TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF ONLINE LANGUAGE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

As the ones taking on the responsibility, EFL teachers must master the implementation of online learning, which includes all aspects of the teaching approach, classroom management, and learning media. Based on this phenomenon, this study looked at how English teachers at senior high schools felt about online language teaching. Thus, the findings of this study found two outcomes of online language learning: positive teaching outcomes and negative teaching outcomes. The efficiency of time management and the improvement of technology literacy, which happen for both teachers and students, are included as positive outcomes. Meanwhile, technical issues and classroom management are the main issues contributing to EFL teachers' negative outcomes. This study suggests further research be conducted on teachers or language instructors from developing countries or with lower socioeconomic backgrounds in the future to examine the effects of intermediate contextual factors on the advantages and obstacles to online teaching and learning in higher education.

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INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, main sectors such as education have had their own significant impact from COVID-19, as it has on any critical industry since its release in late December 2019. Significantly, universities and schools have suffered over the education system and related issues. According to UNESCO, over 800 million learners are significantly affected around the world, with the majority of issues being that students are unable to attend school, students in higher education are unable to enroll in classes, and 102 countries have ordered school closures,

with 11 localized school closures being implemented. In response to the pandemic, educational institutions around the world quickly went online. Teachers and students went from being in physical locations where they could engage in important social connections to spending hours hunched over a screen and using technology such as computers and smartphones in an instant.

Online education is a teaching and learning environment that is based on the internet. Online education is the participation of instructors and students in the use of the internet for teaching and learning that is not reliant on their physical or virtual co-location in an online setting. Dhull (2017) defines online learning as the use of computer networks to offer education using technologies such as the internet, email, chat, new groups and texts, and audio and video conferencing. It enables both professors and students to teach and study at their own speed and convenience. It can be said that the teacher presented the teaching content online and designed teaching modules that promote learning and engagement in a synchronous or asynchronous setting. However, there are differences, and overlapping words have been used to describe online learning, including e-learning, blended learning, online education, online courses, and so on.

As the ones taking on the responsibility, EFL teachers must master the implementation of online learning, which includes all aspects of the teaching approach, classroom management, and learning media. This study investigated the perceptions of English senior high school teachers of online language teaching based on the phenomenon. The criteria of the participants in this study are; they are now teaching in a public or private school, they have taught English as a topic, and they have undertaken online language education for at least a year throughout the pandemic. The following research question was addressed in this study: How are the Senior High Schools Teachers Perception of Online Language Teaching in Medan?

Moreover, in order to investigate how the educational process works in the modern world as well as in Georgia's school, the online system's instruction was a success and is expected to continue (Basilaia, G., & Kvavadze, D., 2022). Online learning was once thought to be a less expensive and more adaptable way for developing countries to increase the number of students enrolled in full-time education and close the education gap between rural and urban students. It is understandable that learning is linked to students' ability to earn in the future because it provides them with the skills required to be productive.

In addition to that, the closure of educational institutions (e.g., schools, institutions, and universities) resulted in a dramatic shift, as evidenced by the fact that online teaching and learning have been conducted remotely since the pandemic. The educational system transition has a wide-ranging impact on various stakeholders, particularly EFL teachers in Indonesia. In

Indonesia, the shift to online platforms has been more gradual, driven mostly by academic institutions that already had digital learning systems in place and the resources to support them. Though there are numerous platforms to promote online learning, such as Zoom Meeting and Google Classroom, the lack of privileged online learning was a common issue in this country.

According to Atmojo and Nugroho (2020), some countries, including Indonesia, have announced countrywide school closures in an effort to halt the COVID-19 pandemic. In Indonesia, many universities and schools have abandoned in-person instruction in favor of the implementation of online learning. Teachers and learners have different perspectives on this learning transition. Unfortunately, during the pandemic, a number of Indonesia's 16 secondary school EFL teachers were questioned about their online teaching, and it was discovered that the difficulties with online learning were related to teachers' lack of preparation and students' technical and digital literacy issues, since the design of an online learning system is still being debated by many scholars.

Indonesia, as a developing country, saw online learning as something new to discover. In addition, Ndibalema (2022) has discovered several constraints of online learning in developing countries that were observed, including digital inequities, a lack of dependable internet connections, a lack of preparation and technological competence among instructors and students, and a lack of digital solutions. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the study discovered that the majority of constraints were driven by a lack of digital culture.

In their study on English teachers of young learners' attitudes, understanding, use, and obstacles in integrating technology technologies into language classrooms, Taghizadeh, M. et al. (2019) addressed these issues of technology in online learning. Based on the findings of this study, many EFL instructors in Iran were not provided training courses on how to utilize technology in the classrooms of young learners, but they were nevertheless ready to engage in technology-based professional development programs. It indicates that, despite a lack of technology, there are still many EFL teachers who consciously attempt and wish to better themselves through online learning methods. Rasmitadila et al. (2020) stated that the readiness of technology in Indonesia required a good teaching plan in addition to the readiness of Indonesian English instructors, the national curriculum, government, and community support. Thus, the effectiveness of various strategies to increase student ownership and involvement in online learning can only be seen if network infrastructure is available to remote areas and technical equipment support is available for students, especially in developing countries such as Indonesia, which faces significant challenges in making it work with digital platforms (Lase & Zega, 2021).

METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive qualitative design. Descriptive qualitative design was chosen in order to explore and understand the social phenomenon (Cresswell, 2009). As the research design, this study applied a qualitative approach. The data of this study were described in the form of words to define the perception of senior high school English teachers of online language teaching.

Individually, the researcher asked the participants of this research to completed an online interview in a written format. The digital-form was created using Google Form and the link was sent privately to the participants through a private online messaging on WhatsApp. The participants of this research were asked to verified their personal information, and this study would keep confidential their personal information. This study has 18 questions which divided into two section. The six (6) questions were given to provide background information of the participants (Appendix A). The twelve (12) questions contains the participants' perceptions on online English language teaching (Appendix B).

This research was conducted with eight EFL teachers in Indonesia. There were four female and four male instructors, ages 21 to 59, with bachelor's degrees in English language education and experience teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). The participants' teaching experience ranged from 2 to 12 years of teaching English as a foreign language. The teachers were chosen using a voluntary sample method by the researchers (participants). As a result, the participants matched the following criteria: they are now teaching in a public or private school; they have taught English as a topic; and they have undertaken online language education for at least a year throughout the pandemic.

The participants of this research were interviewed digitally. Individually, the senior high school teachers who are the participants of this study were interviewed to find out their perceptions of online language teaching.

Table 1. Demography of the Senior High School English Teacher

Name (Initial)	Gender	Age	Years of experience in teaching	Years of experience in online language teaching	School location
KS	F	Early-30s	7 years	2 years	Medan
EY	F	Mid-20s	2 years	2 years	Medan

RR	M	Late-30s	9 years	2 years	Medan
MP	F	Mid-20s	2 years	2 years	Medan
WY	M	Mid-20s	2 years	2 years	Medan
M	F	Early-40s	12 years	2 years	Medan
HR	M	Mid-20s	2 years	2 years	Medan
E	M	Mid-20s	2 years	2 years	Medan

Following data collection, the researcher used Guba and Lincoln's (1989) general inductive technique to evaluate the acquired data. As a consequence, two issues and two subtopics emerged: the first topic is the positive outcome to promote online language teaching and the second is the reasons to stop online teaching due to negative teaching outcome expectation.

FINDINGS

The researcher combined textual explanations of the language instructors' online teaching experiences with discussion to offer a comprehensive picture of how the data supports the claims. The researcher classified two topics and two subtopics in order to answer the research question.

Promote Online Language Teaching: Positive Teaching Outcome

A well-done time management

Iivari, et.al (2020) on their research paper suggested that teachers' well-being was significantly impacted by the additional working hours spent on class preparation and training for the online delivery mode. The researchers also stated that instructors were stressed as a result of a rising burden in class and assignment preparation, which was producing major time management challenges. Due to their experience with numerous elements of online learning platforms, language teachers do not perceive time management to be a key issue, according to the findings of this study.

> *"I'm quite satisfied with simplifying the way I assigned my students in a virtual classroom, once I updated the lessons on WhatsApp Group the whole students are able to reach the lesson material." (KS)*
>
> *"I can see the efficiency of online teaching and learning of English subject because neither students or I do not need to have the hardcopy ones.."(HR)*
>
> *" ... I used google workspace so that the whole email will be annotated notes to the students, it saves time." (MP)*

Iivari, et.al (2020) on their research paper also suggested that online teaching has a significant impact on teachers' personal lives because they must work longer hours in order to balance work and family Although the language teachers reported worries about their mental health in this research, they did not feel they were suffering from burnout or tiredness. Instead, they feel that online education allows them to be both a teacher and a parent. One teacher stated;

> *"I want to continue the online language teaching because the efficiency works on me. I can do multitask such as take care of my children while I am in the middle of preparing the lesson material or at least I can look after them very closely while I am teaching." (KS)*

Based on this statement, the participant believes that working from home helps language teachers to spend more time with their families while still meeting their parenting obligations. Such fulfillment shows the accomplishment of personal goals, which leads to increased well-being as their family life is enhanced. Such positive emotions make individuals recognize the advantages of online education.

Self-Improvement: Technology Literacy

This study revealed several perceptions of the English teachers whose believe that one of the positive outcomes they pursued is the technology literacy.

> *"I feel quite satisfied by the whole effort I made, especially when I can see the students have begun to get used to being technology literate which is good for facing competition in the future." (KS)*

This study investigated other teachers whose found herself become more creative in preparing the English teaching material for the online language teaching. Some participants stated:

> *"I have to adapting myself to a virtual-teaching strategy especially when I teach English, I have to learn more about technology and look forward suitable media to learn English."(HR)*

> *"I am happy to get to know about how to teach English online. I am more prepare to provide the good internet connection and English-based online material. "(MP)*

> *"I will try to improve my public speaking, to get students attention more. I will prepare my gadgets to support the online teaching such as microphone, laptop, and camera."(M)*

> *"My hope in the future is that students will be technology literate so that they can dig up information and knowledge not only from books or print media."(HR)*

Reasons to Stop Online Language Teaching: Negative Teaching Outcome

Technical Issues

Asanov, et.al (2020) proposed that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more exposed while learning online or remotely since they have difficulty acquiring reliable networks and Internet-connected equipment.

Such findings were confirmed in this study, which discovered that the disadvantage affects language teachers' conviction in achieving social fairness through quality education. Two teachers stated;

> *"I think the main issues of my class is the limitation of gadgets used as the tool of learning. Usually, it is about the poor connection and the availability of me and my students' gadgets as the tool of teaching and learning online. If this kind of issue keeps happening between us, I am afraid the objective of the study will not be good."(M)*
>
> *"Of course, I did face those barriers such as poor internet connection whether it is to contact my students to share the information about the class, or when I joined the virtual classroom, I have to go somewhere near the street (go to a free Wi-Fi Cafe) to get a good connection".* (WY)

Difficulties in manage the classroom

Due to the uncertainty of ongoing observation and evaluation of students' learning outcomes, this study found the English language teachers are cautious of their classroom management. A participant stated:

> *"Besides the poor connection, my students are tend to set their camera off, so I cannot create a good classroom management"* (RR)

Another teacher stated:

> *"One of the most negative factors happened is the limitation of learning material from google, bad internet connection, the classroom management is quite challenging since I cannot control what are the things that my students do behind the camera"* (EY)

Other participants believe that even instant video and audio functionalities on video-conferencing platforms or other learning platforms may be inadequate for obtaining access to students' quick learning results. As a result, the goal of formative assessment, which is to give continual feedback and constant review of their learning outcomes, has not been met. Two participants stated;

> *"I think it is easier to obtain success when the English language teaching applied the conventional teaching-learning, because it is easier since I can get directly*

communicate with the students and use the paper-based material, then I can get into my formative assessment for the feedback" (RR)

"Yes, I do. It is hard for me to adjusted myself to virtual classroom, but I keep learning. For example, it is quite hard for me to communicate with the students from WhatsApp since the whole students tend to be show me their slow respond when I try to contact them via WhatsApp group." (E)

Another teacher stated

"The negative factor of mine is that since I cannot control the students' behavior directly, I see clearly that the students are easier to copy-paste the answers from internet, some also copy-paste from fellow students. Other thing that makes me uncomfortable is when the students do not pay attention of my explanation because they only join the class while doing other things, including sleeping while the teaching and learning process happen" (E)

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the findings of this study, English language teachers feel more accomplished when they effectively manage online learning tools including assignment submission administration and an effective feedback system. However, some teachers emerged the technology literacy as an urgency in order to maintain a successful online language teaching. Thus, this study conclude that English teachers of senior high school are improving their technology literacy as the effort for being a well-contributed teachers of English language on online language teaching. The effort shows by the willingness of them exploring new ideas for the English-based teaching material and the preparation of some supportive tools to improve the online language teaching performance. In line with the findings of this study, the prevalent social assumptions about equal access to Internet resources produce a deceptive perception, which leads to learning inequalities among learners and presents itself in low attendance and academic performance. Failure to satisfy learning objectives calls into doubt language teachers' professional identities, diminishing their belief in the capacity of education to promote social justice. Participants believed that online education deprives the lack of students' opportunity in academic achievement, which contradicts their belief in education. This study revealed that the participants of this research are skeptical of students' learning results when active conversation does not occur in online language teaching. As a result, they struggled to assess their students' learning results in real time. This uncertainty impacted their confidence in their ability to

educate well at the time and in the future. It has not occurred to give continual feedback with regular evaluation of their teaching outcomes.

CONCLUSION

This study highlighted personal and environmental factors impacting the English language teachers' decision to utilize the online language teaching, this study has its limitation that the majority of participants are from developing countries and areas. Despite the fact that some of them have expressed worries about social fairness and resources, their comparatively superior socioeconomic background may have impacted their opinion of online instruction. This study revealed the perceptions of senior high school English language teachers' perception of online language teaching in Medan. The perceptions discussed into two topics, teachers' perception to promote the online language teaching and teachers' personal beliefs which qualified the reason to stop the online language teaching. The researchers conclude there are both sides as the positive teaching outcome and the negative teaching outcome of online language teaching.

Three participants of this research strongly agree to promote online language teaching because of several positive teaching outcomes such as the efficiency of time management and the improvement of technology literacy which happen for both teachers and students. Five participants of this study strongly disagree with online language teaching because of the negative aspects based on their own beliefs and experience. Technical issues such as poor connection and the limited access of tools to support the online language teaching becoming the main issues in this research. Most of the participants also believed that a good classroom management is hard to achieve in online language teaching. Most of the English teachers found it was difficult to evaluate their students' learning outcomes in real time, and it was influenced their confidence in the positive teaching outcome at the time and in the future.

Considering the result of this study, the researcher suggest that further research can be conducted a research on teachers or language instructors from other developing countries with lower socioeconomic backgrounds in the future to investigate the effects of intermediate contextual factors on the advantages and obstacles of online language teaching in higher education.

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