Vol. VIII, No. II (Spring 2023)

Pages: 580 – 588

DOI: 10.31703/gesr.2023(VIII-II).52

Citation: Farid, M. F., Parveen, S., & Iqbal, A. (2023). Problems Faced and Coping Strategies during Online Teaching by EFL Teachers at Secondary Level. *Global Educational Studies Review*, VIII(II), 580-588. https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2023(VIII-II).52



Problems Faced and Coping Strategies during Online Teaching by EFL Teachers at Secondary Level

Muhammad Faisal Farid

Sabahat Parveen †

Asif Iqbal *

Corresponding Author: Muhammad Faisal Farid (Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Education, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: dr.faisal.farid@ue.edu.pk)

Abstract: This research explored the challenges faced by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers in the realm of online teaching/learning and the strategies to overcome these obstacles. The objectives were to explore the challenges of EFL teachers during online teaching classes and to suggest coping strategies for EFL teachers. Twenty teachers were selected randomly from five secondary schools. The study employs a qualitative approach, via in-depth interviews, to explore the various hurdles EFL learners encounter in online learning. Findings revealed many challenges including limited face-to-face interaction, technological issues, self-motivation, and the absence of immediate feedback. The study also illuminates the coping strategies employed by EFL learners, such as leveraging online resources, forming virtual study groups, and adopting time management techniques. The thematic analysis produced five conclusions. Teaching materials, corrective measures, and instructional techniques regarding coping mechanisms utilized by EFL teachers, whereas multiple factors encounter difficulties when teaching low achievers.

Key Words: Language Learning Problems, Coping Strategies, Students' Learning

Introduction

Understanding the problems faced and the coping strategies employed by EFL learners in online learning environments is pivotal in enhancing the efficacy of online language education. The literary approach fosters abilities that help pupils' language abilities (Hassan, 2018). On the other hand, the linguistic perspective is crucial comprehending literary works and starting a literary dialogue (Bazimaziki, 2020). The students are learning in an online context, and teaching EFL literature and linguistics is considerably more challenging. The abrupt and infrequent integration of remote classes into schools presented a novel difficulty for both teachers and students (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). Teachers, as a result, place a strong emphasis on effective and efficient learning methods that target crucial language abilities including reading, speaking, writing, and listening. Literary teaching causes instructors' problems and concerns (Bazimaziki, 2020; Joshi, et al., 2020). The teachers face many problems with teaching materials, corrective instructional measures, and techniques regarding coping mechanisms utilized by EFL teachers, whereas multiple factors encounter

p- ISSN: 2708-2113 e-ISSN: 2708-3608 URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2023(VIII-II).52

^{*} Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Education, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

[†] Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Education, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

^{*} Associate Professor, Department of Education, University of Education, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

difficulties when teaching low achievers (Khalid, 2017).

Like teaching linguistics, teaching English seeks to increase students' language proficiency, although teachers find it more difficult. Students who struggle with language may have trouble learning literature (Hussein Al-Emami, 2016; Hassan, 2018). Additionally, students' learning is hampered by insufficient sources for reading enthusiasm, problems (Hassan, Mohammed. 2017). Teachers must use alternative strategies than linguistics instruction to support students' literary learning, which can be difficult given their inexperience (Mohammed, 2017). When teaching English, teachers must carefully choose their methods and offer the appropriate resources and activities. The abrupt shift to online learning has recently presented teachers with even greater hurdles when it comes to teaching English. Due to transformation, teachers are now faced with new issues because they are unprepared for online education (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). The obstacles to teaching EFL online, focus on the teacher, as well as instructional technology (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Bazimaziki, 2020).

Online literary instruction requires teachers to take into account their own technological proficiency, subject delivery, and student accessibility. Raja, et al., (2018), explored the essential steps of online learning for learners. According to Efriana (2021), Hassan (2018), Hussein & Al-Emami (2016), teachers may also have difficulties when it comes to assigning engaging tasks with effective time management, assessments, online teaching resources, and literary works. When teaching English to students, teachers should pay special care to selecting texts that are developmentally appropriate, engaging, and free of unfamiliar language, grammar, and figures of speech (Hussein & Al-Emami, 2016). It is possible that students lack the technology for learning in an online environment (Wahab & Iskandar, 2020) or that they lack an internet connection (Nashruddin, et al., Although teachers can impart knowledge, if students have overcome these issues, they may struggle with comprehension and emotion, teachers lose control of the learning process (Chun, et al., 2016).

Students' language use can be encouraged and they can acquire English in context when literature is taught in EFL sessions (Manzolillo, 2016). Depending on how teachers structure the activities, students engaged in literary study are more likely to use a variety of language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening, vocabulary, and grammar) to investigate the text's strengths and weaknesses and present their findings (Hassan, 2018). Studying the historical, social, biographical, or cultural contexts can help students interpret not only isolated passages but the entire work (Hassan, 2018; Manzolillo, 2016). Reading literature can help students of English as a foreign language improve their critical thinking, analytical reasoning, cultural sensitivity, and interpersonal skills. The interactions. technological use, and online learning opportunities of both teachers and students are constrained (Bao, 2020; Efriana, 2021).

Overcoming Problems in an Online Literature Teaching

The teachers use an online learning environment to address their issues in order to overcome such difficulties. Regarding the use of technology, teachers can choose a few online resources such as social media (Cetinkaya, 2017; Guler, 2016), Google Classroom (Azhar & Iqbal, 2018), and video conferencing (Lestiyanawati & Widyantoro, 2020) to avoid being overwhelmed by the abundance of options available online. The EFL teachers identify the students' difficulties if there are issues with attendance and behaviour because they have less control in an online environment (Efriana, 2021). The activity delivery can then be modified by teachers to maintain student participation.

To improve literary learning in an online world, teachers should adopt modern methods for effective literary instruction (Efriana, 2021). Peer contact, active involvement, personalization, and a higher level of thought

are stressed by these ideas (Miller, 2014). As for the exercises, Manzolillo (2016) and Bao (2020) found that online conversation, group projects, and blending online and offline learning were useful ways to support the teaching of literature. Less reading is required, and they don't require as much internet bandwidth for video conferences to support an online learning community. According to Almurashi (2016), Handayani, et al. (2010), and Kaba (2017), using digital literature, YouTube, and film adaptations, as learning tools might increase students' comprehension and interest while providing more readily available literary sources.

Studies were done to determine the difficulties brought on by the online learning system. Atmojo & Nugroho (2020) analyzed the instructors' self-reflections on their practices and issues in online EFL teaching based on the programs they used, the mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning, and the views of students, teachers, and parents. Using a survey, (Bazimaziki, 2020) identified problems associated with the use of ICT tools in online literature instruction, which in turn impacted students' ICT competence and access to relevant resources. Kaba (2017) emphasized the importance of technology in literature education and the various online tools available to educators. The goal of this research was to learn about the challenges faced by the literature teachers at the high school level when implementing an online curriculum.

In order to assess and enhance the online learning program, studies about difficulties faced by teachers and students have been done. Regarding their use of technology, the students had difficulties in participating in online classrooms, material sources and delivery. On the other hand, teachers experience hurdles in an online teaching environment (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Joshi, 2020; Bazimaziki, 2020). Teachers will learn new teaching techniques when they experience difficulties with their online instruction and go through trial and error. Online learning creates a new learning environment and schools have laid the groundwork to incorporate and enhance it.

Teachers might, for instance, employ online literary forums or digital text sources (Manzolillo, 2016; Kaba, 2017; Handayani et al., 2020). Although quite a few studies have been done on EFL teachers' difficulties with online instruction, there haven't been many done on teachers' views on their difficulties with teaching English in particular and their solutions. Therefore, the study's purpose is to investigate the difficulties EFL senior high school instructors face when teaching English online as well as their perspectives on the subject.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives were:

- 1. To explore the challenges of EFL teachers in online classes.
- **2.** To suggest the coping strategies of EFL teachers while teaching online classes.

Research Question

Following were the research questions of the current study:

- **RQ 1:** What were the challenges of EFL teachers in online classes?
- **RQ 2:** How did the coping strategies of EFL teachers were used while teaching in an online class?

Research Methodology

Using narrative inquiry, the study investigated the experiences of the participants (Merriam & Tisdel, 2016). Based on the studies from Efiana (2021) and Lestiyanawati & Widyantoro (2020), an interview was scheduled for data collection. The interview questions were about the problems faced by teachers in online classes while teaching English. The thematic analysis produced five main themes. The thematic analysis produced five conclusions. Teaching materials, corrective measures, instructional techniques regarding coping mechanisms utilized by EFL teachers, whereas multiple factors encounter difficulties when teaching low achievers.

Population and Sample

The EFL teachers were the population of this research in Punjab, Pakistan. Twenty teachers were selected randomly from five secondary schools of district Faisalabad. The study employed a qualitative approach, via in-depth interviews.

Findings and Discussion

The research questions for the study were, what were the challenges of EFL teachers in online classes to teach literature? and how the coping strategies of EFL teachers were used while teaching English in an online class. This next section shows the outcomes of respondents' reproductions on their coping strategies and challenges in teaching English online.

Teaching English and EFL Teachers' Challenges

The participants discussed their experiences as teachers teaching online classes. The three areas were discussed; technology, students, and the delivery of classes. The teachers faced certain difficulties of their own, they also shared some difficulties.

As this was a novel situation for them, the participants initially discussed their difficulties using online technology for teaching. The difficulties teachers encountered were: utilizing the capabilities of Google Suites efficiently; frequently becoming disoriented while using Google Meet or Zoom; discovering the most relevant, appealing, and interactive online platforms for the delivery of literature topics; and the platform for students to submit their work. All participants had to overcome those difficulties.

Teachers who have little expertise in teaching totally online courses face technological obstacles. According to Ahmad (2016), Lestiyanawati, and Widyantoro (2020), this was the cause of the teachers' lack of preparation about their familiarity with the online platforms and the instruments to conduct the class. The panellists discussed their difficulties with both teaching online programs

and dealing with students. The difficulties faced by the teachers in relation to the students who were frequently late, inattentive, or absent from conference meetings; students frequently had issues with their gadgets; students frequently lacked internet quota; students occasionally had difficulty gaining access to the platforms that the teachers used; and teachers frequently struggled to maintain the students' motivation and participation in learning, particularly in task submission.

The use of technology by students and their behaviour in online classes were additional issues for teachers. When employing technology for online classes, students and teachers both encountered difficulties. According to Nashruddin et al. (2020) and Wahab and Iskandar (2020), the student's first problems were either with the device or with the internet. That may be a result of the parents' geographic or economic circumstances (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). The students' inability to use the websites or software since they had no prior experience utilizing it for online learning was the other problem (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018). As a result, the students experienced problems in submitting their work or accessing websites. In addition, given that teachers substituted tasks for class meetings, the workload may become a problem in online learning (Rahardjo & Pertiwi, 2020). Late submissions from students were caused by both. Additionally, teachers found challenging their students' to gauge comprehension. Students may experience understanding issues since the online learning process differs from traditional classroom instruction. The problems the pupils encounter can result in unfavourable feelings and low desire and involvement. Teachers in this situation found it difficult to maintain the students' emotions and motivation to learn because they were far away, which limited their ability to communicate with them (Chun et al., 2016).

The participants encountered difficulties when delivering the literature resources and activities in their online teaching experiences were some of the challenges teachers faced when presenting literature-related activities. Other teachers also mentioned their own difficulties.

The delivery of literature classes was also impacted by teachers' lack of familiarity with online education. To deliver the literature resources from online sources, the teachers lacked the necessary expertise. It was difficult since teachers had to adapt their lessons to fit the preferences, background knowledge, and learning goals of each student (Hussein & Al-Emami, 2016). In order to address these challenges, teachers have to determine the most effective method of teaching English. Due to their inexperience, they also struggled to choose a teaching strategy because they were unsure of what would be effective in their class 2016). The students' (Ahmad, poor comprehension and interest in literature made it more difficult to decide on a strategy because those factors made it impossible for the students to begin studying literature, practice writing, or create compositions (Hassan, 2018).

The teachers encountered difficulties when attempting to teach classes of English online. Due to their inexperience and unexpected transition to online learning without suitable and sufficient instruction, they had difficulties. Their personal use of technology, the difficulties students faced with online learning, and the difficulties associated with delivering literature lessons without in-person interactions were all difficulties.

Coping Mechanism for EFL Teachers' Challenges

The participants discovered strategies for handling their difficulties while participating in an online class. The panellists discussed various approaches to overcoming issues with technology, students, and subject delivery. All teachers used some of the same techniques, and they also shared some of their own.

The participants devised plans of action to address their technological issues. Their approaches to dealing with technology-related issues were: spending extra time learning and experimenting with online platforms; browsing more websites that could be used for learning; they inquiring about specific features in Zoom, Google Meet, and Google Classroom by watching YouTube videos.

The teachers faced difficulties with technology due to their inexperience and lack of the necessary resources. As fewer meetings meant less need for internet use and simpler communication tools, teaching strategies for classes, cutting back on posting material, conference meetings, and using WhatsApp (Bao, 2020; Mbukusa, 2018) may help teachers solve problems using internet tools.

Teachers who had little expertise with technology spent more time learning about websites' capabilities, asking for assistance from others and practising ahead of time in order to obtain more experience in their leisure time. This is consistent with Efriana's (2021) assertion that once instructors become accustomed to teaching online, they may do a better job.

The participants had several strategies for overcoming their difficulties in regard to the students, fewer graded literature assignments and more sharing and discussion activities.

The tactics used by the participants with regard to students focused on enhancing their technological experience and supporting online learning, and learning activities. According to Manzolillo (2016) and Bao (2020), the professors used personalized, provided directives to clear up any misunderstandings, and altered the file size for assignments because they were aware of the students' limits with technology and the internet. Additionally, teachers used flipped classrooms, where students studied the content outside of class meetings and discussed it in a video conference. This reduced the number of synchronous meetings. It encourages pupils to learn on their own, freely, and independently (Maharsi et al., 2021). They worked with each student one-on-one to support them and lighten their load. They did it to make the kids feel less stressed, more motivated, and more unified (Atmojo Nugroho, 2020). & Additionally, offered teachers more

approachable activities. The participants also discovered coping mechanisms and were able to handle the delivery of their literature subject. Participants overcame their difficulties in teaching English by utilizing less strenuous activities and literary works that students were familiar with. If the students were familiar with the books being discussed in class, they were more likely to speak up. Due to this, the online learning activities they participated in became more focused on the students and more engaging, applicable, and practical (Efriana, 2021). In addition to talking about the literary they could test their proficiency during the debate by giving impromptu speeches, chat bubbles, presentations of their projects (Mohammed, 2017). Teachers also employed the regional poems and the well-liked song rap. Students' learning was aided, they were challenged while writing their poems, and they had the opportunity to work on their vocabulary and grammar by implementing well-known literary forms like the pantun (Mansoor, 2013). Additionally, employing videos as literary sources—such as those found on YouTube or in movies-reduced reading assignments and made the material more engaging for learners which raised achievement levels (Almurashi, 2016).

Conclusion

This study examined the difficulties faced by EFL teachers when instructing literature online as well as their coping mechanisms. The teachers had difficulties when technology, working with difficult pupils, and teaching English. EFL Teachers faced difficulties using the internet, using websites and applications for instruction, and using their gadgets. Their learners faced difficulties with their internet, comprehension, motivation, and involvement. The study is still constrained by the number of participants. Future studies can include more participants and change the individuals' educational backgrounds and school settings. The study's implications call on teachers to reflect in order to recognize their unique teaching obstacles and devise strategies for overcoming them, particularly when it comes to teaching English online. According to Arini et al. (2017), one of the main traits of EFL learners is their lack of interest in education. According to Hadi (2016), it can be difficult for teachers to keep their students interested in learning. Large class sizes are the issue teachers face when educating diverse learners, according to a study by Shaw (2010). Another discovery from Mirani and Chunawala (2015) is that they discovered the challenges teachers encounter when instructing EFL students are large classrooms, time limits, and a complex syllabus.

References

- Ahmad, S. Z. (2016). The Flipped Classroom Model to Develop Egyptian EFL Students' Listening Comprehension. *English Language Teaching*, 9(9), 166–178. https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n9p166
- Almurashi, W.A. (2016). The effective use of YouTube videos for teaching the English classroom language in the supplementary materials at Taibah University in Alula. International Journal of English Language and Linguistics Research, 4(3), 32-47. https://www.eajournals.org/wpcontent/uploads/The-Effective-Use-of-Youtube-Videos-for-Teaching-English-Language-in-Classrooms-as-Supplementary-Material-at-Taibah-University-in-Alula.pdf
- Arini, F. D., Choiri, A. S., & Sunardi. (2017). The use of comics as a learning aid to improve the learning interest of slow learner students. *European Journal of Special Education Research*, 2(1), 71-78. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.221004
- Atmojo, A. E. P., & Nugroho, A. (2020). EFL Classes Must Go Online! Teaching Activities and Challenges during COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia. *Register Journal*, *13*(1), 49–76. https://doi.org/10.18326/rgt.v13i1.49-76
- Azhar, K. A., & Iqbal, N. (2018). Effectiveness of Google Classroom: Teachers' Perceptions. *PRIZREN SOCIAL SCIENCE JOURNAL*, 2(2), 52–66. https://prizrenjournal.com/index.php/PSSJ/article/view/39
- Bao, W. (2020). COVID-19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2, 113–115. https://doi.org/10.1002/hbe2.191
- Bazimaziki, G. (2020). Challenges in using ICT Gadgets to cope with effects of COVID-19 on Education: A short survey of online teaching Literature in English. *Journal of Humanities and Education*

- *Development*, 2(4), 299–307. https://doi.org/10.22161/jhed.2.4.8
- Cetinkaya, L. (2017). The Impact of Whatsapp Use on Success in Education Process. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 18(7). https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v18i7.3
- Chun, D., Kern, R., & Smith, B. (2016). Technology in Language Use, Language Teaching, and Language Learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, 100(S1), 64–80, https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12302
- Efriana, L. (2021). Problems of Online Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic in EFL Classroom and the Solution. *JELITA*, 2(1), 38-47. https://jurnal.stkipmb.ac.id/index.php/jelita/article/view/74
- Güler, Ç. (2016). Use of WhatsApp in Higher Education. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 55(2), 272–289. https://doi.org/10.1177/073563311666 7359
- Hadi, F. R. (2016). The process of learning mathematics in slow learners (slow learner). *Premiere Educandum*, 6(1), 35-41.
- Handayani, S., Youlia, L., Febriani, R. B., & Syafryadin, S. (2020). THE USE OF DIGITAL LITERATURE IN TEACHING READING NARRATIVE TEXT. Journal of English Teaching, Applied Linguistics and Literatures (JETALL), 3(2), 65–78. https://doi.org/10.20527/jetall.v3i2.844
- Hassan, K. M. (2018). Difficulties Facing English Teachers in Teaching Literary Texts at Higher Secondary Level in Bangladesh. *English Language and Literature Studies*, 8(3), 15–26. https://doi.org/10.5539/ells.v8n3p15
- Hussein, E., & Al-Emami, A. (2016). Challenges to Teaching English Literature at the University of Hail: Instructors' Perspective. Arab World English Journal, 7(4), 125–138. https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol7no4.9

- Joshi, A., Vinay, M., & Bhaskar, P. (2020). Impact of coronavirus pandemic on the Indian education sector: perspectives of teachers on online teaching and assessments. Interactive Technology and Smart Education, 18(2), 205–226. https://doi.org/10.1108/itse-06-2020-0087
- Kaba, F. (2017). Teaching and studying literature in the digital era From text to hypertext. *TURKOPHONE*, 4(1), 6-13. https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/354651#:~:text=By%20using%20technology%2C%20literary%20texts,also%20student%20assignments%20or%20notes).
- Khalid, F. S. (2018). Exploring English Language Teachers' Challenges and Coping Strategies in Teaching Slow Learners in Inclusive Education Programmes. *IIUM Journal of Educational Studies*, 5(2), 39–53. https://doi.org/10.31436/ijes.v5i2.195
- Lestiyanawati, R. (2020). The Strategies and Problems Faced by Indonesian Teachers in Conducting e-learning during COVID-19 Outbreak. CLLiENT (Culture, Literature, Linguistics, and English Teaching), 2(1), 71–82. https://doi.org/10.32699/cllient.v2i1.12
- Maharsi, I., Wijayanti, Y. R., & Astari, T. R. (2021). EVALUATING FLIPPED CLASSROOM APPROACH IN EFL STUDENTS READING CLASSES. LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching, 24(1), 92–102. https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.v24i1.2768
- Mansoor, A. (2013). The Recipe for Novelty:
 Using Bilingualism and Indigenous
 Literary Genres in an Advanced Level L2
 Creative Writing Context in Pakistan. *New*Writing, 10(1), 52–66.
 https://doi.org/10.1080/14790726.2012
 .742550
- Manzolillo, M. (2016). Teaching Literature through Online Discussion in Theory and Practice. *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, 18(2).

- https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.3139
- Mbukusa, N. R. (2018). Perceptions of students' on the Use of WhatsApp in Teaching Methods of English as Second Language at the University of Namibia. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, 7(2), 112. https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v7n2p112
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation (4th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Miller, M. D. (2014). *Minds online: Teaching effectively with technology*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Mirani, S., & Chunawala, S. (2015). Teachers' perceptions of dealing with mixed ability classrooms. 43-50. https://dnte.hbcse.tifr.res.in/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2015_SS_Teacher-perception_epi6.pdf
- Mohammed, K. (2017). An Exploration of the Main Difficulties and Challenges in Teaching EFL Literature: The Case of Teachers at the University of Tlemcen, Algeria. SSRN Electronic Journal. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3090217
- Nashruddin, N., Alam, F. A., & Tanasy, N. (2020). Perceptions of Teacher and Students on the Use of E-Mail as A Medium in Distance Learning. *Berumpun: International Journal of Social, Politics, and Humanities*, 3(2), 182–194. https://doi.org/10.33019/berumpun.v3i 2.40
- Rahardjo, A., & Pertiwi, S. (2020). Learning Motivation and Students' Achievement in Learning English. *JELITA*, 1(2), 56-64. https://jurnal.stkipmb.ac.id/index.php/jelita/article/view/65
- Raja, R., & Nagasubramani, P. C. (2018). Impact of modern technology in education. *Journal of Applied and Advanced Research*, *3*(1), 33–35. https://doi.org/10.21839/jaar.2018.v3is 1.165
- Shaw, S. R. (2010). Rescuing students from the slow learner trap. *Principal leadership*, 10(6), 12-16.

https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/48020550/rescuing-students-from-the-slow-learner-trap-national-

Wahab, S., & Iskandar, M. (2020). Teacher's Performance to Maintain Students'

Learning Enthusiasm in the Online Learning Condition. *JELITA*, 1(2), 34-44. https://jurnal.stkipmb.ac.id/index.php/jelita/article/view/63