



SNAP TO READ

## OVERVIEW AND IDEAS FOR ORGANIZING AN ONLINE LANGUAGE CLASS

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### **Abstract:**

*Online language class can be set in two ways whether it uses a synchronous or asynchronous system. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the teaching-learning process is conducted online. Therefore, this paper does not only provide some overviews of the teaching-learning process in online English language classes (starting from providing an overview of the choices of a class setting, the tools and the reasons for their use, the challenges in conducting online language classes, the most applicable tools to use in online language classes) but also presents ideas covering four language skills to set online language classes in the post-pandemic era lively. This study uses convergent mixed method where questionnaires, interviews, and field notes are collected at roughly the same time to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. The findings show a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning as the most suitable and effective systems to conduct online language classes. The most challenging factors of online classes are adaptation in using an online learning platform and an unstable signal. WhatsApp and Google Classroom are the most used platform by the participants. In conclusion, combining both using synchronous and asynchronous learning is better to set creative audio-visual aid to deliver the lesson.*

**Keywords:** *Synchronous learning, Asynchronous learning, Online language class, Ideas*

## INTRODUCTION

Several changes in the education sector in Indonesia are quiet substantial to be considered as the global pandemic COVID-19 comes. The Minister of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia has ordered all education units to run online learning from 24 March 2020 to maintain the health of students, lecturers, and all educational staff, (Mendikbud, 2020). Therefore, the learning process in school has totally changed which previously used technology to support traditional class, now uses technology to completely support online class.

The online teaching-learning process offers a variety of educational opportunities. Students become more versatile learners, more easily find to global resources, and can be more motivated after knowing varieties of new technologies. As well, it also gives benefits to lecturers where it offers the opportunity to experiment teaching techniques that are only available in online. However, those advantages can be gained maximally if the educational practitioners can conquer some of the challenges of teaching online such as recognizing the tool and the material which are going to be delivered in the online environment; knowing the advantage of online medium and be willing to spend more time to give responses and feedback to students. Practically, online learning requires not only technical support but also the teacher or lecture interest and competence. As stated by (Feenberg, 1989), the best way that can be done to maintain the relationship between online education and traditional educational values is to ensure that online learning is delivered by fully qualified lecturers in teaching a web-based environment. Therefore, investigating critical success factors in online learning is important if we are to make the most of online learning (Volery and Lord 2000).

In this study, online learning is used to refer to language learning that takes place completely online via the internet, without face-to-face components. Moreover, in term of online classroom setting, conducting online class need to be set based on some following principles such as the tool, time management, media use, virtual activity, etc. Thus, it is important

to construct suitable type of learning for virtual class. Two types of virtual learnings are synchronous learning and asynchronous learning (Murphy at all,2011)and those can be adapted separately or together as hybrid learning environment.

Synchronous learning can be described as learning/teaching that takes place simultaneously via an electronic mode where participants and instructors interact via internet at the same time(Khan,2006 and Moore & Kearsley, 2012). It most closely resembles the traditional classroom environment which requires all students to be present at the same time, but it needs a strong internet connection. Tools for synchronous learning such as live chat; audio and video conferencing; data and application sharing; shared whiteboard; virtual "hand-raising"; and joint viewing of multimedia presentations and online slide shows. Some applications can be used for synchronous learning, e.g., zoom, google meet, WhatsApp video.

On another side, asynchronous learning takes place at student-guided pace with flexibility in scheduling. Moore & Kearsley (2012) argued that asynchronous learning is teaching and learning that do not happen at the same time. It means that the teaching-learning is not limited by time or the constraints of a classroom. Hence, the learners can access the material any time. Tools for asynchronous learning such as e-mail; threaded discussion; newsgroups and bulletin boards; and file attachments. Since asynchronous learning offers flexibility, it becomes the most adopted method for online education (Lewis & Parsad, 2008). The opportunity to respond indirectly allows learners to use their higher-level learning skills because they have a longer time to think about problems, discuss with peer groups, and develop different thinking. The spontaneity of expression is replaced by a constructed response. This method also reduces anxiety of having direct interaction or facing technological problems. Therefore, asynchronous space leads to a self-paced, independent, student-centered learning(Murphy at al. 2011). Further, by being autonomous learners, students can see the relationship to what is to be learned and how they will learn and to select available resources.

Moreover, both synchronous learning and asynchronous learning will be more effective if it is supported by the right media because media plays role in conveying content to the students. Baidawi (2016) explained that the process of teaching and learning could be facilitated by the teacher using provided tools which are described as teaching media. It helps lecturers ensuring the success of delivering lessons whilst also encouraging the students to learn (Rahardjito et al., 2008, as cited in Baidawi, 2016). Media is also one of two main factors of efficient and effective learning which is provided by the school (Sukmahidayanti, 2015). Therefore, choosing the suitable media to use in an online language class is important. Furthermore, Son (2011) explains that online tools are classified into twelve categories based on their main functions and features. Those are learning/ content management systems; communication; live and virtual worlds; social networking and bookmarking; blogs and wikis; presentation; resource sharing; website creation; web exercise creation; web search engines; dictionaries and concordances; and utilities (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Categories of online tools (Son, 2011)



Those twelve categories of online tools further can be used based on their functions to support synchronous and asynchronous virtual classes.

To learn a language means dealing with both language skills (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) and language components or areas (grammar and usage, vocabulary, and phonology). Moreover, those skills and components can be learnt together or separately by integrating the use of technology in the teaching learning process. Therefore, suitable tools should be known to teach those skills and components effectively and to energize the language class livelier.

Some previous studies have discussed online language class theoretically or practically. Theoretically, Uzunboylu, 2002) told us tools use for online class. Practically, some researches only focus on discussing one type of classroom settings(Chen et al. 2005), or both classroom settings and challenges in teaching online language class from lecturers' experiences and perspectives only or vice versa(Perveen, 2016; Chauhan, 2017&Nugroho& Atmojo 2020). They mostly said that online classes do not run well because lecturers lacked knowledge of applying technology in their online classrooms, therefore planning and preparation should be done for better online learning in the future.

Most of the lecturers conduct their online learning in synchronous mode as it is their schools' rules. That is the selection of a classroom management system is not based on needs but because of school rules. Meanwhile, Perveen (2016) who discussed classroom setting based solely on the learners' perspective says that blend system is more desirable to English language learners. Besides, in terms of achievement and attitude outcomes may show different results whether it is synchronous or asynchronous learning. Whereas research conducted by Bernard et al. (2004) determined that asynchronous learning gave more positive effects than synchronous learning. They found that synchronous learning instruction lacked the flexibility concerning classroom scheduling, place of learning as well as individual attention.

Identifying these gaps, therefore this study is aimed to present a more comprehensive discussion of online language class by providing some overviews of online language class not only from lecturers' perspectives but also learners' perspectives. Starting from discussing classroom setting, the most preferable and accessible media, the reason, until the challenges of having an online language class. To complete the discussion, this study also provides some ideas, especially for language lecturers. It is about suitable media to bring in online language classes to life. This study then examines the explanation on what types and preferable tools as well as the challenge


faced by EFL lecturers and students during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. This study limits only the discussion about online English Classes in Indonesia during the pandemic period.

## **METHOD**

Nassaji (2015) said that although the term qualitative and descriptive can be used interchangeably, the difference between the two can still be made. Since this research discusses more holistic data from multiple sources to gain a deeper understanding of individual participants, including their opinions, perspectives, and attitudes towards online language learning, and this research requires numerical for further evaluation, therefore this research convergent mixed method where open-ended questionnaires, semi structured interviews, field notes are collected at roughly the same time to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. The subjects of the research are 8 English lecturers of English Department of who teach Intensive Course (IC) Classes and 16 students from their classes which are chosen randomly as participants. Those lecturers are RD, OB, NH, YR, EP, AA, IF, and FM who have taught IC classes for around 2 years.

The procedures of the data collection are observing, distributing questionnaire, interviewing samples, collecting the media, and confirming the content of the media. As participant observers, the researchers were observing online language learning class since even semester by using field notes.

Figure 2. Field note

FIELD NOTES	
Class Observations	
Date: Apr, 2020	
Course Subject: Academic Writing Class	
Topic: Optimizing WhatsApp	
<p><b>Observations</b></p> <p>Lecturer ask the students to do class discussion, attendance, and to access the materials through <u>schoolology</u>. On several occasions, some of them said that they cannot access <u>schoolology</u> because of bad signal. They then sometimes ask their friends who have got the materials to send them through <u>whatsapp</u>. They sometimes also ask their friends to report their attendance or they chat me through <u>whatsapp</u> to do attendance. They also chat me to do class discussion through <u>whatsapp</u> than <u>schoolology</u> because they find it easier to access <u>whatsapp</u>. Therefore, they ask another possibility. Finally, the final decision to solve their problem was <u>whatsapp</u> was used for the whole class discussion during semester and materials sharing. Meanwhile, they still have to do attendance in <u>schoolology</u> as long as there are no obstacles.</p> 	<p><b>Comments</b></p> <p>This is good because the lecturers and students finally came to an agreement in resolving various obstacles in the writing class</p>

The questionnaire used is validated by the peer researchers and it was distributed at the beginning of September 2020. There are 27 questions were delivered to participants which covered these following topics.

Figure 3. Topics in Questionnaire

	Questions
1	GENERAL QUESTIONS (5 questions) (Participant's Biodata, Challenges, Positive and Negative Impact of Online Language Learning)
2	TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS (4 questions) (Classroom Setting, Tools Choices Based on Classroom Setting)
3	THE USED OF SKILL-BASED MEDIA (5 questions) (Media used in English skill classroom)
4	THE GENERAL USE OF MEDIA IN NLINE LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS (3 questions) (Media used in English Class based on frequency level, economy level, nad the need)

Next, the interviews were set up under the participants 'convenience either via WhatsApp live chat (text or voice note) or call (voice or video call) to gain more information about lecturers' and students' reasons for choosing online language learning media and classroom setting; their challenges of having online language learning, and some other questions related to the purpose of the study. Then, the researchers also collect the lecturers 'online teaching media through email or WhatsApp and confirming the content to get clearer information about the use of the media.

Furthermore, the data then are analyzed through some steps. First, organizing the data. Second, reducing data and doing Triangulation. Third, coding the data (for interviews result). Fourth, displaying the data in the form of text and numeric, tables, figures. Fifth, interpreting the data and the last is concluding the findings.

## **FINDINGS**

This present research is conducted to answer the questions related to online language classroom during Covid-19 pandemic. It describes online classroom setting, its challenges faced by both lecturers and students, the media used as well as the ideas to set online language class lively. The data collected through observations and interviews. Three lecturers are the participant observers since they did this research. While other respondents had been interviewed related to the questionnaire they have filled.

### **The Classroom Setting**

It is a well-known fact that pandemic has changed the whole classrooms setting to maintain safety while still be able to conduct the teaching and learning activity. The usual traditional class is shifted into online learning. The online learning class is conducted by applying synchronous or asynchronous learning types, or maybe both. This research is conducted at English language class in IAIN Kediri to identify what online learning types preferred by most of the respondents. There are 24 respondents, including lecturers and students, who participate in this research.

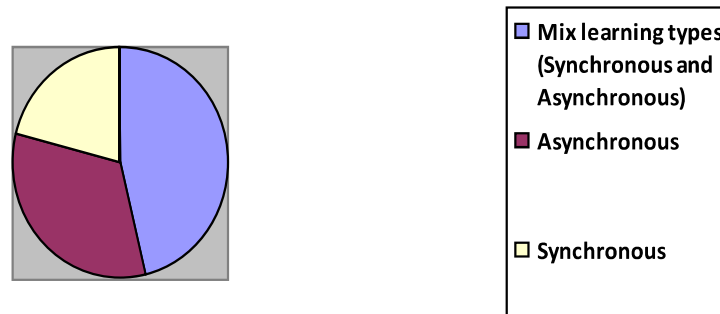


Figure 4. Preferred Online Learning Method



From the figure above, the finding shows that 50% of respondents prefer to combine the asynchronous learning and synchronous learning. 33% of respondents prefer to asynchronous learning, and 17% of respondents choose synchronous learning. Respondents assume that hybrid learning environment which mixes both synchronous and asynchronous learning are viewed as the most suitable online language learning type to date. The result is shown below.

Figure 5. Effective Online Learning Method



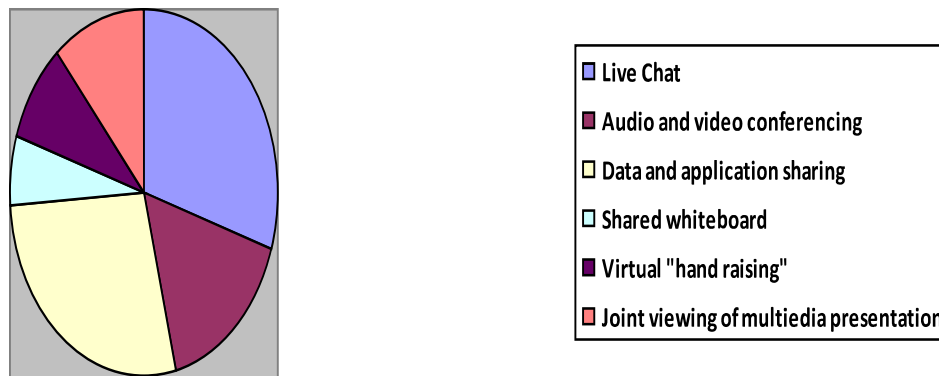
### Preferable Tools

In conducting online learning, both teacher and students have their preferences regarding the most suitable method to apply. Some platforms provided tools that could facilitate either synchronous or asynchronous learning. Respondents have given their opinion regarding this matter as can be seen below.

### Synchronous Learning

In Figure 6, the result shows that the live chat platform is the most preferable one to provide the best performance on synchronous learning, followed by the data and application sharing platform.

Figure 6. Preferable Tools of Synchronous Learning



### Asynchronous Learning

Figure 7 shows that respondents prefer to use both threaded discussion and file attachments in asynchronous learning. The second most preferred tool is e-mail.

Figure 7. Preferable Tools in Asynchronous Learning



## The Challenges during Online Classroom

Figure 8. The Challenges during Online Classroom

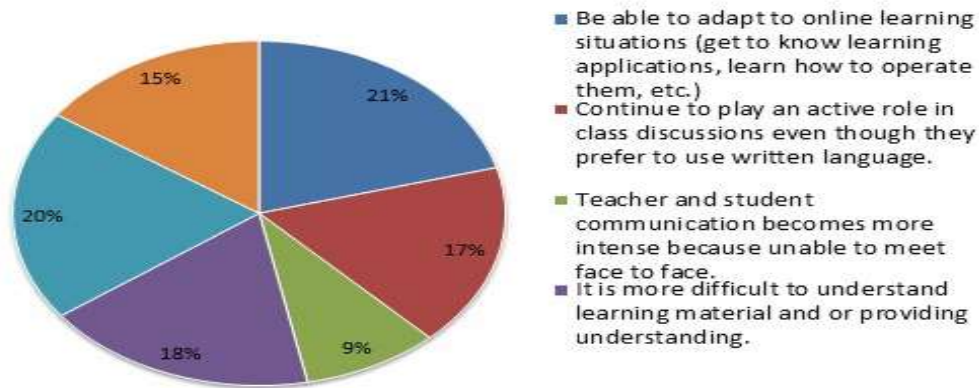


Figure 8 shows that the most challenging factor faced by the lecturers and the students are the ability to use an online learning platform and the unstable internet signal.

Related to figure 8, the participants shared different ideas about their challenge in this online class. It can be seen in these interview results:

“I need to adapt with online learning situation since it is an online class I need to be more active, to know more different types of virtual platform used by the lecturers ...” (S5, I)

This statement (S5, I) supports the result of the questionnaire where they have to be familiar to different types of virtual platform especially when their lecturers use different kind of platform as stated in the below statement (S6, I).

“I think it’s hard for me to understand the lesson, I have many tasks to do ...” (S2, I)

“Since my lecturers use a different kind of media platform, I must learn how to operate those tools ... (S6, I)

## The Benefit of Online Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic

In contrast, the learning situation during this pandemic may also give some benefits. The result can be seen in this following figure.

Figure 9. The Benefit of Online Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic

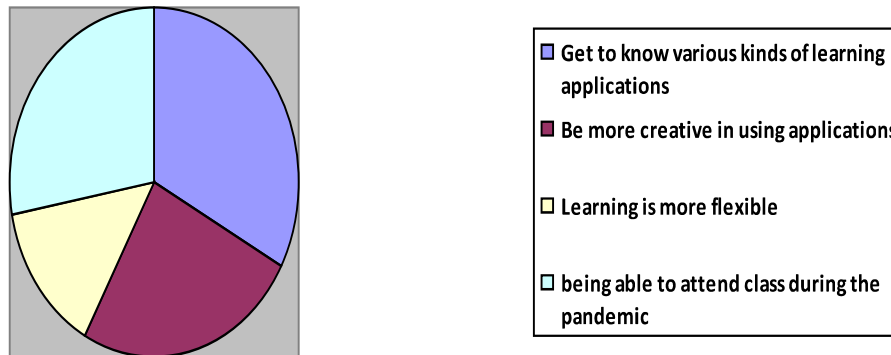


Figure 9 shows the most beneficial aspect in online learning is the participants tend to be more aware of the different types of online language application as stated in the following statement.

“I can be more creative having this online class and know more about different kinds of applications ...” (S2,I)

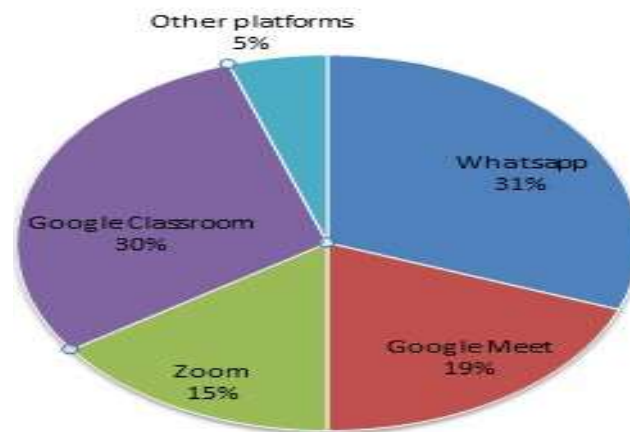
Further, they feel that the process of teaching and learning is more flexible during the pandemic since they can access the materials in different time if the class is used asynchronous learning system as seen in the following argument.

“Sometimes online classes give flexible access for the students to conduct class meeting...” (S7, I)

### **Optimizing the Use of WhatsApp**

In term of application, WhatsApp and google classroom is the most platform used by the participants. The result can be seen in this Figure 10.

Figure 10. Online Learning Platform



The finding shows that most of the participants choose WhatsApp and google classroom as the preferable media to use in the online classroom whether they adapt synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid-learning environment.

“I prefer WhatsApp over other applications because it has complete features ... for example in speaking class I use WhatsApp voice notes since it saves internet quota” (EP, I).

“I use WhatsApp voice note to give more feedback; file attachment to send materials, assignments, pictures, or others; chat more often for having class interaction; voice call for doing speaking test and vocabulary checking; and profile status to appreciate students ‘works and to praise them” (RD, I).

“I use Google Classroom to do attendance and chat; to send materials and assignments, also to collect it. It helps me to document all learning activities in the classroom for lecturer administration purposes” (FM, I).

“My lecturers use WhatsApp more since it’s very economical for us as a student” (S1, I).

“My lecturers mostly use WhatsApp Group to conduct class discussion. We use google classroom for submitting assignments, doing attendance, and getting teaching materials” (S4,I).

### **Ideas to Set Online Language Class Lively**

The finding shows some ideas to set an online language class lively. The first idea is, making sure that both students and lecturers are committing to the exact schedule or the time that has been arranged by both parties. The second is using audio-visual aid to deliver the lesson by creating a video or audio containing the lesson. Those ideas then are classified into some categories where language is broken down into four skills. For listening class, some audio or video files to teach can be found through YouTube, WhatsApp voice note, and podcast. For speaking class, some applications can be used to set the class more active such as WhatsApp voice note, YouTube, Google Meet or Zoom, Schoology, Interpals, Cake application, and English speaking practice application.

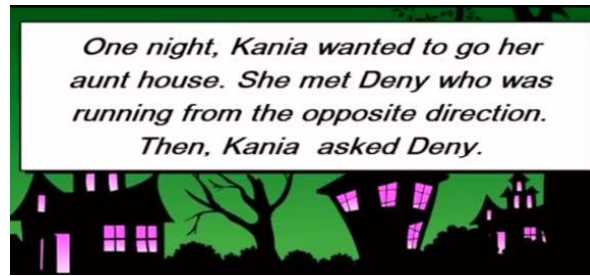
“...such as English speaking practice. It does not only provide speaking materials but also it helps students to test their production and intonation by recording their voice into the apps” (YR, I).

For reading class, Edmodo, Google Classroom, School, Google Docs, WhatsApp, Email are tools to share data or attach files, while VOA, podcast, and electronic novels provide some materials to teach reading. Meanwhile, some activities can be done individually or collaborate in writing class through some online or offline applications. An online application which needs internet such as g-docs offers collaborative work and peer-reviewing towards writing activity. Other applications such as Learning Management System, Schoology, Google Classroom, Edmodo facilitate data sharing, and Short Response System such as WhatsApp and telegram facilitate the process of attaching files. Meanwhile, some offline applications to use in writing class are cartoon story maker (CSM) and windows movie maker (WMM) application which can be used separately or together as seen in figure 11.

“Gdocs helps me to provide feedback for my students’ work. Moreover, to conduct peer review in my writing class ...” (IF, I).

“... CSM and WMM can attract students’ enthusiasm... They can have their own story and build their imagination towards their stories” (RD, I).

Figure 11. The use of CSM and WMM in writing class



## DISCUSSION

In conducting the online language class, both lecturers and students have varied preferences for online learning types. Two types of virtual learnings are synchronous learning and asynchronous learning (Murphy at all,2011). As has been presented in the findings, most of them prefer a mix of learning types (hybrid learning environment) to set the classroom. A deep interview has been conducted to identify the more specific reason behind their preferences. Moreover, the data can be described more comprehensively since the researchers themselves are the participant observers. The combination of synchronous and asynchronous is viewed as a great method that complements each other well. The lesson could be delivered via synchronous by using video conference platforms such as Google Meet or Zoom which allows participants and instructors to do real-time teaching-learning processes via the web (Khan 2006). The respondents argue that having synchronous learning system to deliver the lesson helps students to understand the materials better since it resembles an offline class. The students can directly ask the teacher when they do not understand their teacher's explanation. Meanwhile, lecturers not only can do lecturing directly but also can assess students' performance directly to know their understanding of the materials.

On the other hand, asynchronous learning offers flexibility where it is not limited by time, place, or the constraints of the classroom. Even though participants and instructors cannot interact directly in this system, but this system gives the benefit that cannot be found in the synchronous system. It allows the learner to activate their higher-level learning skills.

The spontaneous expression is replaced by a constructed response. This skill is important in either reading or writing classes where the learners can have a longer time to think about the problems, discuss with peer groups, and develop different thinking. As an example, learners need a longer time to comprehend reading text, especially those who deal with critical reading ability where they have to identify the main idea, supporting sentences, and the purpose of the text. This method also allows students who do not have enough self-confidence to speak up to express their ideas. Thus, the balance looking classroom setting may be achieved by using the combination of asynchronous and synchronous learning or what we call a hybrid learning environment. The combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning is viewed as a much more effective way rather than applying each one of the types alone since this hybrid learning environment can complement the shortcomings of each learning system. As an example, some of the learners claim that online synchronous learning classes can build an atmosphere that motivates them to study as in a traditional classroom. They also admit that there is a feeling of reassurance in which students could directly consult the teacher whenever they face difficulties in following the lesson. While the use of asynchronous learning offers a longer time to understand the lesson completely through media sharing platforms. Besides they have a longer time to provide responses or to think about the materials, they said that they got much more complete and thorough feedback from lecturers in this learning system.

Within synchronous learning-based class, some tools are provided by the platforms to help to conduct the class. There are live chats, audio, and video conferencing, data and application sharing, shared whiteboard, virtual 'hand rising', and joint viewing of multimedia presentation. Among those, the most preferred tools by respondents are live chat and data and application sharing. Audio and video conferencing also gain much interest from the respondents. Respondents reasoned that live chat helps them understand the lesson better where they can communicate or respond directly to their



classmates or even the teacher. They assume that synchronous learning is like a traditional class in which happens in real-time. It is also supported by Fadde & Vu (2014) and Martin & Parker (2014) who found that synchronous communication happens in real-time and thus it can be more expedient and help establish others as being real and there. Besides, the audio-video conferencing aids the students effectively in accepting the lesson as they could learn faster by listening and watching their peers or the teacher giving an explanation. This tool is also preferred by respondents in a presentation or discussion-based classroom. In this research, the finding shows that the most preferable tools in synchronous learning are live chat which not only helps students understand the lesson better but also saves more internet quota. The form of this live chat is WhatsApp.

While, in an asynchronous learning class, the most preferable tools by respondents are threaded discussion and file attachments, following closely by the wide use of e-mail. Threaded discussion and file attachments aid the students to a better understanding because they are having the material in hand and be able to study it by themselves. Using this type of learning may help them to make their selves reflection to monitor their learning. Asynchronous learning may also encourage their cognitive effort since students have more time for self-reflection. The study by Garrison (2001) found that a text-based environment in asynchronous learning will be a reliable tool for assessing cognitive presence. In line with this research finding, it shows that the file attachments tool also claims to be a convenient one because it is mostly a low-cost tool and easy to use. This tool is popular among the respondents, and it could be operated on any type of smartphone. Therefore, it could be effectively used in an online learning classroom. The most popular form of file attachment and threaded discussion tool among respondents is WhatsApp since it not only provides a lot of functions but also categorizes as low-cost tool. The media platform that is mostly used in the language classrooms is WhatsApp. All participants choose WhatsApp as an accessible and effective media to held online learning since it offers many tools to support teaching-

learning processes such as Live Chat (Text or Voice), Files attachment, Profile Status, Chat Groups (WAG), Video Conference (Call), and Audio Call.

They use live chat both in form of text or audio (voice note) to actively participate in classroom discussions such as delivering QnA, to do lecturing, to give explanations or feedbacks privately or in WhatsApp group (WAG). Next, file attachment is used to share any documents, pictures, video, or others for task submission, slide presentation submission, or teaching material distribution. Then, profile is released when the lecturers announce any information related to the course or conduct writing game. Further, communication can be broadened by having video conference (call) and audio call through WhatsApp.

The next discussion is dealing with various challenges in an online language classroom. First, the participants said that in online language learning, they have to be able to adjust to the situation. The participants assume that they are not being used to have fully online or virtual learning before. However, as the pandemic occurred, they are required to be accustomed to using any kind of virtual learning platforms.

Having to adjust themselves in virtual learning without much preparation, affect the performances in class. In a short amount of time, they are demanded to be adapted with up-to-date technology. The usual comfort of following a lesson face-to-face without fussing up much about media is replaceable by anxiety to master all kinds of platforms supporting an online class (Sun, 2011). This seems to build some problems for both lecturers and students. There are visible differences in conducting and participating in class through a flat pixelated screen and doing it in the traditional class.

Some lecturers, who are the participants of this research, claim that they try to recreate the atmosphere of a traditional class. They take efforts to bring what they used to feel and done there. Lecturers take time to formulate the class and minimize the differences to help students to adjust. One of the efforts to recreate traditional classes in virtual learning is by choosing a synchronous learning type. This is assumed to provide similarity with the traditional class.

Unfortunately, synchronous classes have its flaw too, gathering and asking everyone to present at the same time as what they used to be in face-to-face learning slowly become an unexpected difficulty (Sun, 2011).

Second, having online learning, either the lecturers or the students are supposed to be able to use different types of technology. Participants admit that they are not aware of various kinds of media used in conducting an online class. Before this new normal happens, some participants have less knowledge of how technology facilitates a virtual learning process. Some claim it is because normally they do not implement much technology in the traditional class. Moreover, language class is designed to improve its students' skills in using language. Skill-based lesson like reading, listening, speaking, and writing requires efforts to be delivered. Both lecturers and students struggle to adjust themselves. The lecturers try to reformulate the course design while simultaneously teaching themselves about various platforms that are deemed suitable for their lesson. The students also face a reality in which they need to improve not only their language skills but also their competency in using online media (Tanveer, 2011).

Participants' opinions in using online media in a language class may vary. Students face difficulty in understanding the lesson fully. They also experience less excitement in joining the class because everything takes a longer time. They frequently need to look upon how to properly function the platform. Many platforms are completely foreign for them, so they often lost interest in participating in a class. On the other hand, the lecturers also realize the same worry and anxiety in conducting and managing an online class (Sun, 2011).

Lecturers try to adapt themselves to accommodate their students while not losing the main purpose of delivering the lesson well. Choosing suitable platforms that could facilitate the lesson optimally and easy to function slowly become a concern that could affect their confidence in delivering the lesson. Besides that, they realize that every learner has a different adaptation and environment. Lecturers have to use well functioned online media that are

assumed as suitable for all learners (Gillett-Swan, 2017).

Frequently, lecturers try to use various platforms then together with the students, they discuss what platforms that they mostly will use to conduct the class. Thus, it can help them to be more aware of the different types of media being used in their online classroom and to optimize the use of the media in the teaching-learning process.

The third challenge is an unstable internet connection. The participants argued that it can be the most challenging aspect of having an online classroom. An unstable internet connection often leads to a lack of engagement of the student in an online class discussion. It is hard for them to give their full participation in class no matter what type of online learning is used by the teacher. In listening and speaking classes, where the lecturers conduct asynchronous class, image, and sounds sometimes are distorted and causing concerns. Students often feel left behind and cannot respond immediately. On some occasions, it even obstructs students to access the class which forces them to go outside their house for a better connection. Participants also claim to fail to submit their assignments on time because of an unstable internet connection.

Previous researches conducted by Tanveer (2011) and (Sun 2011) also assume that internet connectivity is a real issue facing both students and lecturers. To deal with this kind of situation, it can be resolved by connecting their device to a WIFI signal, setting the class into asynchronous learning environments, and giving a longer time to students when having a quiz or a test.

Further, the various challenges in conducting online classrooms must inspire lecturers to be creative, and adaptive to dynamic changes. It reminds lecturers to keep exploring technology for enhancing language learning. They need to recognize the applications and use them based on the objectives of the classroom. To choose and apply suitable applications, lecturers need to prepare how to organize the activities, motivating students' engagement, and evaluating students' learning. Thus, the lecturers are encouraged to develop

their competency on technology integration in language teaching (Son, 2018).

On another side, a virtual classroom may also give some beneficial aspects for students. In this case, they argue that they are to be more aware of the kinds of applications and media platforms to support their learning during this pandemic. As the result, they can be more autonomous to learn about the material presented in the classroom. Being an autonomous learner is crucial in this era since they are required to be responsible for their learning. As it is argued by Benson (2001) who stated that autonomous learners, the students can see the relationship between what is to be learned and how they will learn and to select available resources. It means that being autonomous learners will help them to negotiate between the strategic meeting of their own needs and responding to the needs and desires of other group members.

Lastly, in improving students' and teacher engagement in an online learning class, respondents suggest some ideas to set the class lively. The first idea is, making sure that both students and lecturers are committing to the exact schedule or the time that has been arranged by both parties. The second is using audio-visual aid to deliver the lesson by creating a video or audio containing the lesson. Using creative and suitable teaching media helps the teacher in terms of ensuring the success of delivering lessons whilst also encouraging the students to learn (Rahardjito et al., 2008, as cited in Baidawi 2016). Many respondents recommended using an audio-video platform because, via this platform, students and lecturers could engage directly as the traditional class environment, moreover, if it is used for discussion, which is frequently happening in presentation basis learning. Those platforms make it easy for either the presenters or the audience to respond directly, without the need to type long paragraphs which could lead to unwillingness in engaging the discussion.

It seems that the use of audio-video aid could raise the interest of the students that leads to actively participating and engaging. Besides, many students' respondents claim that they prefer to learn by listening and watching.

Those ideas are then classified into some categories where the language

is broken down into four skills. For listening class, some audio or video files to teach can be found through YouTube, WhatsApp voice note, and podcast. For speaking class, some applications can be used to set the class more active such as WhatsApp voice note, YouTube, google meet or zoom, Schoology, Interpals, cake application, and English speaking practice application. Some of them not only provide the materials but also facilitate the students to record and practice their speaking even looking for natives as their partner to practice speaking. Some of those applications also facilitate students to do autonomous learning to improve their ability in English.

For reading class, Edmodo, google classroom, school, google docs, WhatsApp, email are tools to share data or attach files. While VOA, podcast, and electronic novels provide some materials to teach reading. Meanwhile, some activities can be done individually or collaboratively in writing class through some online or offline applications. An online application that needs the internet such as G-docs offers collaborative work and peer-reviewing towards writing activity. Other applications such as Learning Management System-Schoology, google classroom, Edmodo facilitate data sharing, and Short Response System such as WhatsApp and telegram facilitate the process of attaching files. Further, some applications can be used to decrease monotonous and boredom in writing class where the students can create their own story and background then set them in form of a movie by combining the use of cartoon story maker (CSM) and windows movie maker (WMM) application or using them separately. Further, some respondents also admit that being provided with creative and suitable aids lift their mood to study. So, these ideas are considered helpful to set the class livelier.

## CONCLUSION

Several changes in the education sector in Indonesia are quiet substantial to be considered as the global pandemic COVID-19 comes. The online teaching-learning process offers a variety of educational opportunities. Practically, online learning requires not only technical support but also the

teacher or lecture interest and competence. Moreover, in term of online classroom setting, conducting online class need to be set based on some following principles such as the tool, time management, media use, virtual activity, etc. Thus, it is important to construct suitable type of learning for virtual class. Either synchronous or asynchronous online system has its strength and weaknesses, therefore, the result of the study shows that most respondents prefer to mix both of those systems. Those blending systems can overcome any problems dealing with the choices of a classroom setting. These classroom settings then can be more effective and successfully done in online language classes if it is delivered by lecturers who are qualified in teaching a web-based environment class. Therefore, some challenges are faced by lecturers because fully online learning environment is carried out suddenly due to the pandemic so that both lecturers and students must be more aware of the use of technology in the teaching and learning process. That awareness then involves the ideas to set their classes to be livelier such as using technology to do collaborative work, peer review, discussion, or doing autonomous learning. Further, it is suggested for the next researcher to apply those ideas to teach language skills and to discuss the result more comprehensively in his or her study. Meanwhile, those overviews and ideas hopefully give beneficial aspects toward the teaching-learning process in an online language class.

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