Online Teaching and Learning During Covid-19 Pandemic: Challenges Faced by English Teachers in Islamic Tertiary Institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia

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Abstract—**The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the education sectors globally. The sudden shift from traditional face to face learning to online teaching and learning brings various challenges to English teachers, particularly in tertiary institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia. Hence, the aim of this study is to examine the online teaching and learning challenges faced by teachers teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia and teachers teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia during the Covid-19 pandemic. The qualitative research design used in this study was a case study using focus group interviews (FGI), individual open-ended responses via Google Form and a discussion thread via Whatsapp. Purposive sampling was used, and 10 English teachers from Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia were chosen as the participants in this study. The data in this study was analysed through NVIVO applications and categorized according to themes. The findings revealed that among the challenges English teachers faced in ESL/EFL online teaching and learning are a lack of technological skills to teach online, constraints in terms of internet accessibility and devices used for teaching and learning, and effective interaction in online teaching and learning. The findings from this study could potentially be utilised to plan strategies and produce practical solutions to overcome the challenges in conducting online teaching and learning among English teachers in any tertiary learning institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia in the future.**

Index Terms—**challenges, online teaching and learning, English as Second Language (ESL), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Covid-19 Pandemic, English teachers**

I. INTRODUCTION

The norms of teaching and learning have changed abruptly due to the emergence of Covid-19 worldwide. Numerous learning institutions around the world have witnessed an extraordinary shift away from face-to-face learning toward various types of online and remote learning in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdowns (Peimani & Kamalipour, 2021). As a result, online teaching and learning emerged as the most appropriate and suitable solution to the current situation. This includes the process of teaching and learning English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to students at the tertiary level. This section will briefly introduce ESL in Malaysia and EFL in Indonesia, online teaching and learning, and challenges in ESL online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Although there are many previous studies on online learning due to the impact of Covid-19, there are still a limited number of studies carried out in the context of ESL/EFL on challenges in online learning among English teachers teaching in Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia. Thus, this study aimed to elicit the challenges that the English teachers in Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia encountered in online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. English as a Second Language (ESL) in Malaysia and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia

The English language is unquestionably a global language. In Malaysia, it is considered a second language and a mandatory subject in educational institutions (Thirusanku & Yunus, 2014). The importance of English is demonstrated by the requirement to acquire a pass, particularly in The Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM), in order to qualify for the certificate of graduation for secondary school as stated in the Malaysian Education Blueprint 2016 (Ganapathy, 2016). Throughout at least 11 years of schooling (Kindergarten until tertiary institutions), English is taught to the pupils so that they would be able to communicate effectively in the target language once they have completed formal education at the secondary level (Ying et al., 2018).

In Indonesia, English is an important subject in schools (Mattarima & Hamdan, 2011). Despite the fact that the country was not ruled by the British, English has been ingrained in the country's institutions. According to Gustine (2018), English is also being more widely utilised as a medium of teaching in schools and colleges, particularly in areas such as management, information technology, and the humanities. English is also extensively taught as a foreign language to students planning to pursue higher education in an English-speaking country.

The English language has become more important in universities (Yen & Maslawati, 2020). It is not necessary for the ESL learners to speak like native speakers, but they need to comprehend the language and be able to communicate using the language in the real world, particularly in their careers (Ling, 2020). According to the Malaysian Times (2012), one of the reasons English is critical is that businesses require their staff to have a strong command of English. It has been established that the majority of multinational organizations in Malaysia need employees who are proficient in English as they require worldwide communication. The most common medium of teaching and learning English in most learning institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia is face-to-face physical learning. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, English teachers had to shift their teaching and learning to online.

B. Online Teaching and Learning

The way individuals interact and organise their everyday lives has transformed due to technological advancements. Apart from connecting individuals and marketing company products, technology has been utilised to aid in the teaching and learning process (Maslawati et al., 2018). According to Martin et al. (2020), online teaching and learning is an instruction platform employed by teachers. Online teaching and learning can be delivered in real-time, also known as synchronous or at any time and from any location known as asynchronous.

Ahmad et al. (2019) assert that integrating technology into ESL classes benefits tertiary students' academic performance. Online teaching and learning are undoubtedly advantageous in increasing the effectiveness and learning engagement of ESL learners' (Ling, 2020). In their study, Lakshmi and Suresh (2020) have proven the impact of information and communication technology (ICT) on education in terms of increasing engagement, interactivity, relevance, and motivation in teaching and learning. Maslawati et al. (2018) state that by engaging in online learning, learners would be exposed to a productive language environment in which they may engage and study with other users. Investigations on the potential for technology to assist ESL students in developing writing abilities reveal that technologies such as Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL), Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), e-learning, and mobile learning have 'endless possibilities' (Hashim et al., 2016). Based on various studies, it is evident that online teaching and learning bring many benefits to teachers and students. However, it is only convenient for teachers and students if they are ready. In this study, it is evident that due to sudden changes in the medium of teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic, English teachers in Malaysia and Indonesia face challenges in conducting online teaching and learning.

C. Challenges in ESL Online Teaching and Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) was first discovered in December 2019 in China. Within a few months, it spread worldwide and was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization on 11th March 2020 (Chakraborty et al., 2021). As a result, universities worldwide were forced to shut down their campuses in the spring of 2020 and had to deliver all academic programs via online platforms (Bao, 2020). Similarly, in Malaysia, all tertiary institutions including Islamic tertiary institutions had to comply with the Movement Control Order (MCO) by the Malaysian government. As such, the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM), one of the Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia that fully uses English as a medium of instruction and communication, also has to shift its ESL teaching and learning into full online mode. This change caused lecturers and students to face challenges in their teaching and learning process, especially for teachers who are not well versed in technology.

According to research conducted by Batubara (2021) in Indonesia, online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic could not be carried out smoothly due to the lack of readiness of many stakeholders - teachers, students, and parents. Heng and Sol (2020) added that technology is the most significant barrier to online teaching and learning for those who are not technologically proficient. This is due to their lack of experience and training. In addition, Mahmood et al. (2021) mentions that teachers' readiness in using ICT and lack of facilities such as stable internet connection, learning platforms and gadgets are among the challenges in online teaching and learning. The majority of senior teachers struggled to accept this new norm and the changes demand them to integrate ICT into their pedagogical instruction. This is supported by a study by Rani et al. (2014), they stated that technology could not be integrated into teaching and learning without internet access.

Meanwhile, Yusuf and Jihan (2020) in their study in a public university in Perlis mentioned that interaction in teaching and learning is a significant drawback in online teaching and learning. In the same vein, Cole et al. (2014) reveal that the primary driver of students' unhappiness with online learning at a university is a lack of engagement and communication with their teachers and peers. Darby and Lang (2019) mention that teachers encounter difficulties when they shift from face-to-face teaching to online teaching and learning by digital platforms, mostly owing to a lack of technological competence and inefficiency in utilizing technology. Furthermore, according to Rutil and Gunasegaran (2020), for some teachers, online teaching and learning is new and require more time to adapt themselves to the new technology as they also face time constraints.

III. METHODOLOGY

This section provides a discussion about the research design, population and sample of the study, research instruments, data collection procedure and in-depth data analysis. It enables readers to have a more comprehensive knowledge of how the study was carried out to answer the research question – What are the challenges faced by English teachers in Islamic Tertiary Institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia in online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic?

A. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach. The primary goal of qualitative research is to gain a better understanding of certain phenomena through the experiences of those who have directly experienced them, while also recognizing the value of participants' unique perspectives that can only be fully appreciated in the context of their experience and world view (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018). According to Quintao et al. (2020), an interactive model of data collection, analysis, and the utilisation of research instruments are used in a qualitative research approach, with the goal of capturing the subjective component of a social phenomenon. In this study, the phenomena refer to the challenges faced by the English teachers of Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia in online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. A multiple case study approach was adopted to allow a deeper insight into the challenges that the English teachers faced in online teaching and learning in Malaysia and Indonesia.

B. Participants of the Study

Purposive sampling was employed in this multiple case study. It is used because the researchers wanted to gain insights from the participants (English teachers) from which the most could be learned (Creswell, 2014). In purposive sampling, the selection of participants shows the direct reference to the research questions in which the research questions provide guidelines as to what the characteristics of the participants are (Patton, 2002). In this study, 10 participants that are among English teachers from one Islamic tertiary institution in Malaysia and another one in Indonesia were chosen. The group of participants was chosen because they fulfilled the characteristics that the researchers had determined and were in accordance with this study's research objectives. The selection criteria were; a) English teachers teaching in Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia / Indonesia; b) conduct English courses via online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic; and c) willing to be interviewed via online video conferencing application and added to a related Whatsapp group.

C. Setting

This study was conducted in an Islamic tertiary institution in Malaysia and in Indonesia. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in the Movement Control Order (MCO) by the government of Malaysia, the focus group interview (FGI) sessions were carried out online via video conferencing application. There were two FGI sessions conducted, each session with five participants. The focus group interviews were conducted using Google Meet. Apart from the focus group interview sessions, the researchers gathered additional information from the participants by having them respond to individual open-ended questions that were distributed via Google Form. In addition, the participants were also added to a WhatsApp group for a discussion thread.

D. Research Instruments

A research instrument is a tool for collecting, quantifying, and analyzing data pertaining to research interests. Interviews, examinations, surveys, or checklists are examples of research instruments. These instruments are frequently used in conducting studies in the areas of health sciences, social sciences, and education to evaluate patients, clients, students, teachers, and employees (Olsson et al., 2020). Based on the research question, the researchers designed interview questions for the focus group interview sessions and selected documents to review. Thus, to answer the research question and achieve the study's objectives, the researchers employed three research instruments in collecting data for this study. They are focus group interview questions, individual open-ended questions via Google Form and discussion threads via WhatsApp group.

E. Data Collection

Data collection is the act of acquiring data in a systematic manner that enables the researchers to address the research question. In this study, the data was collected through focus group interview (FGI) sessions via Google Meet, individual open-ended responses (OER) via Google Form and a discussion thread via WhatsApp group.

(a). Focus Group Interview Sessions via Google Meet

A semi-structured focus group interview was conducted to identify the challenges faced by English teachers in online teaching and learning in this study. Due to the Movement Control Order implemented by the government, the researchers were not able to travel and conduct face-to-face interview sessions. Instead, the participants were then interviewed via an online video conferencing platform- Google Meet. Two focus group interview sessions ranging from 90 to 120 minutes were recorded, and in each session, five English teachers from the particular Islamic tertiary institution in Malaysia and five English teachers from Indonesia were interviewed. The details of the interview sessions are as stated in Table 1.

TABLE 1
FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SESSION DETAILS

Sessions	Date	Time	Number of Participants
1	4/2/2021	11am -1 pm	5
2	4/2/2021	3 pm -5 pm	5

Meanwhile, Table 2 represents the different phases of data collection via the focus group interview sessions.

TABLE 2
DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES DURING FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Phase	Data Collection Procedure
1	Participants were added into a WhatsApp group, and the dates and times for the online semi-structured interview were set and confirmed according to their convenient times.
2	Participants were interviewed through the online video conferencing platforms (Google Meet)
3	The researchers transcribed the recording of the semi-structured interview, and the transcripts were given back to the respondents in order for them to verify any incongruities and to make sure that the researchers have transcribed their interview responses correctly. Verified transcriptions were then analysed.

(b). Individual Open-Ended Response via Google Form

Open-ended questions were also administered through Google Form. The open-ended questions were based on the research question. Participants were given the link to the Google Form in the WhatsApp group. They were asked to complete the Google Form within two weeks after the focus group interview sessions. In the Google Form, the participants had to fill in their names, and email addresses and answer all the open-ended questions. The researchers had all the responses stored in Google Drive storage.

(c). Discussion Thread via Whatsapp

The Whatsapp application was used as a channel of communication between the researchers and the participants. First, the participants' mobile phone numbers were gathered, and the researchers created a Whatsapp group. The researchers then added all the 10 participants to the group. They were asked to share any screenshots or pictures related to their experiences in teaching online during the pandemic. They were also allowed to share the screenshots or the pictures personally with the researchers if they were not comfortable sharing them in the Whatsapp group.

F. Data Analysis

The analysis of data is the most critical component of any investigation. Data analysis is the process of synthesizing gathered data. It is the process of interpreting data acquired by the use of analytical and logical thinking in order to identify patterns, correlations, or trends.

In this study, the recording from focus interview sessions was transcribed verbatim. The term "verbatim transcription" refers to the process through which the researcher converts each vocal sound in an audio recording to text. This occurs when an audio recording is transmitted in its entirety, including pauses, non-verbal remarks, and silence (Loubere, 2017). Additionally, the researchers gave a copy of the verbatim transcription to each participant for evaluation and verification. The participants were asked to rectify any mistakes or inconsistencies. Apart from adhering to study ethics, Hagens et al. (2009) state transcriptions were given to participants to confirm the content of their interview responses and to ensure they had not changed their minds or opinions.

A thematic analysis was conducted on the reviewed and validated transcriptions to ascertain common themes within the findings. According to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), the technique of identifying themes or patterns within qualitative data is referred to as thematic analysis. Later in the study, the themes are employed to address the research questions and explain the phenomena presented. A strong thematic analysis explains and makes meaning of the data (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Given that this is a multiple case study, it is necessary to collect adequate data to ensure that key themes are explored.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the research, which are presented in response to the research question which is about the challenges that the English teachers in Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia encountered in online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. Several themes were derived after the code identification process. In order to answer the research question, data from the focus group interview (FGI) sessions and individual open-ended responses through Google Form (OER) were analysed. The participants were labelled according to numbers from 1 until 10. All ten participants were interviewed through two separate focus group interview sessions that were carried out via Google Meet and the individual open-ended responses were given to them to be completed a day after the interview sessions. Based on the participants' responses, the challenges can be further categorized into three categories; 1) Technological skills and knowledge, 2) Internet accessibility and devices and 3) Interaction in online teaching and learning

A. Challenges in Terms of Technological Skills and Knowledge in ESL Online Teaching and Learning

Based on the focus group interview sessions and the individual open-ended responses from the 10 participants, the researchers discovered that English teachers in Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia faced challenges in terms of technological skills and knowledge in ESL/EFL online teaching and learning. This includes unfamiliarity with online learning platforms and the amount of time consumed in preparing teaching and learning materials.

(a). Unfamiliar With Online Learning Platforms

The participants mentioned that they are unfamiliar with online learning platforms such as Google Classroom and Google Meet. With the sudden implementation of online learning in most universities in Malaysia and Indonesia, most of them are not used to online teaching and are not technologically equipped to teach using these online learning platforms.

> *"I'm not… **I'm not a techno savvy**. I'm not used to using you know ahh you know **Google Classroom or Google Meet** before umm but you know we've been…"* (P2, FGI)
>
> *"technological… technology ahh negative part of this technology kind of thing because like the rest, **I'm don't really know how to use Zoom whatsoever**, I'm **not technological savvy**"* (P2, FGI)
>
> *"...as for me it is actually a big challenge because in my case, I'm **not used to online teaching**."* (P3, FGI)

Most of these English teachers are facing this problem due to a lack of technological skills to conduct online teaching and learning. This is supported by Darby and Lang (2019) who mentioned that teachers encounter difficulties when they shift from face-to-face teaching to online teaching and learning by digital platforms, mostly owing to a lack of technological competence and inefficiency in utilizing technology.

(b). The Amount of Time Consumed in Preparing Teaching and Learning Materials

> The participants also added that due to a lack of experience and technological skills, online teaching and learning become time consuming for them. They need more time to prepare learning materials for online teaching and learning.
>
> *"...sometimes it takes a very **long time to prepare for the lesson**. So, ya ahh I got frustrated okay. I was frustrated with it okay."* (P5, FGI)
>
> *"**Some challenges could be that most of the time I have to do trial and error in using other applications** for the suitability of the topics teach to the students"* (P8, OER)

Time management errors could adversely affect learners' academic achievement and raise teachers' stress levels. Some of the English teachers mentioned that they spent much time uploading teaching and learning materials into a learning platform namely Google Classroom. This happened because they lacked the technological skills, hence, they took a longer time to prepare and upload learning materials into the online learning platform. According to Rutil and Gunasegaran (2020), for some teachers online teaching and learning are new and they require more time to adapt to the new technology as they also face time constraints. This is supported by past studies that mentioned teacher readiness, efficacy and lack of technological skills and knowledge which resulted in challenges to teachers in conducting online teaching and learning (Batubara, 2021; Heng & Sol, 2020; Mahmood et al., 2021).

B. Challenges in Terms of Internet, Facilities and Devices Accessibility

Another major challenge faced by English teachers and students in ESL online teaching and learning is in terms of Internet accessibility, facilities and devices accessibility. According to them, some students lack the necessary devices and internet connection to join online teaching and learning. Moreover, facilities and online learning systems were also not up to date.

(a). Poor Internet Connection

A problem with infrastructures, such as a reliable internet connection and gadgets, is a challenge for English teachers in ESL online teaching and learning. Good internet connectivity is required for online teaching and learning. Thus, without a good internet connection, online teaching and learning are exposed to interruption (Abd Aziz et al., 2020). In

this study, most of the participants mentioned that poor internet connection or access is the major problem in conducting a successful ESL online teaching-learning.

> "…*internet connection, whether it is stable or it is **poor or no internet** at all. Then, if we are… we don't access to internet, we cannot conduct anything, we can't even communicate with the students ye.* (P6, OER)
>
> "… *and with our **limited internet connection**. So, you know imagine the time you know just to upload or download certain things like umm okay, alright.*"(P8, FGI)
>
> "..*So, that was number one problem because **the internet data was slow** alright and umm, we are… I had to share okay with many people in my house umm*" (P1, FGI)

The problems such as poor internet coverage, limited internet data and slow internet speed are among the problems mentioned that hampered the process of ESL online teaching and learning. Inadequate infrastructure, such as a reliable internet connection, impacts the low adoption rate of new technologies in online teaching and learning (Ahmad et al., 2019). This is supported by Maslawati et al. (2021) that mention that in teaching and learning, some students face difficulties such as sharing internet quota among siblings and housemates as well as sharing devices for the learning session.

(b). Devices Problem Among Students

Other than Internet issues, the participants in this study mentioned the lack of devices among students. According to them, some of their students did not possess suitable learning devices such as laptops while some of them have suitable learning devices but not with full functionality such as microphones and cameras.

> "… *you know, some of them have. So, the thing is I was surprised ye, ahh… we never thought of it actually that there are students who **don't have laptops**.*" (P3, FGI)
>
> "*Just…like, if I were not wrong, some of them were not able to talk. They **do not have the microphones** or like they say they could not turn on the mic*" (P10, OER)
>
> "…*And, for some students, it's also the device; some are **using phones** and it's difficult for them to get a clear picture of the issues discussed.*" (P1, OER)
>
> "*I pity those you may have insufficient connectivity and have **no reliable** gadgets*" (P2, OER)

According to Dhawan (2020), students' learning is hampered by a lack of appropriate devices. Apparently, the lack of suitable learning devices imposes challenges for English teachers to ensure smooth and successful online teaching and learning.

(c). Challenges in Online Learning Portal

Participants in this study also mentioned that the online learning portals were not up to date. For example, university learning management platforms were not functioning well. This is a challenge for both teachers and students when both parties cannot access the learning management system. The number of users is too big therefore it took them a long time to access their university learning portal.

> "*I think at one point it was like 800 students without crashing platform you know and umm our platform which…ahh the **university platform** was not umm I think was not big enough I think to handle..* (P4, FGI)
>
> "*some of them were **very slow** ahh… I waited like half an hour sometimes to access the **uni learning portal**...*" (P7, OER)

According to Adedoyin and Soykan (2020), many universities' online learning systems received a heavy workload due to sudden changes in the mode of teaching. With this problem, some students are not able to submit their online tasks and teachers could not access the students' assignments in the university's online learning portal. These findings concerning the challenges in online teaching and learning in terms of internet, facilities and devices are supported by previous studies which mentioned without proper internet and devices, online teaching and learning pose challenges to teachers and students (Heng & Sol, 2020; Mahmood et al., 2021; Rani et al., 2014).

C. Challenges in Terms of Online Teaching and Learning Interaction.

Another challenge in online teaching and learning faced by the participants in this study is regarding teaching and learning interaction.

(a). Learning Interaction Among Students

The participants mentioned that the interaction among students was poor. Without effective interactions among students, certain types of learning activities are ineffective. According to the participants, the students could not complete certain group tasks in the ESL/EFL online teaching and learning due to insufficient interaction among group members. This is based on the excerpts below.

> "*Especially when it comes to group work, some students complained that they **could not contact** their group members….*" (P1, OER)
>
> "..*Lack or almost **no interaction**..*" (P4, FGI)

In addition, based on other open-ended responses from the participants, they mentioned that students were passive, lacked opportunities to give feedback during online teaching and learning; and were silent during online sessions. They were shy to ask questions in big groups and reluctant to respond to their teachers' questions, even some simple ones.

*"Online class can be insufficient for **shy** and introvert students who are not proactive"* (P3, OER)
*"...students' **reluctance** to speak on screen and **lack of opportunities** to give immediate feedback orally"* (P4, OER)

(b). Learning Interaction Between Teacher and Students

Other than learning interactions among students, the participants also mentioned the challenge in terms of teacher-student interaction in ESL/EFL online teaching and learning. Responses from the participants in FGI disclosed that it was difficult to get responses from the students during online teaching and learning as well as establishing eye contact.

*"...See, during class hours ahh... I find... I found it difficult to get **responses** from student. Mainly because of ahh... connection I guess."* (P4, FGI)

*"compared to a physical classroom, we can have **eye contact** but with this ahh... online kind of thing, difficult, I mean like we cannot see them okay"* (P7, OER)

*"If... if they switch on the camera we don't... we cannot establish **eye contact**. So, difficult okay."* (P5, FGI)

Based on these FGI and OER from the participants, these problems have caused substantial challenges to English teachers in Islamic tertiary institutions in order to conduct an effective ESL online teaching and learning. This is also supported by a past study (Yusuf & Jihan, 2020) that states learning interaction is one of the main challenges in online teaching and learning. The interaction between students and teacher-students is very important in online teaching and learning. Thus, without effective two-way interactions, it would affect the effectiveness of online teaching and learning.

V. CONCLUSION

The main aim of the current study was to explore the challenges faced by English teachers in Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia in conducting ESL/EFL online teaching and learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. This study has identified three major challenges faced by English teachers in Islamic tertiary institutions in ESL/EFL online teaching and learning which are challenges in terms of technological skills, internet accessibility, lack of devices and effective learning interaction. The findings of this study suggest that without appropriate strategies to overcome the challenges, these could adversely affect the effectiveness of ESL/EFL online teaching and learning.

A limitation of this study is that the result can only be generalized to English teachers teaching in institutions similar to Islamic tertiary institutions in Malaysia and Indonesia. English teachers from other types of learning institutions such as primary and secondary schools might encounter different and additional challenges, thus requiring different strategies and solutions. Notwithstanding these limitations, the study suggests that English teachers might have similar challenges in online teaching and learning regardless of the type of learning institutions, thus, strategies and actions implemented to overcome these challenges might be adjusted and put in place accordingly. Further research could be useful to further understand these challenges, identify measures for overcoming the challenges and produce proper guidelines.

The findings of this study have a number of practical implications. First, it is essential for teachers to have a support system or continuous training to improve their technological knowledge. Thus, it is vital for the administration of learning institutions and the Ministry of Education to implement a policy or system that ensures the existence of this support system and training in every learning institution. Secondly, higher learning institutions in Malaysia must provide ample facilities on their campus in order for students to access online learning. Proper and continuous training and coaching of technological and pedagogical skills for English teachers are essential. The findings reported here shed new light on the Islamic tertiary institutions in particular in Malaysia and Indonesia to address the challenges in online teaching and learning.

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