

# Vietnamese High School EFL Teachers' Perceptions toward Online Teaching under the Impact of Covid-19

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## ABSTRACT

Since March 2020, the coronavirus disease case, also known as Covid-19, has spread globally. Schools were closed because of a public health emergency in about 100 nations, including Vietnam, according to UNESCO. Teachers have been obliged to switch from face-to-face instruction to online instruction as a result of the condition. This study examined how EFL high school instructors perceived online English language instruction in the context of Covid 19. This study used a mixed-methods approach with a descriptive design. For this study, 216 EFL high school teachers in Mekong Delta were surveyed and interviewed to get their opinions. The results showed that the participants had a very favorable opinion of the value and simplicity of online instruction during the Covid-19 epidemic. The teachers were able to demonstrate the right attitude toward using technology to teach online, despite the fact that they faced various difficulties during the online teaching process. Finally, it is intended that the pedagogical implications of online teaching and learning would support the development of creative teaching methods in the context of high schools in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta.

**Keywords:** Covid 19, Online teaching, Perceptions.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Due to the abruptness of the shift to online learning, the applicability of prior research examining such shifts is questionable. Some of this research looks at the transition to online learning via the innovation theory's perspective, which holds that an innovation's fundamental qualities affect the chances of its success. Grgurovic (2014), for instance, analyzed how a blended learning innovation was implemented based on the innovation's complexity and trialability, but in the case of the pandemic, the move to online learning was so abrupt that it was difficult to test out various implementations of the innovation. Also, Giovannella (2020) conducted a study on the Italian school system to capture how the teachers perceive and experience online learning two months after the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. It was discovered that teachers thought highly of using technology. It seems that the teachers' perspective on online learning has not been given much consideration in the context of Vietnamese. There have been studies that have only examined tools and platforms for online learning. If face-to-face changes necessitate an online learning experience that integrates both classroom learning and online systems that have never been adopted before, teachers have difficult obligations that cannot easily be transferred. Because there is nothing to be learned from prior research and because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is crucial to understand the advantages of online learning as well as its challenges. At the junior high school education level in Vietnam, there is a critical need for research into the effects of the abrupt shift to online teaching. Ideally, this research will produce guidelines for future applications of online teaching and describe information about teacher perceptions and the challenges that teachers feel stand out in relation to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to ascertain how teachers feel about teaching English online.

The result of this research is expected to be used theoretical and practical. This study can support and add to earlier theories regarding the perspectives of online instruction. The research's conclusions may have important applications for both teachers and pupils. In order to keep up with the subject matter, students can use online learning to acquire English materials even while they are not doing it face-to-face in the classroom. It is hoped that this study would give teachers motivation or suggestions for teaching English online. The level of the obstacles faced by students in online instruction can then be determined by teachers based on their perceptions. In short, this study will make some pedagogical implications for EFL language teachers, school leaders, and administrators for the enhancement of training for online teaching.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Language Education and COVID-19 Pandemic*

One of the most profound systemic disturbances in history has been caused by the Covid 19 epidemic. While the pandemic mostly had an impact on public health, there were also negative spillover effects in the field of education. Around 1.6 billion students in more than 190 countries were affected, making education one of the industries with the most severe interruptions (UNESCO, 2020). Because the illness is so contagious, nations and international authorities decided to close schools and institutions in an effort to curb the virus's spread. It was once believed that closing schools were one of the finest ways to create social and physical distance. Given that all colleges in Vietnam were mandated to become totally online for two months, COVID-19-associated social distancing added new problems to social work education on top of these already existing ones. There is still a great deal to learn about the circumstances, benefits, drawbacks, and student evaluation of online learning in general and social work in particular. Although Vietnam is so far among the countries that have basically controlled COVID-19 and nearly brought people's lives back to normality, COVID-19 has still been a worldwide threat with a possible second wave of outbreak. Online teaching, according to Rusman (2011), includes any educational activities that are supported by technology. Both traditional education and online education can benefit from these exercises. Online education is described as a "revolutionary strategy" by Jennex (2015) and Twigg (2002) for preparing the workforce to transform changes into advantages. For instance, Twigg (2002) offers an interactive, repeatable, and adjustable system as part of the learner-centered and project-centered online teaching method.

### B. *Online Teaching: Benefits and Challenges*

Carliner (2003) defines online teaching as "access to learning experiences through the use of technology. Meanwhile, Anderson (2008) describes online teaching as a subset of remote education that has always focused on giving access to an educational experience that is, at the very least, more time and space flexible than campus-based education. In a book review on e-learning methodologies, Marc (2007) listed the following benefits of online instruction: Flexible in terms of time and location, it offers the chance for relationships to develop between students through the use of discussion forums, helps remove participation barriers like the fear of speaking with other students and encourages students to interact with others. Furthermore, Anderson (2008) also lists the following benefits of online learning for students: While synchronous online teaching offers real-time interaction between students and teachers, the students can use the internet to access current and relevant learning materials and can communicate with experts in the field they are studying.

Almosa (2002) asserts that there are several drawbacks to online teaching. First, the learners become undergo contemplation, remoteness, as well a lack of interaction or relation. Second, it is less effective than the traditional method of learning because of the offer of explanations, as well as interpretations. Although the students may have good academic knowledge, they might not have the necessary communication skills to impart their information to others. Third, it is difficult to control or regulate sinful activities like cheating on the test for assessment, misled to piracy and plagiarism, deteriorating the role of instructor, purely scientific fields that include practical cannot be properly studied through e-learning, and the heavy use of some websites bring about unanticipated costs both in time and money. The lack of student involvement and concerns with isolation in online learning is the next challenge because most online courses are asynchronous, allowing students to participate from various locations, which may lead to students feeling lonely. Unfortunately, there are few research studies investigating students' perspectives on online learning, including the effectiveness of instruction, chances for collaboration, teamwork, and technology integration. This study will give information that could aid higher education institutions in creating and promoting their online course offerings by gaining knowledge of students' perceptions of online learning.

According to Aras Bozkur et al. (2020), online learning during a pandemic is a serious emergency in remote education and is very distinct from planned practices like distance learning, online learning, or other derivations. Additionally, this study offered a worldwide perspective and picture; yet, other nations continued to teach and learn despite the Covid-19 outbreak, demonstrating how nearly every country's technological readiness affects the success of online learning. Rasmitadila et al. (2020) provided a thorough explanation of Indonesia's technological readiness for COVID-19. It should be in keeping with the national humanist curriculum and have backing and cooperation from all parties involved, including the government, schools, teachers, parents, and the community. A suitable teaching approach was also required given the readiness of technology.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The research questions that informed this study are:

1. *What are teachers' perceptions of media and strategies used in online teaching?*
2. *What are the benefits of online teaching from high school EFL teachers' perceptions?*
3. *What are the challenges of online teaching from high school EFL teachers' perceptions?*

This study used mixed-method research in which both quantitative and qualitative methods were used for collecting data. The research consisted of two stages. In the first stage, the questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from respondents. The questionnaire consists of 38 items that are constructed to investigate students' perspectives about positive and challenging aspects of online learning. The subjects involved in this study are high school EFL teachers in high schools in the Mekong Delta who are experiencing online teaching during Covid 19 crisis. Six participants are chosen to participate in the follow-up interview. 216 participants from high schools in Me Kong Delta participated in this study. The participants consisted of 51 (23.6%) males and 165 (76.4%) females. These participants were assumed to be different in terms of proficiency and experience.

To answer the two questions in the study, the researcher used two instruments: (1) the questionnaire on the teachers' perceptions toward online teaching and (2) the interview on teachers' depth. The questionnaire was comprised of 38 items in total. The data obtained from the questionnaire were subjected to the Statistics Package for the Social Science (SPSS) for the data analysis. The table below shows how this 5-point Likert scale operates when using SPSS to analyze the research data.

TABLE I: SUMMARY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Categories	Items
Teachers' perception on media used on online teaching	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
Teachers' perception on the strategy used on online teaching	11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18
Teachers' perception of advantages on online teaching	19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28
Teachers' perception of disadvantages on online teaching	29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38

Six teachers under investigation included two with the highest, two with the average, and the other two with the lowest mean scores in the questionnaire were involved in the interview. However, there is a difference in the direction of these scales, for example, clusters 1 and 2 might be a low score on questions 6, 8, 10, 13, and 15 but a high score on others. Before conducting any analyses, it is important to ensure that all items are consistent with each other in terms of what an agreement or disagreement means for the attribute being measured. To do this, it is a good idea to reverse score all the questions that are "negatively phrased" in order to ensure consistency across all variables. The aim of reverse scoring is to recode the responses so that a high score is transformed into the corresponding low score on the scale. For example, on a 5-point scale, 4 is transformed into 2, and vice-versa.

### IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

#### A. Teachers' Perceptions on Media and Strategy Used in Online Teaching

A great number of EFL high school teachers showed their perceptions of media used in online teaching. The finding was supported by both quantitative and qualitative data. The results of the first cluster of the questionnaire with ten items were shown in Table II below.

TABLE II: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON MEDIA USED IN ONLINE TEACHING

Items	Mean	SD & D (%)	Neutral (%)	A & SA (%)
1. Online media is more complete than face-to-face.	2.95	39.9	15.6	44.5
2. Online learning media makes learning effective.	2.93	44.9	16.2	38.9
3. It would be easy to be competent in the use of online learning media.	3.29	27.7	15.8	56.5
4. Online learning media is easier than face-to-face.	2.87	3.61	14.8	49.1
5. Online learning media will soon substitute the face-to-face approach.	2.57	20.4	23.6	56
6. (I find it difficult to educate students using online learning media.)	3.18	48.1	18.1	33.8
7. I feel comfortable using online learning media.	3.31	26	18.9	55.1
8. (I do not understand how to use online learning media.)	3.90	74.5	19.9	5.6
9. I prefer to use online learning media to teach.	3.23	26.9	25.4	47.7
10. (I prefer to respond to the questions directly rather than through online media.)	2.55	23.7	14.8	65.1

\* N=216; SD & D: Strongly disagree & Disagree; A & SA: Agree & Strongly agree.

The results in Table VII indicated that most of the participants positively responded to these items. Significantly, half of the participants ( $n=216$ ) responded that it's easy to educate students using online learning media ( $M=3.32$ ), they feel comfortable using online media when they teach ( $M=2.79$ ), and they prefer to use the online learning media to teach ( $M=2.26$ ), and online media is more complete than face-to-face ( $M=2.89$ ). It can clearly be seen in Items 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9. However, 48.1% of the participants stated

that they find it difficult to educate students using online learning media ( $M=3.18$ ) and they do not understand how to use online learning media ( $M=3.90$ ) on the proof of Items 6 and 8. In addition, a large number of the participants showed their agreement with Item 10. "I prefer to respond to the questions directly rather than through online media" (61.5% agree;  $M=2.55$ ). To sum it up, it is found that mostly the teachers' perceptions of media as an indicator of English online teaching media were quite positive. It can be seen clearly that online teaching is access to learning experiences via some technology. The teachers have to use media as effectively as by taking advantage of technological developments. (Carliner, 2004). The result of this study is relevant to the result of previous research. The research conducted by (Yanti, Setiawan, Nurhabibah, & Yannuar, 2018) states that the teachers perceived that online learning media is a useful and also easy to use technology. It was found that the teachers are satisfied with the advantages of the use of this new technology in their teaching process. It means that the teachers' perception was quite positive. Giovannella (2020) conducted a study on the Italian school system to capture how the teachers perceive and experience online education two months after the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. It was found that teachers had a positive perception of using technologies.

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to present more data related to high school EFL teachers' perceptions of media used in online teaching is presented in Table III below.

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Teachers' perceptions on media used in online teaching	216	1.80	5.00	3.08	0.55

From Table III, it can be seen that the mean score of the teachers' perceptions on media used in online teaching is 3.08 ( $M=3.08$ ). Then, a one-sample T-Test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean score of the teachers' perceptions on media used in online teaching ( $M=3.08$  as a medium level) was statistically different from the test value of 3.4 considered the high level in light of the Oxford framework, 1990. The results revealed no significant difference between the mean score of EFL teachers' perception on the strategy used on online teaching and the test value ( $t=0.088$ ,  $df=215$ ,  $p=0.930$ ). The results showed that EFL students have a positive perception of the media used in online teaching. To consider whether there was a significant difference between the perceptions of the male teachers ( $M=3.04$ ) and those of the female teachers ( $M=3.09$ ) towards the media used in online teaching, an Independent-Samples T-Test was conducted. The results disclosed no significant difference between the perceptions of the male and female teachers towards the media used in online teaching ( $t=-0.560$ ,  $p=0.576$ ). Participants' perceptions about the media used in online teaching were the same, taking gender into consideration.

The quantitative data in conjunction with the qualitative data leaked that EFL high school teachers' perceptions of strategies used in online teaching were negative. The results of the second cluster of the questionnaire consisting of eight items are shown in Table IV below.

Items	Mean	SD & D (%)	Neutral (%)	A & SA (%)
1. I prefer an online learning-teaching environment rather than the face-to-face one.	2.44	64.3	20.8	14.9
2. I feel that teaching in the classroom is better.	3.80	12.5	9.3	78.2
3. (I feel that there is no difference between the online and face-to-face learning environment.)	3.67	69.4	15.7	14.8
4. I suggest that more learning be conducted online because the learning environment is engaging.	2.91	31.5	28.2	40.3
5. (I believe that online learning is good but to learn English with it will be difficult.)	2.64	23.1	21.3	55.6
6. I find it easier to teach online.	2.91	41.2	24.5	34.3
7. I am more creative when teaching online.	3.48	18	17.7	64.3
8. Online teaching has contributed greatly to my satisfaction in teaching students.	2.58	54.1	26.9	19

\* N=216; SD & D: Strongly disagree & Disagree; A & SA: Agree & Strongly agree.

From the data in Table IV, more than 64.3% of the teachers didn't prefer an online teaching environment rather than the face-to-face one. ( $M=2.71$ ) on the evidence of Item 1. Also, 78.2% agreed that teaching in the classroom is better ( $M=3.21$ ). They stated that no difference between the online and face-to-face learning environments. ( $M=3.67$ ) and online learning is good but learning English with it will be difficult ( $M=2.64$ ). It can be seen clearly on Items 3, and 5. Additionally, in Item 8, more than half of the teachers expressed that online teaching has contributed greatly to their satisfaction in teaching students and they suggested that more learning be conducted online because the learning environment is engaging. ( $M=4.08$  and  $M=2.91$ ). However, the majority of the teachers believed that they are more creative when teaching online (63.4% agree;  $M=2.47$ ) in Item 7. In summary, the results showed that EFL teachers' perceptions of strategies used in online teaching were negative.

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to find out the average level of the EFL teachers' perception of strategies used in online teaching. The results were presented in Table V below.

TABV: TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF STRATEGIES USED IN ONLINE TEACHING

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Teachers' perceptions of strategies used in online teaching	216	1.88	4.75	3.05	0.43

As presented in Table V, the mean score of the teachers' perceptions of strategies used in online teaching is 3.05 ( $M=3.05$ ). Next, a One-Sample T-Test was run to investigate whether the mean score of the teachers' perceptions of strategies used in online teaching ( $M=3.05$  as the average level) was statistically different from the test value of 3.4 considered a high level in light of the Oxford framework, 1990. The results showed no significant difference between the mean score of EFL teachers' perceptions of strategies used in online teaching and the test value ( $t=0.306$ ,  $df=215$ ,  $p=0.760$ ). The results indicated that EFL teachers have a negative perception of the strategy used in online teaching. An independent-sample T-Test was conducted to investigate whether there was any difference between the attitudes of the male teachers ( $M=3.02$ ) and those of the female teachers ( $M=3.07$ ) towards the perceptions of strategies used in online teaching. The results indicated that there was no significant difference ( $t=-0.697$ ,  $df=214$ ,  $p=0.487$ ). This implies that male and female teachers' perceptions of the perceptions on strategies used in online teaching are not different.

### B. Teacher's Perception toward Benefits of Online Teaching

The quantitative data in conjunction with the qualitative data leaked that EFL teachers well perceived positive perceptions of the benefits of online teaching. The results of the third cluster of the questionnaire consisting of ten items are shown in Table VI below.

TVI: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD BENEFITS OF ONLINE TEACHING

Items	Mean	SD & D (%)	Neutral (%)	A & SA (%)
1. Online teaching increases my time management skills.	3.34	25.9	16.2	57.9
2. Online teaching develops my lesson-planning skills.	3.45	19.3	15.3	65.4
3. Online teaching makes my performance improves.	3.12	31.9	23.2	44.9
4. Online teaching can be cost -saving.	3.53	19.5	14.7	65.8
5. Online teaching helps me think innovatively and creatively.	3.55	17.6	15.8	66.6
6. Online learning is interesting for teachers and students.	2.89	35.2	23.1	41.7
7. Online learning makes students learn effectively.	2.48	58.8	24	17.2
8. Online learning can reduce discrimination and prejudice.	3.01	34.7	25	40.3
9. Online learning can enable teachers to understand how to integrate ICT skills into their online teaching.	3.86	7.9	11	81.1
10. Online learning provides students with computer skills..	3.65	13	15.3	71.7

\* N=216; SD & D: Strongly disagree & Disagree; A & SA: Agree & Strongly agree.

From the data in Table VI, more than 50.0% of the teachers believed online teaching increases their time management skills (*Item 1*,  $M=3.34$ ), develops their lesson-planning skills (*Item 2*,  $M=3.45$ ), makes their performance improves (*Item 3*,  $M=3.12$ ) and can be cost-saving (*Item 4*,  $M=3.53$ ). They stated that online teaching helps them think innovatively and creatively (*Item 5*,  $M=3.55$ ) and enables teachers to understand how to integrate ICT skills into their online teaching (*Item 9*,  $M=3.86$ ). Also, they believed that online learning makes students learn effectively ( $M=2.48$ ) and can reduce discrimination and prejudice ( $M=3.01$ ). It can clearly be seen in Items 7 and 8. Strikingly, in Item 10, only 71.7% of the teachers agreed that online learning provides students with computer skills ( $M=3.65$ ). In summary, the results showed that EFL high school teachers well identified the positive impacts of online teaching. According to (Arora, 2019), teachers can find unlimited information that they can access via the internet. It will make teachers think more innovatively and creatively because online teaching can help develop their cognitive abilities. Besides, the teachers who choose to teach online have an opportunity to gain technical skills in using ICT (Arora, 2019). The result of this study is relevant to the result of previous research. The research conducted by (Martene & Bernadowski, 2016) states that online teaching has made it easier for the teachers with limitations to provide the activities; improvements have been made in teachers' academic performance; teachers have had success with asynchronous and synchronous teaching and student motivation has increased.

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to find out the average level of the EFL teacher's perception of the benefits of online teaching. The results were presented in Table VII below.

TABLE VII: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD BENEFITS OF ONLINE TEACHING

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Teachers' perceptions on benefits of online teaching	216	1.20	5.00	3.29	0.64



From Table VII, it can be seen that the mean score of the teachers' perceptions of the benefits of online teaching is 3.29 ( $M=3.29$ ). Then, a one-sample T-Test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean score of the teachers' perceptions of the benefits of online teaching ( $M=3.29$  as a medium level) was statistically different from the test value of 3.4 considered a high level in light of the Oxford framework, 1990. The results revealed no significant difference between the mean score of EFL teachers' perception of the benefits of online teaching and the test value ( $t=0.070$ ,  $df=215$ ,  $p=0.945$ ). The results showed that EFL students have a positive perception of the benefits of online teaching. To consider whether there was a significant difference between the perceptions of the male teachers ( $M=3.36$ ) and those of the female teachers ( $M=3.27$ ) regarding the benefits of online teaching, an Independent-Samples T-Test was conducted. The results disclosed no significant difference between the perceptions of the male and female teachers towards the media used in online teaching ( $t=0.883$ ,  $p=0.378$ ). Participants' perceptions of the benefits of online teaching were the same, taking gender into consideration.

Additionally, these findings were strongly supported by interview data. First, most of the teachers who were invited to the interview go along with the view that online teaching is very flexible and can be cost-saving. One teacher stated:

*"Online teaching is very flexible. Our teachers can teach anywhere that feels comfortable and quiet. In addition, we save the cost of teaching and the time to go to school." (FT1)*

Besides, 3 out of 6 teachers strongly support the flexibility of online teaching for both teachers and students. They claimed identical points of view as follows:

*"Online teaching offers flexibility in time as well as comfortable space for both teachers and students, based on online classroom platforms and learning support sites such as google classroom or doc." (FT2)*

*"I don't need to go to school so my time is more flexible and less expensive. I have more time for preparation" (MT3)*

Second, all the teachers tend to agree that online teaching helps teachers and students improve their computer skills. They have an opportunity to learn and practice through some websites as well as submit their homework quickly and effectively. One of the teachers said:

*"I realize that both teachers and students have the opportunity to improve their technology capabilities to serve learning and teaching. Students are also quite interested in online activities" (FT1)*

*"It is also more convenient to submit assignments online, just sending them via zalo or email, from which teachers can also save printing costs." (MT4)*

Finally, teachers also shared their view that online teaching is a good solution in that serious time of Covid 19 because of students' and teachers' safety. One said:

*"The biggest advantage of online teaching is that it reduces the risk of students being infected with covid to the lowest level because they have not been vaccinated, and also helps parents feel more secure. Teachers will have more flexible time and better preparation." (FT5)*

*"Learning materials are stored on management software, so students can easily access and download them at any time. Also, the lectures are recorded and saved so that students who are absent from school can review them without losing their lessons. (MT4)*

### C. Teacher's Perception of Challenges of Online Teaching

Both quantitative and qualitative data revealed the challenges of online teaching. The results of the fourth cluster of the questionnaire with ten items were shown in Table VIII below.

As presented in Table VIII, Item 8 received the most negative responses, which indicated that learning process can be disrupted because of poor accessibility to the internet connection (90.3% agree;  $M= 4.12$ ). The majority of the teachers perceived that it is difficult to communicate with the students in the online classroom (Item 1,  $M=3.63$ ), reduce student motivation (Item 2,  $M=3.63$ ), keep classroom interaction with the students (Item 6,  $M=3.56$ ) and makes students feel isolated during the learning process (Item 7,  $M=3.26$ ). Noticeably, only 30.1% of the participants agreed on Items 3 which showed that online learning can hinder learning because it takes so much costs. In Item 9 and 10, teachers showed that learning process can be disrupted because teachers do not know technology well and it's difficult for students to submit the assignments on online learning ( $M=3.73$  and  $3.34$ , respectively). In conclusion, the results unveiled a large number of the students' agreement on the challenges of online teaching. The result of this study is relevant to the result of previous research. According to (Todd, 2020) in his survey of all 52 English language teachers at one respected Thai university, the teachers have a positive perception of challenges of online

learning such as limited access to the internet and less interaction with the students. Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that most teachers perceived the challenges of online teaching. By using online learning, the teachers can get to know more about technology and they can be more creative and innovative in the learning process. Still, other teachers have negative perceptions of online teaching. Online learning can cause miscommunication with the students. Also, the teachers who are unfamiliar with the ICT will find it difficult to teach the students in the learning process.

TABLE VIII: TEACHER'S PERCEPTION OF CHALLENGES OF ONLINE TEACHING

Items	Mean	SD & D (%)	Neutral (%)	A & SA (%)
1. I find it difficult to communicate with the students in the online classroom.	3.63	17.2	7.4	75.4
2. Online learning can reduce student motivation.	3.63	17.1	10.7	72.2
3. Online learning can hinder learning because it takes so much costs.	2.89	37.1	32.8	30.1
4. Online learning reduces social interaction between teachers and students.	3.74	14.3	11.2	74.5
5. Online learning makes it difficult for students when they want to ask questions.	2.95	41.2	12.9	45.9
6. I find it difficult to keep classroom interaction with the students.	3.51	22.7	9.7	67.6
7. Online learning makes students feel isolated during the learning process.	3.26	30.5	17.7	51.8
8. Learning process can be disrupted because of poor accessibility to the internet connection.	4.12	6.0	3.7	90.3
9. Learning process can be disrupted because teachers do not know technology well.	3.73	12.1	14.7	73.2
10. It's difficult for students to submit the assignments on online learning.	3.34	30.1	11.9	58.0

\* N=216; SD & D: Strongly disagree & Disagree; A & SA: Agree & Strongly agree.

A Descriptive Statistics Test was run to check for teachers' perceptions towards the challenges of online teaching. The results were presented in Table IX below.

TABLE IX: TEACHER'S PERCEPTION TOWARD CHALLENGES OF ONLINE TEACHING

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Teachers' perceptions of challenges of online teaching	216	1.00	5.00	3.48	0.66

From Table IX.8, it can be seen that the mean score of the teachers' perceptions of the challenges of online teaching is 3.48 ( $M=3.48$ ). Then, a one-sample T-Test was conducted to evaluate whether the mean score of the teachers' perceptions on challenges of online teaching ( $M=3.48$  as a high level) was statistically different from the test value of 3.4 considered the high level in light of the Oxford framework, 1990. The results revealed no significant difference between the mean score of EFL teachers' perception challenges of online teaching and the test value ( $t=0.093$ ,  $df=215$ ,  $p=0.926$ ). The results showed that EFL students have high perceptions of the challenges of online teaching. An independent-sample T-Test was conducted to investigate whether there was any difference between the perceptions of the male students ( $M=3.45$ ) and those of the female students ( $M=3.49$ ) regarding the challenges of online teaching. The results indicated that there was a significant difference ( $t=0.334$ ,  $p=0.739$ ). Therefore, male and female teachers' perceptions of the challenges of online teaching are not different. Participants' perceptions on the benefits of online teaching were the same, taking gender into consideration.

The quantitative results were correlated to what was explored in the interviews, online teaching has some challenges that may impede the teachers from using it. The first challenge that six interviewed teachers share is a large amount of time to invest in online teaching. Whether it takes time in the preparation step, to choose and adapt the activities, during the process of teaching, or at times to consolidate after teaching, online teaching requires teachers' careful preparation and reasonable organization in order to obtain effectively rewarding results. A teacher with about 3 years of experience teaching high school students explained her difficulties:

*"I feel that it takes me more time to prepare online lessons than f2f ones. I have to combine games or software so that they can grasp the lesson without the lecture being too boring..." (MT3)*

Considering stable wifi connection and modern facilities for online learning and teaching, all of the teachers stated that online teaching is hard for students because they lack wifi connection. Three of them claimed:

*"On the negative side, the biggest difficulty is that not all students have a stable internet connection and a quiet place to study. In the learning process, they also encounter problems such as teachers can't hear their answers..." (FT1)*

*“Their learning process is affected by external factors that can also disrupt their concentration in learning, in addition to other problems such as unstable networks, and unstable devices. It also affects the lesson a lot.” (FT2)*

Additionally, one difficulty that all the teachers had was managing the classroom. Among these, managing the cacophony brought on by online learning and inspiring pupils merit attention. If the second wave of school closings were to occur before the health crisis has been fully addressed, developing strong learning attitudes, for example, is essential if students are to remain focused and motivated in challenging learning environments, and could therefore be key to addressing the main difficulties that students may encounter again in the near future. The interaction between teachers and students is one of the key factors in determining how satisfied they are with online courses, according to Nambiar (2020) and Orhan & Beyhan (2020). The pleasure of teachers was significantly influenced by students' engagement.

## V. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

In conclusion, the analysis of the questionnaire and interview data has been reported in this chapter to examine EFL high school teachers' perceptions of online teaching. The positive attitudes toward online teaching and the challenges that these participants confront are beneficial to raising the consciousness of EFL high school teachers around the world about what they can do and should do for more effective online teaching. As indicated in the section of Literature Review, there are many benefits and challenges discussed based on some previous studies by other researchers. Surprisingly, many of the responses received in this research had the same points of view as in the second chapter.

Firstly, the results obtained from this research are shown to be reliable and detailed. Talking over the online teaching media, a majority of teachers who participated in this study agreed that it is easier than f2f teaching. Online teaching media makes learning effective as it helped students absorb knowledge effectively through interactive activities. For example, the statement of the research conducted by Yanti, Setiawan, Nurhabibah, and Yannuar (2018) shows that the teachers perceived that online learning media is useful and also easy to use technology is actually right. In the current study, the teacher participants believed that online teaching media made learning more effective through interactive activities. In addition, for the strategies used in online teaching, the findings in the current study are very similar but more detailed in terms of teachers' perceptions. In fact, the teachers recommended that more learning be done online because it was a fun setting. In a similar vein, Bonner and Reinders (2018) found that the employment of online techniques in language learning processes encouraged students to actively engage in the online learning process and improved the environment for online teaching and learning.

Secondly, in terms of the advantages of online instruction, it has been mentioned that students can access the materials at any time and interact with subject matter experts. In fact, the majority of the teachers who took part in the current survey felt favorable about this element. These findings are fairly similar to those of the other studies, but they are more focused on the manner that online instruction benefits from flexible characteristics of time and space. Additionally, online instruction uses IT to successfully teach students using audio files, videos, applications, and internet resources wherever and whenever they are. Moreover, online teaching helped teachers think innovatively and creatively, and they knew more about IT skills to facilitate their teaching. Such findings are in accordance with those in the studies by various researchers. In fact, Anderson (2008) lists some advantages of online teaching for learners and teachers such as no time zones, location, and distance. Besides, while the benefits of online teaching include the flexibility to complete assignments at a time that is most convenient to the student, both teachers and students still need to manage their time wisely to ensure students complete their assignments by the deadlines. As a result, students not only gain knowledge from the coursework but also sharpen their time management skills. So, it is safe to say that online teaching brings convenience, time savings, and reduced costs are hailed as significant positive aspects that push it towards adoption and continued use in the future (Shubhrajyotsna, 2016).

Finally, for the challenges of online teaching, based on the study of Lestyanawati & Widyantoro (2020), it was stated that technology infrastructure was the most frequent challenge for teachers and students, and the results of this study said that lacking IT skills, IT facilities, Internet connection are the big disadvantages. It can be seen clearly from the findings that working individually seems not interesting and attractive to students as interacting directly. In addition, Nambiar (2020) and Orhan & Beyhan (2020) emphasized that interaction between teachers and students is one of the crucial aspects of teacher and student satisfaction with online categories. The pleasure of teachers was significantly influenced by students' engagement. Due to the full dialogue and interaction, face-to-face instruction was more successful for teachers than online instruction. One of the main causes of students failing to finish online courses is still a lack of self-motivation on their own. During their learning activities, students are frequently left on their own with no one prodding them along toward their learning objectives.



## VI. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

### A. *Implications for EFL Teachers*

Future decisions regarding using online instruction should be influenced by the lessons discovered from this study and other studies. Instructors should spend more time learning practical knowledge or strategies for successful online teaching by joining, sharing, and frequently collaborating with others in online professional communities all over the world. This will help them overcome challenges like a lack of proper training for conducting an online class and related issues, a lack of computer and digital technology competency, and a lack of time for online course design and online test preparation. The instructors must take into account how crucial learner motivation is in online instruction. Increasing communication with students through regularly used apps like Zalo, Facetime, Facebook, etc. to remind and encourage them to work hard in class or listen to them and try to solve their problems is one of the most successful strategies to boost students' motivation. In order to encourage students to participate in class excitedly and actively, teachers must provide more appealing learning activities or mini-games. Instructors are advised to employ a problem-based learning technique that necessitates student cooperation in order to promote student interaction. They will collaborate and have discussions in small groups in order to evaluate, synthesize, and present their findings. Other students are also requested by the teacher to carefully listen to the presentation before providing insightful criticism or participating in "Q&A." The dynamic of the online classroom will then remain similar to that of the offline one because all students can connect with their peers and teacher without feeling uncomfortable.

### B. *Implications for EFL Students*

In order to improve social connections when teaching online, both teachers and students must come up with innovative strategies. Advanced learning techniques and motivational techniques are needed for online instruction. Additionally, students require knowledge of how to arrange their days, strike a balance between work and play, and take care of their welfare.

### C. *Implications for School Administrations*

In the community that is the school, asking for assistance and support is made simpler by direct interaction with the teachers. Students are better able to finish their studies when they have the support of their parents and the community. Teachers believe that a school's strategy, where everyone is equally committed to and responsible for pupils, should be the foundation for online instruction. Furthermore, it is advised that the school launch professional development initiatives for online teaching, such as lectures and workshops delivered by experts in the field from other academic institutions. With the help of these apps, educators can transform their traditional lessons into an electronic format while becoming familiar with the many features and tools of the online teaching platform. Teachers will become more proficient in computer technology, expand their knowledge of and experience with online teaching, and spend less time creating and organizing online lessons or tests. In order to address other learner-related challenges like the caliber of the internet connection and students' device specifications, schools should consider offering free high-speed internet for educational platforms or applications or providing financial support for those students to have better learning devices.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and the discussions of the study, the researcher put forward directions for further research. Imposing online learning at the time of Covid-19 had caused both opportunities and challenges for Vietnamese teachers to simultaneously experience online education with predictable disadvantages. Despite the fact that technology has improved learning environments, various barriers prevented teachers from continuing online instruction. It is useful to forecast the future of online courses based on an analysis of the impacts of online teaching barriers in order to assess learners' preferences and suggest a series of activities to maximize online learning and teaching's effectiveness. Importantly, there may be worth noticing results to compare teachers' perceptions and students' perceptions toward online teaching and learning. In addition, the combination of various methodologies such as questionnaires, interviews, online class observation, etc. should be taken into account to explore participants' perceptions of online teaching and learning.

## VIII. LIMITATIONS

Although the research has reached its aims, there were some avoidable limitations. The first constraint of the current study is that it involved a small sample size of teacher participants. The respondents consist of 216 EFL high school teachers having experienced teaching online in Covid 19, who responded to a

questionnaire regardless of those who took part in the piloting of the questionnaire. Six of them were invited randomly to participate in the semi-structured interviews. Consequently, such a modest number of participants may be not good representatives of the whole population. Thus, it is hard to generalize the result to the teaching context in high schools in Vietnam. Lack of classroom observation is regarded as another limitation of this study. Although the questionnaire and personal interview were employed to collect data, observing online classes would probably help the researcher have a closer and clearer look at how teachers and students deal with the challenges in teaching and studying online. It could be better if the study was carried out with the use of different data collecting tools to obtain a much more reliable conclusion. Nevertheless, the findings of the current research are expected to be useful to teachers, high school students, and school administrations. In addition, the present study hopefully inspires researchers who are interested in the field of online teaching as well as using online platforms in teaching under the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

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