Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter includes several points related to the topic of the research. The background of the research, identification of the problem, delimitation of the problem, research question, objective of the research, significance of the research and organization of the Chapter. Finally, this chapter presents the outline for the entire research.

Background of the Study

In the teaching and learning process, teachers have various choices in using media to teach both inside and outside the school. Inside the school means the learning happens face to face, while outside the school means the learning happens through online platforms where teachers and students do not see one another physically. This media is very useful so that the teaching and learning process can continue well. The use of online learning media provides wider educational facilities because it uses a broadband connection (Ichsanda et al., 2021). This wide connection allows students to get the learning material they need.

Online learning refers to gaining knowledge or skills via online educational resources and platforms (Singh A, 2018). This teaching approach uses digital tools and resources to enable students to access coursework, communicate with teachers, and engage with peers virtually. It includes a range of formats, such as massive open online courses (MOOCs), e-learning, virtual classrooms, and webinars.

Online learning is one of the essential aspects of teaching and learning. The application of online learning makes it easy for students and teachers in the context of time flexibility. Classes should not be conducted according to a face-to-face schedule so they can adjust to the availability of time for both the teacher and the students. There are two types of online learning: synchronous and asynchronous meetings.

Synchronous meetings in online learning comprise instructors and students interacting in real-time through platforms such as video conferencing or virtual classrooms. Because everyone participates at the same time, real-time conversations, prompt feedback, and timed group projects are possible. Live webinars and interactive sessions that require everyone to be present simultaneously are two examples.

On the other hand, participation in asynchronous online learning meetings is not necessary in real-time. Rather, students participate in discussions and access course materials whenever it is convenient for them. Platforms such as email, discussion boards, and recorded lectures are commonly used for communication, giving participants flexibility regarding when they can access content and participate in discussions. Without requiring simultaneous presence, asynchronous meetings facilitate self-paced learning and accommodate various schedules.

The application of online learning with technological developments makes of various learning media considered effective in supporting student learning interests. This research was carried out at a private university in Yogyakarta, which has utilized

online conferencing tools as the online platforms for conducting online courses. Online learning focuses on online conferencing tools, such as video conferencing platforms and collaboration software, to facilitate real-time interaction between educators and students, transcending geographical barriers. The synchronous learning mode offers an immersive experience, allowing students to actively engage in discussions, ask questions, and receive immediate feedback. The interactive features, such as screen sharing and virtual whiteboards, enhance the delivery of content and enable dynamic presentations.

This application of online learning was implemented before the pandemic occurred in Indonesia. This private university in Yogyakarta has implemented blended learning, which contains 60% offline and 40% online meetings. However, the COVID-19 pandemic certainly also had a significant impact, so learning was carried out completely online. The covid-19 pandemic has impacts on all sectors, including the educational sector. According to Tasso et al. (2021), nearly 300 million students around the world are disrupted by their school activities, so universities and schools also require all activities to be online, such as admission tests, examinations, and even graduations. This prolonged pandemic situation has made it possible for activities that are usually carried out offline to be held online. For example, a defense at a private university in Yogyakarta has even used this online platform. This online learning led to the use of several applications that can be used as learning tools for both synchronous and asynchronous meetings.

However, many difficulties are encountered during online learning, which are felt not only by students but also by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers. Unstable internet conditions make the delivery of material difficult. Students have difficulty understanding the material explained by the teacher, and such conditions cause the teacher to not reach the learning target.

Research related to the integration of onlinee cpnferences tools in education has been widely conducted. For example, a study by Dale (2021) found that the use of online confereing tools significantly improved student engagement in lessons, activities and assignmentsstudent performance in English. According to research conducted by Zhang (2022), Teaching using ZOOM presence significantly influenced social presence and cognitive presence in both learning modes. Similarly, the work of Nuryanto (2022) demonstrated online learning is environment-friendly because it can save paper used for the assignments. It means that Zoom Meeting can stimulate the involvement, motivation, and success of students in the learning process. These findings collectively suggest that online conferencing tools holds substantial promise for transforming educational practices.

While the impact of online conferencing tools has been widely studied, the role of advantages and challenges in the use of online conferencing tools is still not well understood. This study aimed to investigate the online conferencing tools that are used by English teachers, the advantages and challenges using it.

The researcher considers the perception on the use of online conferencing tools and the problems faced by teachers of the English Language Education

Department (ELED) of a private university in Yogyakarta. Besides, online conferencing tools can have a variety of activities that are fun or difficult for the teachers while doing online learning. It concluded that the researcher also explored challenges from English teachers' perceptions of the use of online conference tools as a medium for online synchronous meetings.

Identification of the problem

Many media can be used to do the online learning. However, there are also weaknesses in using online conferencing tools. This becomes a concern for students and teachers because they do not have a secure internet network and lack technology skills. The lack of a stable internet connection makes it impossible to do online learning regularly. Compared to face-to-face lectures, lectures using conferencing tools are inefficient because the internet connectivity of a student is unstable. Online conferencing tools need a signal that is strong enough and stable to work properly.

The facilities available in conferencing tools are varied and make it easy for students. Learning to use conferencing tools is considered an exciting new tool so students can learn remotely more effectively. Nevertheless, online learning by using conferencing tools still creates difficulties for students, the biggest obstacle being the internet connection.

In recent years, integrating online conferencing tools in educational settings has become increasingly prevalent, particularly in response to the global shift towards remote learning prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This transition has posed significant challenges and opportunities for educators, including English teachers

who rely on synchronous online meetings to deliver their lessons effectively. The research site for this study, which consists of a network of schools that have adopted various online conferencing tools for their instructional delivery, provides a critical context for examining these issues in depth.

One of the primary concerns at the research site is identifying the specific online conferencing tools that English teachers utilize during their synchronous online meetings and understanding the types of activities they typically conduct using these tools. The selection of conferencing platforms can significantly influence the quality of interaction, engagement, and learning outcomes. However, there is a noticeable gap in comprehensive data regarding which tools are most commonly used and how they are integrated into instructional activities. This gap hampers the ability to standardize best practices and optimize the use of these technologies to enhance student learning experiences.

Furthermore, teachers at the research site have reported various challenges associated with using online conferencing tools for their synchronous meetings. These challenges encompass technical issues, such as connectivity problems and software glitches, which can disrupt the flow of lessons and impede effective communication. Additionally, pedagogical challenges arise from the need to adapt traditional classroom activities to a virtual format, which often requires innovative strategies to maintain student engagement and participation. Teachers also face difficulties managing classroom dynamics, assessing student understanding, and providing individualized support online.

The Delimitation of the Problem

The study focused on using online conferencing tools for online synchronous meetings among English teachers. The primary purpose of this research is to identify which conferencing tools are utilized by English teachers for their synchronous meetings, understand the activities conducted during these meetings, and explore the challenges teachers face in using these tools.

This study is specifically delimited to the English Language Education Department (ELED) of a private university in Yogyakarta. By narrowing the focus to this department and institution, the researcher aims to provide an in-depth analysis of English teachers' unique experiences and challenges in this context. The study does not extend to other departments or institutions or cover asynchronous teaching methods or other forms of educational technology beyond online conferencing tools.

These problems are exacerbated by teachers' varying levels of familiarity and proficiency with these technologies. While some educators may be adept at using advanced features of conferencing tools, others may struggle with basic functionalities, leading to inconsistencies in the delivery and effectiveness of online lessons. Moreover, the lack of institutional support and professional development opportunities tailored to the specific needs of online teaching further compounds these issues, leaving teachers to navigate these challenges largely on their own.

The Research Question

The research questions in this research are:

1. What are the online conferencing tools that English teachers use for their online synchronous meetings, and what are the advantages they get during the meetings?

2. What challenges do teachers face when using online conferencing tools for their online synchronous meetings?

By exploring these questions, the study aims to provide a detailed understanding of the current practices and obstacles associated with online synchronous teaching at the research site. The findings offered valuable insights into how English teachers can better leverage online conferencing tools to enhance their instructional methods and overcome the challenges inherent in virtual learning environments. Ultimately, this research seeks to contribute to developing more effective and equitable online teaching practices that can support teachers and students in achieving their educational goals.

The Objectives of the Study

This research is conducted to discover two purposes as follow:

1. To explore the conferencing tools used by the teachers and the activities carried out to support online synchronous meetings.

2. To investigate the challenges of using online conferencing tools for English Language Education Department teachers.

The Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to provide results that can contribute to students, teachers, and the next research with similar purposes. The significances are listed below:

For the students. This research provides information for students about the benefits of using conferencing tools as online learning media and the challenges students face when using the conferencing tools. So, this research can make students prepare themselves when using conferencing tools as media for online learning.

For the teachers. This research provides information for students about the benefits of using conferencing tools as online learning media and the challenges students face when using the conferencing tools. Moreover, this research can be used to evaluate teachers on the media they use to do online learning.

For future **researchers:** This study is expected to inspire future researchers to conduct research related to the use of conferencing tools in online learning, especially at a private university in Yogyakarta. This research can also be used as a reference for other future researchers.

The Organization of the Chapter

This research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is an introduction, which consists of the background of the study, the identification of the problem, the delimitation of the problem, the research question, the research objective, and the significance of the research. The second chapter discusses literature review, related to the theories about online learning, the definition of online conferencing tools, review of related study, and the conceptual framework. Third chapter focuses on the research

design, research participants, research setting, and data analysis. Fourth chapter

presents the findings and the discussion of the research. Thus, in the last chapter

presents the conclusion and the recommendation of the research.