

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates the study's background, objectives of the study, research questions, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, definition of terms, and the organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Since March 2020, the case of Coronavirus disease or known as Covid-19, has become a global pandemic. The massive spread of Coronavirus forces social distancing policy, or was introduced as physical distancing to minimize the spread of Covid-19. This policy was attempted by many countries in the world, which causes a significant impact on various sectors of life, especially education, as mention by Flores and Swennen (2020) that Covid-19 changes the way people live, interact, work, teach and learn.

According to UNESCO (2020), schools were closed in many countries due to a public health emergency. Until the first April 2020, UNESCO recorded at least 1.5 billion school-age children who could not attend school due to the impact of Covid-19 in 188 countries, including 60 million of them is in Indonesia. This condition makes every country work hard to find students' solutions to keep learning and fulfill their educational rights.

The Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia responded with educational policies mentioned in Circular Letter Number 4 year 2020. One of the policies is that teaching and learning in all education levels will be done at home by online learning during the spread of Coronavirus disease. This policy forces all teachers in Indonesia to make the transition of the way they teach from face to face learning to online learning.

According to Carliner (2004), online learning provides access to learning experiences via some technology. Online learning is part of distance learning. It means that teachers and students do not go to school, but they teach and study from home using technology. The technology can be used like smartphone, laptop, tablets, and computer. Bozkurt, Jung, Xiao, Vladimirschi, Schuwer, Egorov, Lambert, Al-Freih, Pete, Olcott, Rodes, Aranciaga, Bali, Alvarez, Roberts, Pazurek, Raffaghelli, Panagiotou, Coëtlogon, Shahadu, Brown, Asino, Tumwesige, Reyes, Ramírez, Ipenza, Ossiannilsson, Bond, Belhamel, Irvine, Sharma, Adam, Janssen, Sklyarova, Olcott, Ambrosino, Lazou, Mocquet, Mano, and Paskevicius (2020) mention that emergency remote education during Pandemic Covid-19 is different from practices such as distance education, online learning, or other derivations because the social injustice, inequity, and the digital divide which have been exacerbated during the pandemic and need unique and targeted measures if they are to be addressed. Flores and Swennen (2020) add the difference between online learning during Pandemic Covid-19 and online learning implemented before is that teachers and students had to learn instantly how to adapt to online teaching.

The teachers' education institutions and teachers educators encountered and experienced the challenges and opportunities to deal with their job in such unexpected circumstances. They need to adapt to new contexts of teaching and learning online in rapid time.

The implementation of online learning for school-age students is the right choice in the middle of a pandemic because the students can have their rights to learn without attending school. They also can take some advantages from online learning. Marc (2007) states that online learning has flexible in time and place. It means that the students do not have to go to school. They can study anywhere, especially at home.

Hjeltnes and Hansson (2004) also list some advantages of online learning: cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness, long-life education and ease of learning, teacher and student time saving, greater flexibility, less geographical barriers, and better administration. It means that online learning gives the students many benefits, flexibility in time and place, and efficiency where the students do not pay for transportation and other costs as if they go to school.

You and Kang (2014) state that online learning has been conducive for students to have self-regulated learning. Online learning is more self-guided, so the students can spend more time on the concepts that they need help with and less on concepts that they can pick up quickly (Kirtman, 2009). Besides, You and Kang (2014) explain that online learners have an orientation to use some cognitive and metacognitive strategies to achieve their learning. They will able to think their self-

regulated learning skills frequently utilized time management, reviewed material regularly, sought help from professors or peers, meet deadlines, and had the skill of metacognition in order to get the reflection of their learning. It means that online learning can motivate the students to have self-regulated learning like manage time, review the material, search for help from teachers or friends, meet deadlines, and evaluate their learning.

Furthermore, Dixson (2010) views that in an online class, students are more engaged in learning and gain more than in a traditional class. However, this increase in engagement and achievement may be due to the greater emphasis placed on online students to self-engage with their learning (Wickersham & Dooley, 2006).

The sudden massive online learning implementation that applies in Indonesia, makes educators and students shocked, including parents and everyone. Educators feel shocked because they have to change the system, syllabus, and learning process quickly. Students stammer because they get stacks of assignments while learning from home. Meanwhile, parents feel stressed when accompanying the learning process with assignments and thinking about survival and work during a crisis.

The benefits and advantages of online learning are not fully felt by teachers and students in many regions in Indonesia. Survey of KPAI (Komisi Perlindungan Anak Indonesia) for elementary to high school students in 20 provinces found various complaints emerged from students during online learning. These include limited online learning tools, the lack of teacher-student interaction, and too many assignments (Firdausya, 2020).

The lack of infrastructure and facilities for online learning are also found in some areas in Indonesia. Firmansyah (2020) mentions that in West Java there are more than 42.000 students who have not been able to access online properly because they do not have smartphone or laptop, can not afford internet voucher or unstable signal that hinder them to involve in online learning. Meanwhile in Jogjakarta the main cause of online learning problem is the ineffectiveness of the internet network (Adit, 2020). The same problem is also experienced by teachers and students in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), North Kalimantan, and East Java. According to Arsendy, Sukoco and Purba (2020), the survey conducted by Innovation for Indonesian School Children (INOVASI) in April 2020 in those areas found that some teachers have to visit their students' house to conduct teaching activities due to some problems: the absence of digital tool, no signal and no internet voucher. In other places, some students have to walk to open area like field or hill to get network access or stay in the village office to get internet access. We can see that the obstacles of online learning almost experienced by all provinces in Indonesia.

As online educator, teachers are also faced by some challenges in teaching online. Many teachers admitted that they have limited skills in using information and communication technology (Adit, 2020). This means that not all teachers are familiar with the technology used in online learning. Adit (2020) also mentions that in Indonesia only about 8% of teachers used to use informatics media in teaching process before the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, when online learning was

applied during the pandemic, many teachers experienced difficulties. Among some of these difficulties are their inability to create effective interactions with the students, except giving and asking for assignments (Sholekan, 2020). The teacher does not realize that the students' ability to concentrate on listening and seeing on the cellphone takes no more than 15-20 minutes. The limited skills of teachers in operating digital system make them rigid and confused or confusing.

Besides, implementing an online learning program is not easy. All system should be ready technically. Online learning is not a method to change face-to-face learning with digital applications, nor does it burden students with collecting assignments every day. Online learning should encourage students to be creative in accessing as many sources of knowledge as possible, produce work, wider insights, and ultimately shape students to become lifelong learners. Palilonis and Filak (2009) mention that online learning should offer a consumer-centric approach and interactive experience. In their study, they said:

Online learning offers a consumer-centric approach to delivery that gives students greater control over the learning experience, digital learning, and online technologies can give a model of interactive experiences for students to learn. Online circulation can increase and broaden student audiences. (p. 248)

Online learning construction is different from traditional classroom settings. Developing and teaching in online learning is not attempting to recreate the traditional classroom in an online setting. Thomson (2010) advises that the instructor capitalizes on the benefits that the online environment can offer and minimize the environment's challenges. Furthermore, Thomson (2010) states that

the instructor who will implement online learning should be well organized from the very start, providing the students with detailed instructions and expectations. Instructors or teachers should prevent areas of potential misunderstanding and anticipate unclear explanations at the beginning of learning. Misunderstandings can be reduced through an exact syllabus, clear learning calendar, useful links, and applicable learning information.

In dealing with the challenges, educators must take the courage to make online learning an opportunity to transform their education. Educators must be able to teach online learning, which incidentally must use technology. The function of technology itself is to illustrate natural phenomena and science, provide students space to explore, facilitate interaction and collaboration between students and teachers, and provide services on an individual basis without stopping (Anderson, 2008). Minimum ICT level of competencies must be mastered, including the ability to conduct video conferencing and create online teaching materials. Moreover, the teacher should prepare a learning system, syllabus, and learning method with digital or online learning patterns.

The online instructor plays a vital role in developing and maintaining an effective online learning environment and must possess a unique set of tools to perform successfully (Anderson, 2008). Some instructors from the traditional classroom environment will quickly adapt to the online model if their perceptions and understanding are positive. It means that teachers' perceptions are essential to achieve online learning success as well as the students' perceptions. The way

teachers manage, negotiate, and cope with the challenges will show how ready the teacher faces a new learning system. And also, the responses of students will show how effective the online teaching practice applied by the teachers.

When we know teachers' situations and conditions, it will be a measure to improve the present condition to sustain and increase online program. As mention by Flores and Swennen (2020) that it is also essential to look at how teacher education has adapted their new way of teaching and learning during the pandemic Covid-19 with the restriction in interaction. So, the purpose of this study is to investigate the EFL teachers' perceptions of online teaching, how they manage, negotiate and cope with the challenge in teaching online, and the students' responses toward the implementation of online learning.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study aims:

1. To investigate the EFL teachers' perceptions of online English language teaching and learning.
2. To find out how do the teachers manage, negotiate, and cope with challenges in teaching online.
3. To investigate the students' responses toward online English language learning.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are teachers' perceptions toward the online English language teaching and learning?
2. How do the teachers manage, negotiate, and cope with challenges in teaching online?
3. What are the students' responses toward online English language learning?

1.4 The Scope of the Study

This study focuses on investigating the EFL teachers' perceptions of online English language learning. The participants are Junior High School English teachers and students. This study's perceptions is to know how teachers perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use in online learning systems. Perceived usefulness is the level of someone to believe that online learning will increase their skill. Meanwhile, perceived ease of use is the level of someone to believe that using an online learning system is not difficult. Moreover, this study also tries to describe how teachers manage, negotiate, and cope with challenges in teaching online and find out the students' responses toward the implementation of online English language learning.

1.5 Significance of the Study

By doing this study, it is hoped that the study's results will be contributory in several aspects: theoretically, practically, and professionally.

1. Theoretically: This study is expected to enrich the literature on language learning strategies in teaching English, which still new and receives little attention in the Indonesian EFL context.
2. Practically: This study will provide teachers and students with information about appropriate language learning strategies in developing an online learning system. Using the information provided in this study, it is hoped that the online learning system becomes a new teaching-learning style in Indonesia.
3. Professionally: The results of this study would provide some information to EFL teachers and the government. Thus, it is expected that the government can support the teachers inappropriately implementing online learning, especially when needed.

1.6 Definition of Terms

To give a clear view of this study, the definition of key terms is provided as follows.

1. Online learning is where students do not come to school but study entirely online from home by using digital technology such as smartphone, laptop or computer. In this study, online learning is done by teachers and students of Junior High school during the pandemic of Covid-19.
2. Perceptions is the association, identification, and explanation of a sensation to figure a psychological illustration. In this study, the researcher wants to

know the teachers' perceptions of online English language learning. The perceptions includes usefulness, ease of use, behavior, and system used in the online learning program's scope.

3. An EFL teacher is a person who teaches English as a foreign language. In this study, the researcher took English Junior High School teachers involved in online learning during the pandemic of Covid-19.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This thesis will be organized into five chapters.

Chapter I Introduction

The study's background, objectives of the study, research questions, the study's scope, the study's significance, the definition of the term, and the study's organization are provided in this chapter.

Chapter II Theoretical foundation

This section focuses on the theoretical foundation relevant to the present study, with online and teachers' perceptions as the main issue.

Chapter III Research Methodology

This part encompasses the research methodology, the participant and setting, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter IV Results and Discussion

This chapter endows the results of the conducted research and the discussion of the research finding.

Chapter V Conclusion and Recommendation

The study's conclusion, the implications, and suggestions for further researchers and related institutions are provided in this chapter.