

## Online EFL Classroom Management: Voices from Indonesian EFL Teachers

**M. Ali Ghufron**

IAIN Pekalongan, Indonesia

Jl. Kusuma Bangsa No. 9 Pekalongan, Indonesia

[m.ali.ghufron@iainpekalongan.ac.id](mailto:m.ali.ghufron@iainpekalongan.ac.id)

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### ABSTRACT

Due to the scarcity of studies on online EFL classroom management in the Indonesian context, this study attempts to explore online EFL classroom management from the viewpoints of Indonesian EFL teachers in terms of its processes, strategies, and challenges. This study employed a qualitative case study approach involving 6 EFL teachers. Within three months, data were gathered through individual semi-structured interviews with EFL teachers, which were then evaluated narratively. The findings reveal that (1) in management process, teachers must make an appointment with students, prepare the content and task for online learning, deliver materials and tasks through online media, and give feedback to students' works directly or indirectly for their evaluation or assessment; It takes a lot of processes to complete online learning management from the preparation, implementation, and evaluation stages; (2) teachers may use different strategies in managing online EFL classrooms; however, the most important points are using clear instructions in organizing the students (e.g., in doing tasks) to minimize students' confusion, using a balance portion in using a variety of assignment methods (individual, pair, and group), and choosing interesting learning activities to engage students; and (3) the challenges faced by Indonesian EFL teachers are, among others, developing online learning materials and tasks, building a strong online learning community, and integrating teacher-student-parent relationships in online learning. This study may have implications for several parties, such as EFL teachers, students, and parents.

**Keywords:** classroom management, english as a foreign language (efl), indonesian efl teachers, online classroom, qualitative case study

## INTRODUCTION

Classroom management is undoubtedly the most critical part of teaching and learning. Effective class management is as critical to a teacher as knowledge, competence, and a comprehensive set of teaching abilities. A teacher must be able to communicate the material in such a way that it is effectively received in a class with active involvement, keen engagement, and little disruption. In order to preserve proper students' conduct, engagement, and, ultimately, academic accomplishment, effective classroom management is urgently needed (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Landrum & Kauffman, 2006). Further, according to Adeyemo (2012), classroom management is a complicated collection of explicit behaviors used by the teacher to create and maintain settings that enable learners to accomplish educational objectives efficiently.

Classroom management was originally thought of as a teacher's capacity to keep control of student behavior. An increasing amount of recent studies on the issue has focused on the teacher's role in creating and maintaining a learning environment in the classroom rather than just regulating students' behavior (Keiler, 2018). The teacher's actions in the classroom, such as setting the scene, decorating the room, arranging the chairs, speaking to students and handling their replies, putting daily routines, drafting and conveying regulations, and respecting them, all have an impact on the classroom management. A successful teaching career hinges on the ability to manage classroom rules (Cristina, 2020). When it comes to classroom management, a wide range of tasks and activities are involved in creating a pleasant learning environment and minimizing disobedience and disturbances (Oliver et al., 2011).

During Covid-19, all schools should be forced to adopt a policy allowing for either online or distant education. If a pandemic takes its course, education leaders must act fast and with unique settings in mind to devise appropriate solutions (Reimers et al., 2020). The ability to modify classroom management tactics while maintaining the students' learning motivation is essential for all school teachers by that time, whether they are ready or not. Teachers can put their faith in one another and collaborate in order to develop, endure, and progress toward greater organizational performance (Dastjerdi & Jafari, 2019). Collaboration amongst peers, in addition to providing possibilities for social and emotional support, the sharing of ideas, and the provision of practical guidance.

This study seeks to construe how six Indonesian EFL teachers dealt with online EFL classroom management in terms of its processes, strategies, and challenges. The choice of this 6 EFL teachers to be involved in this study was based on the results of pre-observation conducted prior to this study. Initially, there were 12 EFL teachers who were observed, however, after the purposive sampling technique was employed, the 6-participants were chosen.

There are a number of studies concerning classroom management practices both in traditional (face-to-face) learning and online learning (see, for example, Adeyemo, 2012; Anwar et al., 2020; Cho et al., 2020; Cristina, 2020; Dustova & Cotton, 2014; Hoang et al., 2020; Lasari, 2021; Milliken, 2019; Oliver et al., 2011; Sammaknejad & Marzban, 2016; Setyani, 2021; Soleimani & Razmjoo, 2019; Wut & Xu, 2021). The findings have led to the widespread conclusion that effective classroom management is critical for successful teacher-student interactions and negotiations (Anwar et al., 2020; Dikmenli & Çifçi, 2016).

Classroom management studies are theoretically concerned with parent-teacher relations, educational materials, classroom overcrowding, seating arrangements, loudness, and social-cultural activities (Macías, 2018). Teaching in a classroom comprises creating an environment, setting up seating arrangements and décor, addressing students and handling their responses and establishing routines as well as formulating rules and explaining those standards (Sieberer-Nagler, 2015). Further, according to Aliakbari & Heidarzadi (2015), assessment of teachers' classroom management abilities is crucial. The logic behind this is that student achievement and learning are influenced by teacher performance in the classroom and management strategies. Besides, Pedota (2016) found that successful classroom management strategies including encouraging, challenging, and engaging students will help improve students' academic behavior in a morally and ethically responsible manner.

The recent studies about online classroom management in the Indonesian context have been carried out by Lasari (2021) and Setyani (2021). A study conducted by Lasari (2021) analyzes the various styles of classroom management used by lecturers in online learning during the Covid-19 era at the Islamic Primary School Teacher Education (*Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*) program. She listed three stages used in online classroom management, including (1) the planning stage, (2) the implementation stage, and (3) control stage. Meanwhile, Setyani (2021) investigates the online classroom management strategy used by an English teacher in a public vocational high school during the Covid-19 pandemic. She listed three strategies of online classroom management, including (1) setting clear rules, (2) creating engaging activities for students, and (3) being active to stimulate learners. However, the two studies have yet to specifically focus on online EFL classroom management from a wider context and perspective (limited research site). EFL teachers in Indonesia need to be aware of the challenges they face when teaching English online in order to better understand what they can do to improve their quality of teaching. To address this gap in the literature on online EFL classroom management, the researcher examined online EFL classroom management in the Indonesian context, including the processes, strategies, and challenges associated with online classroom management. There were two research questions: (1) How do Indonesian EFL teachers manage online EFL classroom in terms of its processes and

strategies? and (2) What are the challenges in managing online EFL classrooms according to Indonesian EFL teachers' experiences? These two research questions will be answered based on the theory of Mcleod et al., (2003) about classroom management processes.

## METHOD

To better understand the online EFL classroom management from the viewpoints of Indonesian EFL teachers in terms of its processes, strategies, and challenges, this study used an exploratory case study approach (Creswell, 2012; Elliott, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2019; Miles et al., 2014; O'Donoghue & Punch, 2003). According to Creswell (2012), exploratory case studies are conducted before a large-scale research. The researcher performed the research at two secondary schools and two universities in Central Java, Indonesia.

The participants in this study were six English teachers from two secondary schools and two universities who took part in the study. It was decided to use the pseudonyms Yana (Female), Yono (Male), Yuni (Female), Doni (Male), Dini (Female), and Dana (Male) instead of their given names. In terms of research ethics, the participants were asked to read through, complete, and sign an [informed consent form](#), indicating that they were voluntarily donating their time to the study and that they understood they had the right to withdraw their participation at any time during the study.

Dealing with data collection, individual semi-structured interviews were used to gather the empirical data for this study. In-person interviews were conducted for 20 to 30 minutes, with each session being documented on video using a smartphone (e.g., [recorded interview](#)). Meanwhile, to analyze the data, a pattern-coding approach offered by Miles et al. (2014) was used, in which the researcher produced provisional codes that were based on the research questions that were addressed by the themes and interview questions. To detect similarities and differences between the transcripts of the four participants, all of the transcripts were evaluated and compared, then reread line-by-line to identify regularities and developing themes, as well as sub-themes, within the data (Anwar et al., 2020; Jati et al., 2019; Muyassaroh et al., 2019).

To maintain the validity of the data, researcher applied member checks by sending [copies of the interview data](#), conclusions, and final report to each participant after each interview (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1990). This technique was used to ensure that each participant consented to the information that was collected from them, as well as to allow the researcher to use the information in the current research.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The process of online EFL classroom management

According to the information gathered from the interviews with the participants, the analysis found that teachers go through a number of procedures in order to complete online learning management, including the phases of preparation, implementation, and assessment. In order to complete online learning management, teachers must do the following procedures: (a) making an appointment with students, (b) preparing contents/learning materials and assignments for online learning, (c) delivering materials and tasks through online media, and (d) providing feedback to students' efforts either directly or indirectly for evaluation or assessment.

#### a. Making an appointment with students

In order to conduct online learning, teachers must first schedule an appointment with students, which is one of the protocols they must follow. This is since teachers and students are at different locations that are physically distanced from one another, causing students to lose track of their study schedule. Even though a schedule has been created by the school or university, online learning allows students to be more flexible with their study schedules. As a result, teachers and students must constantly remind one other of study hours scheduled throughout the week. This is generally done on behalf of the teacher or student who initiates the process. Students can inquire about the learning schedule that will be followed through the WhatsApp group in advance of participation. This situation is reflected in Dana's statement. He shared the following:

Before beginning an online course, teachers and students must agree on a timetable for the course. The fact that teachers and students are separated by a physical barrier is why this matters. (Doni, 2021)

Dini and Yuni both made similar statements. Even if the school or university has set an official schedule for teaching and learning, it is critical to agree on learning time. At the very least, this serves as a reminder to students and teachers to prepare adequately for learning. The followings are their interview excerpts:

Before learning, it is critical for the teacher and student to agree on the learning schedule. Although the study program has already created a schedule, at the very least, this serves as a reminder to teachers and students to prepare adequately for learning. (Dini, 2021)

An agreed-upon time for online learning and reminders of the timetable is essential. As a result, pupils may take their studies more seriously when it comes. For example, if there was an assignment at the prior meeting or not. (Yuni, 2021)

Likewise, other teacher participants, such as Dana, Yana, and Yono,

reported having a similar experience, which was scheduling an appointment before online learning was carried out or at the very least informing students of the online learning schedule before online learning. It is highly useful, according to them, as a general reminder as well as for students to be more prepared in their studies.

Based on the finding of this study, making an appointment or schedule is an initial process that teachers do before online learning. Lasari (2021) and Tang & Lam (2014) assert that a timely schedule for online classes makes students punctual, disciplined, and highly responsible for learning. Further, Wang et al. (2003) and Wut & Xu (2021) also argue that making a schedule is not only important for determining the time for online learning, but also in doing the tasks or assignments. Scheduling essentially boils down to anticipating how long each assignment will take to complete and then ensuring that the overall amount of time allotted for studying and homework does not exceed the amount of free time they have available.

#### **b. Preparing contents/learning materials and assignments for online learning**

The preparation of learning materials and learning tasks for students is the second process that the teachers engage in when implementing online learning management. Learning materials and varieties of assignments that are appropriate for the topic, the level of difficulty, and the abilities of students are extremely essential in the learning process, especially for online learning. Additionally, learning materials and learning tasks must be adaptable to online learning environments, whether they are delivered synchronously or asynchronously. The following are the views of the teacher participants on this matter.

The next step is for the teacher to ensure that all learning materials and assignments are adequately prepared. Learning assignments must be in accordance with the topic, the level of difficulty must be gradually increased, and students' abilities must be taken into consideration while creating learning assignments. (Dana, 2021)

Meanwhile, Yana and Yono shared their thoughts on the process of developing learning materials and assignments, which may be time-consuming and frustrating for teachers due to the amount of time it requires. Materials and learning assignments must be able to be used in conjunction with online media, regardless of whether the materials and assignments will be delivered synchronously or asynchronously.

Preparing learning materials and learning assignments is quite time-consuming for teachers. This sometimes frustrates us. Materials and assignments must be well designed and can be applied to online learning. (Yana, 2021)

Given the fact that online learning may take place both synchronously and asynchronously, teachers must be able to develop materials and assignments

that can be used in both forms of online learning in order to be effective. For teachers, this may be extremely exhausting and time-consuming at times. (Yono, 2021)

The process of preparation of learning materials and learning assignments was also carried out by other teacher participants, such as Doni, Dini, and Yuni. And, in general, they voiced more or less the same view, which was the difficulty in preparing materials and assignments for online delivery.

The finding of this study which deals with the process of materials and tasks preparation for online learning is also found in other studies (e.g., Asrobi et al., 2021; Dustova & Cotton, 2014; Gujjar & Malik, 2007; Ruthotto et al., 2020; Stevens, 2021). In the Indonesian higher education context, Asrobi et al. (2021) assert that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the availability and use of online learning resources in an e-learning system are becoming more important for many universities. Meanwhile, Stevens (2021) states that materials and task preparation require much time during the first setup phase, but they may be reused several times with only minor modifications, hence reducing the amount of time spent developing materials.

### **c. Delivering materials and tasks through online media**

The third process that the teachers do is the delivery of materials and tasks via online media. The online media platforms employed range from WhatsApp groups, Telegram groups, Google Classroom, Moodle, Google Meet, and Zoom Meetings. However, they frequently use more than one platform to distribute materials and tasks, such as WhatsApp groups, Google Classroom, and Google Meet. WhatsApp or Telegram groups are used to exchange announcements, schedule appointments, remind members of duties, and other information that has to be delivered fast. Asynchronous learning is accomplished using Google Classroom or Moodle. Synchronous learning is accomplished through the usage of Google Meet or Zoom Meeting. The following are some excerpts from interviews with teacher participants.

The process of delivering materials and tasks through online media is done upon an agreed schedule. In order to optimize the online learning experience, we usually use WhatsApp groups, Google Classrooms, and Google Meet. (Dana, 2021)

Practically, the process of materials explanation is done through a variety of mediums, such as WhatsApp and Telegram groups, to communicate information quickly and efficiently. We use Google or Zoom Meetings for the synchronous explanation of the material. In the meanwhile, we post our material and assignments to Google Classroom as asynchronous media. (Doni, 2021)

We frequently use a combination of media to deliver materials and assignments. Moodle has been implemented in our university as a means of delivering material asynchronously. However, if we study synchronously per week, it is unfair to students. As a result, we alternate between synchronous and asynchronous learning via Google Meet or Moodle. (Dini, 2021)

There was a similar response voiced by Yana, Yuni, and Yono, the other teacher participants. As a result, a variety of online learning resources are utilized simultaneously in order to maximize efficiency.

In accordance with this finding, Mohmmmed et al. (2020) state that the transmission of online materials and assignments is more convenient, and it may create a more lively and dynamic teaching and learning environment than traditional classrooms. Therefore, online learning is becoming increasingly popular among educational institutions as a technique of delivering learning materials. However, the use of online learning should not only be a means of delivering knowledge and course materials but also a trigger for getting students interested in course work, with the help of their teachers and the engagement of their peers (Rasmitadila et al., 2020; Reese, 2015; Simamora, 2020).

#### **d. Providing feedback on students' works for evaluation or assessment**

The next process is to provide feedback on students' completed assignments. It becomes more vital to provide feedback on student work as a type of evaluation or assessment of student work. Students can determine if their answer is correct or incorrect by receiving feedback. In addition, they will receive feedback on what should be done with the task, where parts should be revised, and so forth. When it comes to delivering feedback, the teacher can do it in two ways: directly or indirectly. The feedback provided by the teacher is also immediately orally delivered if students' answers/responses are conveyed orally during synchronous learning sessions. In contrast, if students' answers are submitted in writing, it is common for teachers to spend several days or weeks going over each student's answers and then provide each student with a written response that will be returned to them in the end. Here are some excerpts from interviews that have been conducted on this topic.

The final process is to provide critical feedback on students' work. This is a key part of the evaluating process. Students need to know if their work is correct, incorrect, or in need of improvement before they can move forward. (Doni, 2021)

Afterward, we need to provide them feedback on their responses or works. Direct and indirect delivery are the most common methods. Students' oral answers are responded to orally and directly. A student's written answers are checked one by one, which might take days or even weeks to complete. (Yuni, 2021)



Following the delivery of learning materials and tasks, there is one more step that is frequently completed, which is providing feedback on each student's answer. This works the same way as an evaluation and assessment material, which determines whether or not students comprehend the topic taught. (Yono, 2021)

Dealing with this finding, there are a number of studies discussing the importance of giving feedback (e.g., Dzubinski, 2014; Gilmour et al., 2019; Oliver et al., 2011; Sammaknejad & Marzban, 2016; Stewart, 2008; Wut & Xu, 2021). Dzubinski (2014) argues that students are able to persevere because of positive feedback from their teachers and classmates, which encourages them to attempt new things and gradually gain confidence. Further, Oliver et al. (2011) assert that providing feedback to students is one of the most important factors in achieving success in classroom management, whether in an online or offline setting. The online teacher must offer timely feedback to individual students while also fostering a sense of connectedness. Feedback is given when asked, but, like in regular class discussion boards, it is not directed until the groups appear to be using incorrect information. In such cases, immediate feedback is necessary to avoid spreading misinformation to the rest of the class during the project discussion phase (Stewart, 2008; Wut & Xu, 2021).

## **2. The strategy of managing an online EFL classroom**

Using information gathered from the participants' interviews, the researcher discovered that teachers can employ a variety of strategies in managing online EFL classrooms. The most important points to remember are (a) to provide clear instructions in organizing the students (for example, in doing tasks) to minimize students' confusion, and (b) to use a balanced portion of a variety of assignment methods (individual, pair, and group), and (c) to choose interesting learning activities to engage students.

### **a. Providing clear instructions during the online learning process**

In the opinion of the teachers, providing clear directions during the learning process is one of the most significant and very effective strategies in organizing online English classrooms. Because of the distance between the teacher and the students, the clarity of instructions provided by the teacher when students are studying online can help to lessen, if not eliminate, misconceptions among students. One of the participants shared some of his thoughts in an interview, which is included here.

Clear and concise instruction from teachers to students, in my opinion, is a crucial and highly effective method in managing online classrooms. This is extremely significant since teachers and students are separated and located in various places. Students should not be misunderstood when following commands, following directions, or comprehending explanations from the teacher. (Dini, 2022)

I believe that the teacher's ability to communicate clearly and effectively with students is the most important factor. So, students' confusion and misunderstanding will be reduced. (Doni, 2022)

Yana agrees with Dini and Doni's opinion of the clarity of teacher instruction strategies used in the management of online classes. According to her, many students prefer to remain passive when participating in online learning activities such as synchronous classes or discussions through WhatsApp groups. As a result, the teacher's clarity in explaining the material as well as the teaching instruction is critical.

In synchronous classes or discussions in WhatsApp groups, I've seen many students become passive. They don't grasp the teacher's explanations or directions yet are afraid to question. So, the ability to explain and give instructions, simply, and easily understood by students is one of the most crucial strategies for online teachers. (Yana, 2022)

Dana, Yono, and Yuni, on the other hand, agree with the others on the importance of strategy in delivering clear explanations of learning materials and instructions. They have also utilized this strategy in their online classes.

From this finding, it is seen that clarity of instruction is a prime strategy in the online learning process. Dealing with this, Hall (2019) mentions that teacher clarity is connected with the affective or emotional elements of learning. Teacher clarity is also associated with considerable improvements in cognitive learning and affective learning. Further, Iswati (2021) and Wong (2020) explain that the lack of clarity in online instructions will lead to students misinterpreting and submitting work that does not match expectations. It is critical to provide clear direction and instruction while teaching online, as communication hurdles are more likely to arise than in person. Instruction that is of high quality must be clear, concise, and understandable to learners. The cognitive theory of teaching suggests that online learning should be quick and uncluttered in order to lessen the cognitive load on online learners (Bolkan, 2016; Tan et al., 2021).

#### **b. Using a balanced portion of the assignment method**

Choosing the most appropriate assignment method for students is the next strategy that, according to the teacher participants, is quite effective in managing online classrooms. Individual, pair, and group assignments must be equally distributed, according to them, and the assignment process must be balanced. Teachers should provide students with assignments that are useful while also managing the course and communicating with them in a meaningful way. The following are the excerpts from an interview that was conducted on this issue.

In the next part, teachers need to give assignments with the right method. There must be a good combination of individual, pair, and group assignments given by the teacher during online learning. (Yuni, 2022)

Similarly, Dana also believes that the right assignment method is important because students' perceptions might be profoundly shaped by the assignments they get. This is his interview excerpt.

Giving assignments proportionally, both the level of difficulty of the task and the way students work on the task, such as individually, in pairs, or groups, are also important. Giving the right assignment can give a meaningful impression to students. (Dana, 2022)

Meanwhile, Yono also emphasized that a balanced portion of assignments can reduce students' anxiety and boredom levels in online learning so that learning becomes more meaningful. Here is his opinion on this.

I believe that balancing individual and group assignments helps reduce student anxiety and boredom when learning online. In my opinion, this is important. (Yono, 2022)

This finding shows the importance of using a variety and balance assignment methods for students in online learning. According to Stevens (2021), to achieve a balance in assignments, five solutions based on the notions of scaffolding, interaction, and collaboration are recommended, i.e., anticipate students' inquiries, design reusable formative tests, scaffold assignments with numerous components, offer summative assessment options, and promote collaboration. Further, Wang et al. (2003) state that individual and collaborative teamwork assignments should be included in an online course's assignments. Meanwhile, Cabrera et al. (2002) and Dumford & Miller (2018) explain that student engagement in online learning is enhanced by interactions with peers through collaborative learning, discussions, and assignments. Meaningful interaction between learners can come in many forms, and it can be used as a support system, for example, learners can share resources and collaborate on projects/assignments together (Bloomberg, 2020; Sari, 2012).

### **c. Choosing interesting learning activities to engage students**

It can be difficult for even the most experienced teachers to overcome the challenges of online learning. Lack of face-to-face engagement, diminishing student interest, and technological obstacles are just a few of the causes. Based on the interview results, the strategy that can be applied by teachers in managing online learning is using effective online learning activities to engage students, such as brainstorming, Q&A sessions, collaborative worksheet, online debate, presentations, etc. It is depicted in the following interview excerpts.

It is important to keep students engaged when teaching online. Teachers must thus select relevant, interesting, and interactive learning activities, such as brainstorming strategies, to introduce new topics. (Doni, 2022)

Interesting learning activities can increase student participation in online learning, such as debates, online presentations, question and answer sessions, and others. In short, students must be involved in learning activities, not just passively listening to the teacher's explanations. (Dini, 2022)

Dana, in particular, has an opinion on an interesting activity for an online writing class that he thinks everyone should try. Here is his opinion.

When it comes to improving one's writing abilities, a collaborative worksheet is a fun way to learn. This works particularly well in asynchronous classes, in my opinion. A group of students can collaborate on a piece of writing, such as an essay. They may help each other improve their writing by giving each other feedback and suggestions. (Dana, 2022)

Other participants, including Yana, Yuni, and Yono, agreed that the selection of interesting and interactive learning activities to encourage student engagement in online learning is an important factor in increasing student participation. Students' engagement in online courses, such as collaboration, they claim, is pretty crucial, and learning activities that encourage this participation are quite significant.

Several studies support the finding of the importance of engaging students in online learning activities (e.g., Muyassaroh et al., 2019; Stevens, 2021; Wu et al., 2017). According to Chen Hsieh et al. (2017) and Wu et al. (2017), engaging in online class activities pushed participants to apply what they learned in real-world contexts. Dealing with collaborative activities to engage students, Clark & Mayer (2016) state that collaborations between teams of two to five persons that utilize synchronous and/or asynchronous tools can promote students to accomplish an educational purpose, such as producing a joint product, resolving a case study, or completing an instructional worksheet. Engaging learning activities in online EFL classrooms not only promoted meaningful learning while promoting positive interaction and collaboration but also significantly improved participants' verbal communication skills, hence increasing their competence in learning activities (Chen Hsieh et al., 2017; Stevens, 2021; Wu et al., 2017).

### **3. The challenges in managing online EFL classrooms**

There are at least three key issues that teachers face while organizing online English classrooms, according to the findings of the interviews. To summarize, the three issues are: (a) creating online course materials and assignments; (b) building a strong online learning community; and (c) integrating teachers, students, and parents' relationships in dealing with problems of online learning.

#### **a. Developing online learning materials and tasks**

Concerning the difficulties associated with designing or developing online learning materials and assignments, the teacher participants said that the process was time-consuming and exhausting. Teachers are regularly required to create PowerPoint presentations that attract students' attention.

This should be completed by the teacher each week prior to conducting online instruction. The following are some of the participants' comments.

Among the challenges is having to prepare, design, or develop materials for online learning every week. It is quite a time-consuming and tiring for teachers. (Yuni, 2022)

Doni, further, argued that although textbooks or modules are already available, teachers must still need to develop attractive materials and tasks every week.

It is not easy to create or prepare online learning materials and tasks. Every week, teachers must be patient and insightful in selecting resources and tasks that are appropriate for online learning. Even if textbooks or modules are already available, online learning requires unique content that is presented engagingly so that students are not bored. Books and modules are merely a supplement to their self-study. (Doni, 2022)

Dana, like Yuni and Doni, admitted that preparing learning material and tasks for online classes were challenging. Teachers must be creative and innovative in the selection of materials and tasks.

Yes, in this case, the teacher is required to always be creative and innovative so that the materials and assignments for online classes can attract students. This is a challenge for teachers. (Dana, 2022)

The finding of this study reveals that developing online learning materials and tasks is one of the challenges for teachers. This is in accordance with several previous studies (e.g., Cuesta, 2010; Dustova & Cotton, 2014; Gujjar & Malik, 2007; Reese, 2015; Stevens, 2021). Dealing with online learning materials development, Cuesta (2010) argues that online course materials should be developed by considering the needs and performance goals of a certain target audience. Teachers, in developing materials, must plan for and achieve the instructional objectives required for a successful course process. When it comes to designing course materials, instructors must be logical, critical, and creative thinkers who are also skilled in visual inventiveness and capable of empathizing with their students (Gujjar & Malik, 2007). In relation to online tasks or assignments, Stevens (2021) points out that online teachers are responsible for developing relevant learning tasks, but they may find it difficult to keep a balance between their teaching and other responsibilities. Further, Reese (2015) asserts that assignments in online contexts require students to draw on a variety of resources and explain connections between them in order to demonstrate comprehension of a subject matter or concept. Consequently, it is logical that developing online learning materials and tasks becomes one of the challenges in managing online classes.

## **b. Building a strong online learning community**

The following challenge is to establish a strong online learning community. Online learning communities have long been regarded as one of the most critical concepts in technology-assisted learning. Some important keys to creating a strong online learning community are the active participation of students during online learning, social interaction among members, and a similar perception of learning goals among members. The followings are some of the interview excerpts.

Students need to become active participants in their education, rather than passive recipients of information, in order to develop a strong online learning community. Getting students to take an active role in learning is a difficult task for teachers. (Yono, 2022)

Social interaction, teacher-students, and students-students are important in developing a strong online learning community. Online learning makes this challenging, even though many tools exist to help. However, distance makes the 'feeling of connection' less significant, and therefore learning becomes less meaningful. (Yana, 2022)

Teachers and students, as members of an online learning community, should clearly understand the learning goals. They should also create guidelines and regulations to achieve the learning goals. Once they understand and obey the guidelines and rules, the strong online learning community can be sustained and the learning goals can be achieved. However, this is such a challenging thing for teachers. (Doni, 2022)

There are a number of studies that support this finding (e.g., Bloomberg, 2020; Dzubinski, 2014; Geer & Au, 2002; Sari, 2012; Tang & Lam, 2014; Wang et al., 2003). Providing chances for students and teachers to connect informally and officially can help build an inclusive and effective learning environment. The difficulty of building a learning community has been at the heart of online education from its inception (Bloomberg, 2020). Further, Geer & Au (2002) elaborate that in order to create and sustain online learning communities, a well-structured framework for interaction and collaboration is required. A vibrant and engaged community takes time to develop from a properly planned and supported structure. The work invested presumably reflects the learning community's success. It will necessitate constant support from a teacher who can alter the course as required. A community of learners will only flourish if all involved parties are committed to its success.

## **c. Integrating teacher-student-parent relationships in online learning**

Another challenge faced by the teacher participants was parent/family support. The impact of family support on students' participation in e-learning is more readily apparent. Family support encompasses three types of support: environmental support, emotional

support, and capacity support. The integration of teachers, students, and parents' relationships in online learning is critical. Parental involvement has a significant impact on students' success when learning online, for example, by providing a calm and comfortable learning environment, motivating their children, and assisting them if they experience learning difficulties by acting as a mediator between students and teachers.

Another challenge is integrating teachers, students, and parents into online learning. Parents or families can provide material and emotional support to their children. This would be beneficial if it can be realized. (Yuni, 2022)

Teachers, students, and parents should work together in online learning. The role of parents here is very necessary for terms of providing adequate online learning infrastructure, giving motivation to their children, and helping them when they have learning difficulties. For the third, if it is not possible, parents can help communicate their children's difficulties to the teacher. This will have a very positive impact if it can be implemented. (Dana, 2022)

School and parental support for children when learning online is very important. The school has facilitated by providing an online learning platform that can be used by teachers and students. However, what has been lacking so far and become a challenge is optimizing the role of parents or family. For example, online learning requires an internet quota and a comfortable learning environment, which can only be realized by parents at home. (Dini, 2022)

Dealing with this challenge of integrating teacher-student-parent relationships in online learning, some studies support this finding (e.g., Carrión-Martínez et al., 2021; Henderson & McGoey, 2018; Patrikakou, 2015; Willis & Exley, 2018). Online learning has placed financial, psychological, and social burdens on parents or families. Generally, lack of time and parental inability to become teachers at home is the reason for lack of parental engagement and support. To assist students to learn at home, parents supply internet packages, help them grasp the content, and help them complete assignments or assessments (Lase et al., 2021). Further, Carrión-Martínez et al. (2021) point out that schools and families had to work together to improve student achievement. The changes in parental-child relationships resulted in parents feeling more stressed and frustrated, as well as feeling overwhelmed by their children's more challenging schoolwork. Therefore, the strength of the relationship between parents and teachers does have an impact on students' progress (Henderson & McGoey, 2018).

## CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the processes, strategies, and challenges of managing an online EFL classroom from the perspective of Indonesian EFL teachers. To sum up the findings, teachers made scheduled time with students, created materials and assignments for online learning, distributed

those materials and activities via online media, and provided feedback on students' performance, either directly or indirectly, as part of the management process. To successfully manage online EFL classrooms, teachers used a variety of strategies, but the most important were clear instructions, a balance of assignment methods (individual, pair, and group), and interesting learning activities to engage students. Further, the challenges of managing online EFL classrooms were developing online learning materials and tasks, building a strong online learning community, and integrating teacher-student-parent relationships in online learning.

This research suggests that educators continually improve their skills, particularly in terms of digital literacy. Teachers must also continue to develop their pedagogical abilities so that they can effectively manage classrooms, including the creation of online learning communities that have an impact on students. In addition, this study suggests that teachers, students, and parents develop effective communication and collaborate in online learning.

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