: For my case, I think the easiest one, or the first one, was reading, the second one was writing, the third one was listening, and the most difficult one was speaking.

Lastly, Teacher 4 almost opined similar things to Teacher 1 and 3, by stating that the hardest skills to be taught were writing and speaking which belong to productive skills, while the easiest skills to be taught were reading and listening which belong to receptive skills.

T4: There are two groups of language skills, active skills and passive skills. For the passive ones, like listening and reading, students tended to merely receive (the material), so the materials' delivery seemed faster. Contrarily, for speaking and writing, in the term of "how to produce", we needed students to be active because the products would come from the students themselves, and sometimes, that was the difficult part.

Overall, all teachers opined that ELT through online classes were still effective since they still had the media to deliver the lesson to their students.

Theme 4: Advantages of Online Classes

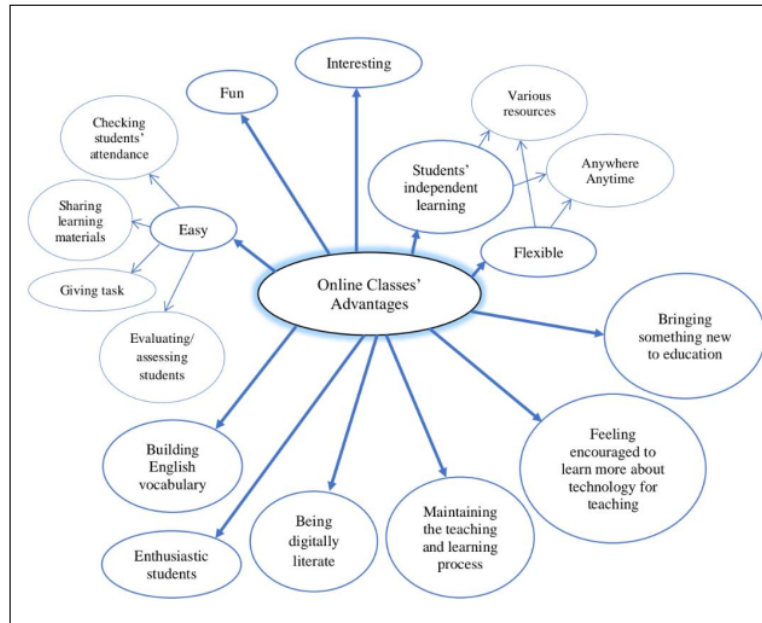


Figure 4.4 Online classes' advantages

According to Figure 4.4, it was revealed that there were several advantages from conducting online classes. The benefits mentioned were easy, fun, interesting, good for students' independent learning, flexible, and so forth. However, the main positive thing was its capability to keep the teaching and learning process running amid the COVID-19 outbreak which prevent educators and learners to meet face-to-face as they used to be.

T1: The advantage when I taught them English, for me, was I could easily give the material to the students, evaluate them, and motivate them to learn in this new situation since they were studying from home. That's all.

T4: The positive thing that I can take from online classes is being more digitally literate. For example, I used to check the students' attendance manually, but it was quite a waste of time and effort. After I used the applications, such as Google Form, Google Meet, and Zoom Meeting, checking students' attendance became a lot faster and easier by just checking the number of the participants (students) who were in the virtual meeting.

Teacher 4 also added that by the utilization of learning applications, both teachers and students could improve their English vocabulary and get accustomed to several English terms.

T4: For example, when we are using this Zoom Meeting, as you can see, they all (the features) are using English, right? So, it indirectly can build vocabulary, too, like the terms "recording", "view", "mute", and so forth. Therefore, this is good for me and my students to get used to with English terms.

Moreover, Teacher 1 also added about how online class was beneficial for students' independent learning.

T1: Students can study everywhere and everytime, and they also can study from various resources easily from the internet. They can search the material, find the information, and study by themselves where the assistance of the teacher is not a must. It means that this is an independent learning where they study by themselves where the teacher's role is only as a facilitator, so when they have problem with the lesson, they can ask the teacher to help them to solve the problem. But, once the teacher gives them the material, they can study by themselves. They can study everywhere although there is no textbooks and notebooks. They can digitally type anything on their laptops/smartphones, and they don't need to write using the pen on their books anymore.

Furthermore, Teacher 3 added that her students who tended to be shy in the real classroom became more active during online classes.

T3: And, from the students, I think that I found out several students who were shy in the (face-to-face) classes, but during online classes they had tendency to actively participate, but (still) whenever the “shy” came up, then the loudest ones or the active ones would a little bit sink them down.

In line with this, Teacher 1 and 2 also agreed that students tended to have high motivation to study while attending online classes.

T1: I think they had high motivation when they had the online classes. They wanted to study, and they were excited enough for the online classes because when we met face-to-face, I asked them about the online classes where they were studying English with me, and the students responded that they were okay with it, and they could understand the lesson.

T2: Yes, they tended to be highly motivated and feel free to speak, especially for Zoom Meeting and Google Meet.

Theme 5: Challenges during Online Classes

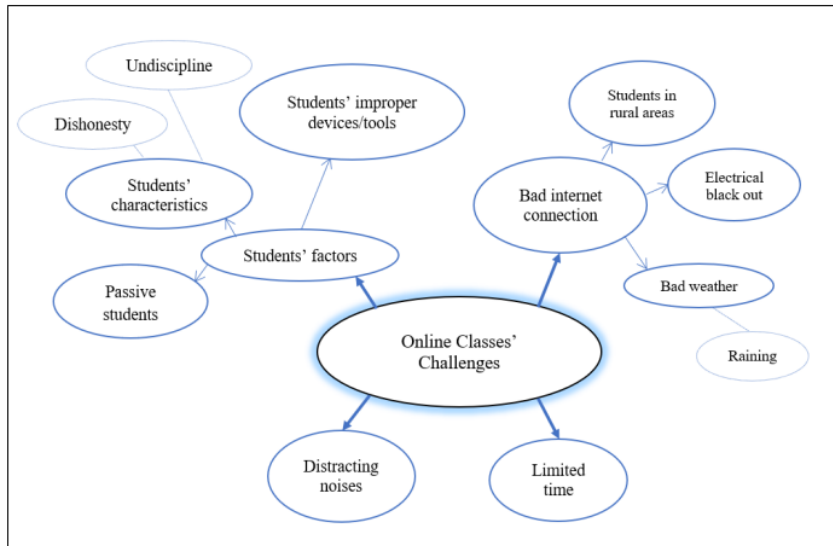


Figure 4.5 Online classes' challenges

According to Figure 4.5, there were several challenges emerging during online class, such as bad internet connection, time limitation, distracting noises, and students' (negative) factors. From the interview results, the most mentioned problem that often interrupted online classes was the poor connection.

T1: Also, this was maybe due to the bad internet connection. Sometimes they asked me to repeat my explanation or questions because they couldn't catch my words well.

T2: For the internet access, even though we got the internet quota (from the government), sometimes the signal could be distracted, moreover when the weather was bad, for example, while raining.

T3: The challenges, actually it came from the students' connection. As you know that not all students in my school were having good connection in their areas. Also, they often said to me that their areas were having a kind of electricity error or

something like that, so that's why, the connection was really challenging for me to teach, especially during the morning class.

T4: The challenge sometimes was the signal, the disconnection.

According to Teacher 2, the connection problem during online classes often came from students who were in rural areas.

T2: Due to the pandemic, since students didn't have to go to school physically, there were several of them who went back to their hometown (to rural areas), and the signal problem usually came from them. However, the teacher who conducted the online teaching and the rest of the students (who were in urban area) had no problems. So, if they (students in rural areas) faced this problem, the information for the (teaching and learning) activities would be shared through WhatsApp or Google Classroom.

In addition, according to Teacher 4, distracting noises and students' (negative) factors, such as dishonesty and indiscipline could be considered as challenges during the online classes implementation too.

T4: Sometimes, when students were talking, we heard the sound of the passing vehicles, and sometimes it could be quiet distracting, but it was not 100% the problem actually.

T4: Prioritizing the honest character was quite difficult because we know the technology nowadays. When we gave the task to students and asked them to finish it in the certain span of time, there was no guarantee that they did the task honestly.

Furthermore, Teacher 3 added that sometimes her students did not have appropriate digital devices to attend the online classes.

T3: It was really difficult for me to do it (to assess them), especially when they didn't have proper connection or proper mobile phones to do it.

Teacher 1 and 2 also added that during the pandemic, the time for the teaching and learning process became shorter and more limited.

T1: Yes. I think this was the main problem for us, both students and teachers, because of the limited time.

T2: During pandemic, the duration for teaching and learning process was limited, so it was not as long as when we were having the face-to-face classes. ... So, we had to find the listening material which was not too long.

Theme 6: Potential Solutions for the Challenges

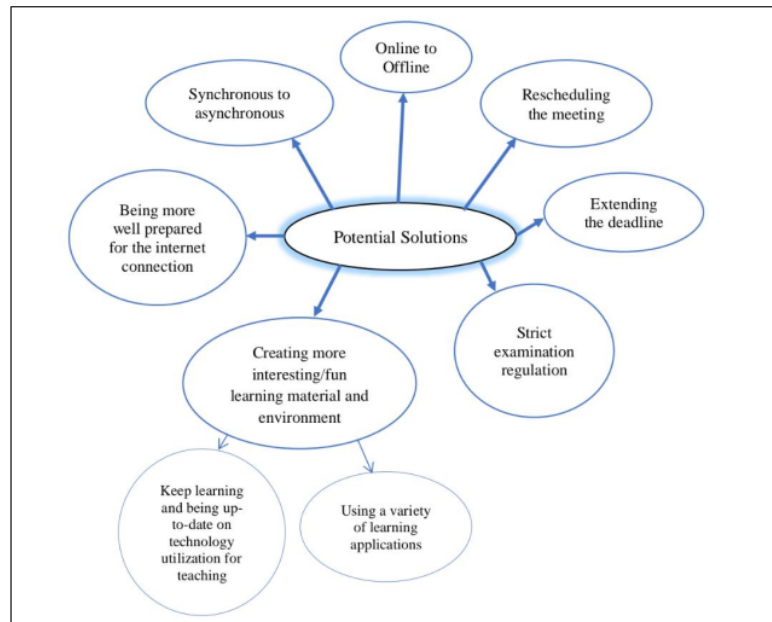


Figure 4.6 Potential solutions to deal with the challenges

Related to the challenges that have been mentioned in the previous section, teachers also offered several insights to deal with them based on their experience. For the poor connection obstacle, teachers had solutions, such as switching the teaching and learning activities, from online to offline or from synchronous to asynchronous, extending the due time of the task, re-arranging the schedule, and so on as stated in Figure 4.6.

T2: For the bad internet connection, I would give more time (before starting the synchronous meeting). If it was still not possible to meet face-to-face through Zoom Meeting or Google Meet, then I would share the information (material/task) to WhatsApp Group or Google Classroom and had the discussion there.

T4: Alright, so talking about the bad internet connection, I think there were two solutions. The first one was re-scheduling the (virtual) meeting, and the second one was moving the activities from online to offline if the situation forced to do so, especially for certain students who really had difficulties (for online classes). For example, they could directly come to school to submit the task or I could assign them the task only through social media, such as WhatsApp, then I gave them time to complete the task. I think that's the probable solutions, so the lesson could be still delivered to the students.

Furthermore, Teacher 3 also mentioned that for parents, they should prepare good internet connection for their children's learning, and also for teachers, they should be able to develop the teaching and learning environment to be more fun and creative.

T3: For the (bad) internet connection, I think, from the family of the students, they have to prepare it well, so they son/daughter can get a good education, so they have to prepare it well at home, and do not just rely on the school. I think that's the first one, the first point. Also, for the school itself, whenever they want to teach something or share the knowledge to the students, I think they have to make the

learning and teaching process a lot of more fun than the face-to-face classes, so that the students can have the tendency of being active during the online classes. So, from the schools, they have to tell or suggest their teachers to make a creative learning environment or (creative) teaching and learning process during the online classes. Yeah. I think that's it, maybe my own solutions, ya.

In addition, to regulate sinful activities during online classes, Teacher 4 added that his school implemented strict regulation during the examination period.

T4: During examination, there would be a specific regulation for students in our school. While doing the test, they had to join the Zoom Meeting, so they could be monitored. Therefore, the use of smartphone or the other additional digital devices could be avoided.

Theme 7: Teachers' Perspective on Online Classes Implementation during the COVID-19 Outbreak

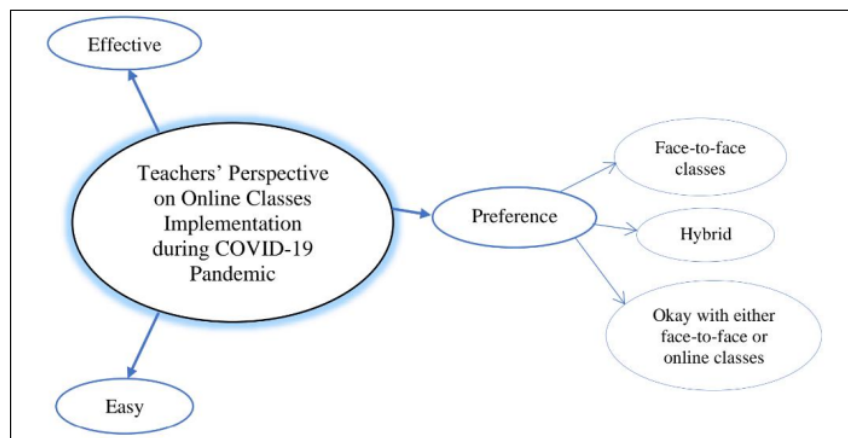


Figure 4.7 Teachers' perspective on online classes implementation during the COVID-19 outbreak

Based on Figure 4.7, most teachers agreed that conducting online classes was easy and effective enough as the alternative of face-to-face classes which were prevented to be conducted in certain period of time in order to avoid the rapid transmission of COVID-19. They opined so because its implementation ran smoothly, and they did not face any serious obstacles during the process.

Here what Teacher 1 and 2 said about the online classes implementation during the pandemic.

T1: Because of the utilization of technology in education, we could use technology to teach them the lesson, and I think it was not difficult to teach them by using these kinds of online platforms. It's not difficult for me because I like to study about the technology for teaching.

T2: For online classes, I can say that there were only few problems emerging.

However, related to the teachers' preference between face-to-face class and online class, some interesting insights were found during the interview, where Teacher 1, 3, and 4 apparently still preferred teaching face-to-face classes, while Teacher 2 chose neutral which means that she was okay with either online or offline mode of teaching. In addition, it was surprising that they also mentioned about "hybrid method", a method combining both online and offline mode, as a new way to teach their students.

T1: Actually, for me, I like to teach them in the real situation or in the real classroom, but with the help of technology, I can teach them through the hybrid method, where sometimes I can teach them by using technology, sometimes I can teach them directly in the classroom, and sometimes they can use online platforms in the classroom too... Because now we are having face-to-face classes, I am currently using both, for example I give the material through Google Classroom, so students can learn before the class begins, and they will be ready to talk about or learn the lesson.

T2: Emm... for preference, I think it is the same, since both online classes and face-to-face classes almost require same preparation, from the teaching material, the lesson plan, and so forth. What makes them different is only the medium of delivering the lesson. Therefore, for me, face-to-face class is okay, so is the online class. Because we, as teachers, basically work (teach) based on the situation. When we are required to teach face-to-face classes (PTM–Pertemuan Tatap Muka), we will do it. Previously, the situation (during the pandemic) apparently forced us to teach through online, so we did it either (the online teaching).

T3: My choice is still teaching face-to-face, and I still prefer teaching face-to-face because the bond between students and teacher will be different from online classes, but I also cannot deny that online classes bring something new to the teaching and learning process. So, I still prefer teaching face-to-face, but I cannot deny also that teaching online classes is a lot of fun and easier, so maybe hybrid?

T4: For me, I personally prefer teaching face-to-face because I think it was more fun, but sometimes, for students' assignment, it was a lot easier to use the online applications, for example, by using Google Form, ThatQuiz, etc., so the students also could be trained (to finish the task) beyond the time limit.

4.3. Discussion

This section addressed the perspective of Palembang high school English teachers on the online classes implementation during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially while conducting the online ELT, based on the responses of the online questionnaire and in-depth interview sessions.

According to the questionnaire's results, it was shown that teachers had enough experience, knowledge, and skill to conduct online classes. This is in line with Almazova et al. (2020) stating that most of their research participants (teachers) had ever experienced e-learning utilization, and they were also positive about their digital knowledge and skill to teach amid the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the findings of the questionnaire of the present study also indicated that

teachers felt that they still had to learn more about technology utilization for online teaching. Moreover, it was also revealed that students also had sufficient knowledge and skill for online classes although they still faced technological problems within. During online classes, there were some students who actively participated, but there were also some who were passive and unserious. Regardless of that, most of them were still able to complete the online task on time. In addition, during the virtual learning, teachers tended to be highly motivated to teach through online, and for them, it was not that difficult to adjust the online teaching mode. Their creative-innovative thinking, teaching skill, and confidence also arose along with its implementation. Similarly, Nambiar (2020) found that teachers did agree that conducting online classes was a new chance for them to increase their confidence and encourage them to explore and employ more innovative methods of teaching. Nevertheless, at the same time, it was shown from the survey's results that teaching face-to-face classes was still preferred by most of the participants due to its easiness and effectiveness, and again, it is in line with Nambiar (2020) stating that even though holding online classes was convenient since it could be done comfortably from home and could save travel time, it was perceived less effective and structured compared to the classroom method.

Furthermore, the survey's findings revealed that the advantages of online classes implementation were: helping teachers and their students to be more digitally literate to support the teaching and learning process; good for students' independent learning (Mukhtar et al., 2020; Purwadi et al., 2020; Wilson, 2020); and flexible (Ally, 2008; Mansour & Mupinga, 2007; Mukhtar et al., 2020). On the contrary, the challenges found were: bad connection (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Bahasoan et al., 2020; Efriana, 2021; Lestari et al., 2021; Mardiah, 2020; Mathur & Singh, 2020; Nakhriyah & Muzakky, 2021; Noor et al., 2020); costly enough which is in contrast to Djalilova (2009) and Davidovitch and Wadmany (2020); and difficulties in communicating with students (Mathur & Singh, 2020), evaluating students' knowledge and skill (Lestari et al., 2021), and regulating sinful activities (Almosa, 2002).

In addition, based on the interviews' responses, it was revealed that at the very first experience of implementing online classes, teachers found it confusing, difficult, and challenging enough as a new way of teaching amid the pandemic. No matter they were ready or not, they had to manage the online teaching preparation, starting from the digital knowledge and skill which could be acquired from online seminars and workshops, the digital devices, good internet connection, the learning applications, and the learning material which would be delivered to the students. As the process ran, they finally opined that online classes implementation, as well as the online ELT, was easy and effective enough since it provided them opportunity to keep teaching their students during the pandemic period, and the process also ran smoothly without any serious problems emerged. However, teachers still preferred to teach directly in the classroom. In addition, some of them also mentioned that they were interested in employing hybrid method, a teaching method combining both online and offline mode, to teach their students.

Furthermore, from the interviews' results, teachers appeared to utilize many kinds of learning applications and platforms to conduct the online ELT. This is in line with Atmojo and Nugroho (2020) stating that some applications and platforms, such as Learning Management System (LMS), texting media, video conferences, content makers, assessment, videos, online learning providers, and additional sources, were used in EFL online classes amid the pandemic. Similarly, Putri and Sari (2021) mentioned that applications, such as *Zoom (Cloud Meetings)*, *Google Classroom*, *Google Meet*, and Learning Management System (LMS) were usually used by English teachers and students to facilitate the virtual classes.

Moreover, focusing on four English language skills teaching through online classes, teachers tended to use varied methods to teach their students. Firstly, listening skill was taught by using videos, audios, songs, and also lecturing during the class, where the sources of the learning material were mostly taken from *Youtube*. Secondly, speaking skill was taught through class discussion or question and answer session, where the students' speaking ability could be seen by the way they responded to a question or a situation orally. Thirdly, reading skill was taught by simply giving students a paragraph or a text, where their reading ability could

be measured by how far they could comprehend the text, for example, whether they knew what the text was about and could find the topic and the main idea of the text. Lastly, writing skill was simply taught through online texting within the learning applications, such as *WhatsApp*, *Google Classroom*, *Google Meet*, *Zoom Meeting*, etc., and also by giving students writing assignment, such as writing summaries, discussion reports, and letters.

In general, from the interview sessions, it was perceived that the most difficult skill to be taught through online was speaking, while the less difficult one was reading. Almost similar to Famularsih (2020) and Karatas and Tuncer (2020), their studies found that students' speaking skill was considered to be the less improved skill among the four skills during virtual classes. Moreover, Hazaymeh (2021) mentioned that reading skill, listening skill, speaking skill, and writing skill were consecutively the most improved skill to the less improved skill by the students during online classes, and this is in line with one of the interviewee's statements in the present study stating that the receptive skills (listening and reading) tended to be easier to be taught rather than the productive skills (speaking and writing) since they depended on the students' willingness to produce the output. Additionally, another response of the interview sessions stated that the preparation to conduct online classes apparently was not too different with the face-to-face classes', and what made them different was merely the medium of delivering the lesson. In line with this, Atmojo and Nugroho (2020) mentioned a close statement that most activities in online classes were generally carried out in similar ways to the ones in the face-to-face classes where the teachers tended to move the face-to-face learning mode into a virtual learning environment.

The interview results also revealed that online classes implementation had both advantages and challenges within the process. For the advantages, firstly, it was easy, fun, interesting, and flexible. Related to its flexibility, Ally (2008), Mansour and Mupinga (2007), and Mukhtar et al. (2020) also mentioned similar opinion that virtual learning was considered flexible since it could be done anytime and anywhere with less usage of resource and time. Secondly, it motivated students to be independent in learning which is in line with Mukhtar et al. (2020), Purwadi

et al. (2020), and Wilson (2020). Thirdly, it brought something new to education since the full-time onsite teaching and learning at all levels of education was shifted to full-time online classes due to the COVID-19 outbreak (Al-Bargi, 2021) even though the online learning itself has been conducted beforehand (Yükselir & Yuvayapan, 2021). Fourthly, as a well-known fact, it successfully maintained the teaching and learning activities amid the pandemic as the alternative to the face-to-face classes which were prevented to be held to stop the virus transmission. Fifthly, it encouraged teachers to learn more about teaching with technology, and consequently it made them become more digitally literate. Sixthly, it enhanced students' learning motivation (Fahrurrozi et al., 2020). Lastly, as a new insight, it was revealed that using various online learning applications could help to build English vocabulary too since most of them were in English. Besides those benefits, several challenges were also found during the online learning process. The first challenge was the poor internet access as it has been mentioned in numerous previous studies (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Bahasoan et al., 2020; Efriana, 2021; Lestari et al., 2021; Mardiah, 2020; Mathur & Singh, 2020; Nakhriyah & Muzakky, 2021; Noor et al., 2020). The second one was the limited time (Nakhriyah & Muzakky, 2021) since during the pandemic, the time to conduct online classes was not as long as conducting face-to-face classes in the real classroom. The third challenge was the distracting noise which could suddenly emerge throughout the virtual meeting. Finally, the last one was students' negative factors including: passive students (Lestari et al., 2021; Nakhriyah & Muzakky, 2021); their negative characteristics, such as dishonesty and indiscipline; and the improper digital devices they had for the online learning.

At last, from the interview results, there were also some positive suggestions offered by the teachers to deal with those challenges. The first was to have the offline or asynchronous learning activities if the online or synchronous activities were not possible to be held due to the connection or technical problems, and this mirrors what Putri and Sari (2021) have mentioned that teachers tended to conduct more asynchronous activities and utilized *WhatsApp* application to communicate with students when the internet connection trouble emerged. The second was to re-

schedule the virtual meeting. The third was to extend the due time of the assignment. The fourth was to regulate sinful activities during examination by monitoring students through video conferencing which could prevent them from cheating. The fifth was to create a more interesting atmosphere, and it could be done by using numerous kinds of learning applications (Almazova et al., 2020) and keep learning about the utilization of technology for teaching so that the teaching methods could be improved and diverse to be applied in online classes. Finally, the last suggestion was to prepare the internet connection well before the class began, therefore, there would be no signal distraction during the teaching and learning process.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents (5.1) conclusion and (5.2) suggestions.

5.1. Conclusion

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, online classes were implemented in order to keep the educational process running. After conducting this study, it was concluded that English teachers' perspective on online classes implementation during the pandemic era was positive considering that they found it easy and effective overall, and there were no serious obstacles faced during the process. Since they had to be ready to teach students in all situations, teaching through either face-to-face or online was acceptable, however, their preference was still teaching directly in the real classroom. Additionally, hybrid method, a method integrating both offline and online ways of teaching, also became a new choice for them to teach their students.

Related to the implementation of online ELT, the four English language skills were taught by utilizing a variety of methods and applications in order to deliver students the learning material, do the discussion, and assign them task/test. In addition, it was revealed that the easiest skill to be taught through online classes was reading, while the most difficult one was speaking.

Furthermore, during its implementation, online class possessed both benefits and challenges. The benefits found were: it was easy, fun, interesting, and flexible; it promoted students' independent learning; it brought something new to education; it successfully maintained the teaching and learning activities amid the pandemic; it encouraged teachers to learn more about teaching with technology; it made teachers become more digitally literate; it enhanced students' learning motivation; and it could help to build English vocabulary. Meanwhile, the challenges found were: bad internet connection; limited time; distracting noises; and students' negative factors.

Regarding those challenges, teachers gave some positive insights to deal with them. The following potential solutions were based on their own teaching experience. They included: switching the online/synchronous activities to offline/asynchronous activities, re-scheduling the virtual meeting; extending the task's due time; regulating sinful activities during examination; creating a more interesting learning atmosphere; and preparing the internet connection well.

Conclusively, teachers' perspective on conducting ELT through online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic was positive due to its easiness, effectiveness, and advantageous sides. However, at the same time, within the process, teachers also faced several challenges. Therefore, it is believed that with sincere effort and fulfilled solutions, those challenges can be diminished, and the implementation of online classes, especially for ELT, can get better in the future.

5.2. Suggestions

The suggestions are addressed to teachers, students, and future researchers.

5.2.1. For teachers

Teachers should be ready to keep educating students in every situation where the real recent situation was teaching amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The primary key is to keep learning and being up-to-date with the technology utilization for teaching, and this can be done by joining online workshops, webinars, lectures, etc. By having various experiences with online teaching, teachers are expected to be able to provide a more fun and interesting learning environment for students, for example, by providing them varied learning sources, delivering the learning material in a creative way, and trying to use attractive learning applications, which can encourage them to be actively participate in online classes. In addition, for the bad internet connection problem which is unpredictable, teachers should always be prepared for another teaching plan to keep the teaching and learning process going.

5.2.2. For Students

In the teaching and learning process, the participation of both educator and learners is necessary. Therefore, students are expected to be mentally and technically well prepared before the class begins, and be active during the class. Besides being active, always being on time and honest in doing the task is also important. Additionally, a successful online classes implementation needs good communication too, so to avoid miscommunication, when students are having problems, such as bad connection, unavailability to comprehend the material, and so forth, never hesitate to tell either peers or teacher and ask for their assistance.

At last, teacher and students should have a great synergy, so they can help and support each other while one is having difficulty during the process. Therefore, with a good collaboration between them, it is believed that the educational process will run well in which students can gain meaningful learning experience.

5.2.3. For future researchers

As every study does, this study also has limitations since it only focuses on the perspective of English teachers who teach in senior high schools located in Palembang city. Hence, to improve the current implementation of online classes, especially the online ELT, more related studies related to education doers' perspective, such as teachers and students, as well as parents' perspective, with different research approaches, methods, and instruments, are expected to be done. Additionally, future studies focusing on online ELT in which the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are taught, also need to be explored.

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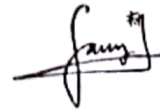
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