A REVIEW ON SYNCHRONOUS, ASYNCHRONOUS, AND BLENDED LEARNING ON ELT IN INDONESIAN CONTEXT

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Abstract: This study analyzes Indonesian EFL teachers' synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning implementation during the Covid-19 pandemic. Numerous articles have been published this trend. Unfortunately, the early search only found implementation or student/teacher perspectives research. One-article works on other learning modes are preferable. Thus, using PRSIMA's Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design, the researchers chose 32 of 82 related papers from qualified publications approved by SINTA 1, 2, and 3. The study addresses six key points: implementation of the three learning modalities, urban-

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rural contrasts, most used platforms, students' and teachers' opinions, obstacles they face, and solutions. After COVID-19 broke out, researchers became more interested in these learning modalities, highlighting their importance. This review also analyzes how teachers used digital platforms to engage students throughout synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning courses. Even though students and teachers faced classroom management, technological issues, platform unfamiliarity, and internet limits, they still liked the learning modes. They liked the modalities' practicality, adaptation, and flexibility, especially for English acquisition. EFL teachers, educators, researchers, and policymakers can use this review to gain a comprehensive understanding of synchronous (virtual real-time activity), asynchronous (learning at different times), and blended learning.

Keywords: *asynchronous, blended mode, EFL context, synchronous*

INTRODUCTION

UNESCO since 2020 to 2021 has reported that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on education system worldwide with more than 1,5 billion learners affected by school closures (UNESCO, 2020, 2021). Indonesia has been one of the countries that significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic in educational sector. Over 63 million students from primary to university had to be "home-schooled" because of this (UNESCO, 2021; UNICEF, 2021). In response to the rapid spread of the virus, the government has decided to close schools and universities to prevent wider infectious areas (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Sahu, 2020; Schleicher, 2020). This circumstance has caused a shift from traditional face-to-face learning to asynchronous and synchronous online learning (D. Li, 2022; Varela & Desiderio, 2020).

The term synchronous and asynchronous, in fact, have existed as one of learning modes of delivery in teaching and learning long before the Covid-19 pandemic period. Then, during the pandemic, asynchronous and synchronous learning have gained intention from educators since they were implemented as ones of the most used teaching delivery modes by schools, including in Indonesia. From the concept, asynchronous learning is defined as a method that offers students to learn independently outside of a traditional classroom setting that they have access to pre-recorded lectures or teaching, instructional videos, e-books, and online learning materials at any time and place (Dhawan, 2020; Perveen, 2016; Varkey et al., 2022). On contrary, synchronous learning involves real-time interactions between students and instructors in a virtual classroom through various virtual platforms (Fadhilah et al., 2021; Hizriani, 2022; Octaberlina & Muslimin, 2020; Perveen, 2016). This learning type permits real-time discussion, question-and-answer sessions, and feedback from teachers and peers (Taraj, 2021; Yamagata-Lynch, 2014).

The enactment of asynchronous and synchronous learning modes in Indonesia as alternatives to the conventional mode has encountered various challenges. One of the primary challenges is in the constrained accessibility of technological resources, particularly in rural regions where internet connectivity remains absent or unreliable. Studies have reported that numerous students were lack access to computers, laptops, and stable internet connections, limiting their abilities to engage in online learning (Avrinia, 2022; Barrot et al., 2021; Basar et al., 2021; Zikrullah, 2022). The existence of the digital divide has led to disparities in educational possibilities for students hailing from socioeconomically disadvantaged households. Furthermore, a significant hindrance arises from the insufficient preparation that teachers and academics receive in the realm of online education delivery (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Avrinia, 2022; Fitriana & Purnamasari, 2021; Nugroho et al., 2020; Saputra et al., 2022). Educators, including both teachers and lecturers, encountered

difficulties during online sessions due to their limited familiarity with this mode of education, which had been rarely or never applied prior to the current circumstances. The implementation of online instruction resulted in notable discrepancies in the level of educational delivery, as certain instructors encountered difficulties in properly engaging students throughout the teaching and learning process.

As Indonesia continues to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, the implementation of asynchronous and synchronous learning remains a vital component of the country's educational system. While some schools and universities have reopened for face-to-face learning, many have opted to continue with online learning through a blended format. Blended learning combines both synchronous and asynchronous learning modes, allowing students to learn both online and in person (Cahyani et al., 2021; Fuller, 2021; Gozali et al., 2022; D. Li, 2022; Mulyadi et al., 2020). It has become an increasingly popular approach in Indonesia, particularly, as schools and universities after a long period of closure due to pandemic. One of the primary advantages of blended learning is its flexibility that students can participate in synchronous online classes which are typically held at scheduled times, while also completing asynchronous learning activities at their own pace (Aji et al., 2020; Ardinengtyas & Himawan, 2021; Chaeruman et al., 2018; Jamilah & Fahyuni, 2022; D. Li, 2022; Warman, 2018) . Moreover, the inclusion of face-to-face interaction as one of the components of blended learning allows students to actively participate in direct communication with both teachers and fellow students, similar to the traditional form of learning. This facilitates a more immersive and cooperative learning experience. The cultivation of social skills and the establishment of relationships are crucial for both personal and interpersonal development (N. Li et al., 2021; Rasheed et al., 2020; Rengel & GGmez, 2018; Rianto, 2020).

Similar to the concepts of asynchronous and synchronous learning, the integration of blended learning in the aftermath or post-

pandemic period also encounters several challenges. The successful use of blended learning necessitates the cultivation of self-regulation, responsibility, and proficiency in computer literacy (Dahmash, 2020; Rasheed et al., 2020). It is imperative for learners to engage in the deliberate processes of planning, monitoring, and assessing their own learning, while also demonstrating proficiency in effectively utilizing online platforms and resources (Paudel, 2020; Peimani & Kamalipour, 2021; Sankar et al., 2022).

Despite the extensive research conducted on the implementation of synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning modes, there is a paucity of studies that have examined these modes holistically. Previous studies have individually examined the application, obstacles, and benefits associated with these three distinct types of learning. However, consolidating the discussion into a single paper would yield a more substantial contribution. This is because the intended readers would have the opportunity to directly compare and analyze the various modalities of learning in a comprehensive and straightforward manner inside the same written work. The researchers seek to address this gap. This study employs a Systematic Literature Review methodology to facilitate a comprehensive and extensive discussion. It encompasses various dimensions, such as the viewpoints of both teachers and students regarding synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning. Additionally, it explores the challenges encountered in these learning modalities and the strategies employed by stakeholders to address them. This comprehensive discourse would significantly enhance the depth of understanding and knowledge pertaining to shared research interests.

METHOD

Based on the research focus, the researchers believe that utilizing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is the most appropriate. An SLR involves gathering and analyzing all research evidence related to a research question or topic (Donato & Donato, 2019; Munn et al., 2018; Pollock & Berge, 2018). It includes identifying,

assessing and synthesizing evidence to draw conclusions and inform research A systematic review provides an unbiased understanding of fields by summarizing existing research. SLRs are methods, for synthesizing research as they identify, select and assess the quality of included studies (Page et al., 2021). As for this research, the specific area of interest lies in examining how English language teachers at levels (from primary to university) utilize synchronous, asynchronous and blended instructional modes. To investigate this topic thoroughly, the researcher gathered articles that discuss these approaches and analyzed them to extract their main abstracts or key points. In its implementation, we followed the design of PRISMA for conducting and reporting systematic reviews modified by Page et al. (2021) and Gozali et al. (2022). The diagram below illustrates the design.
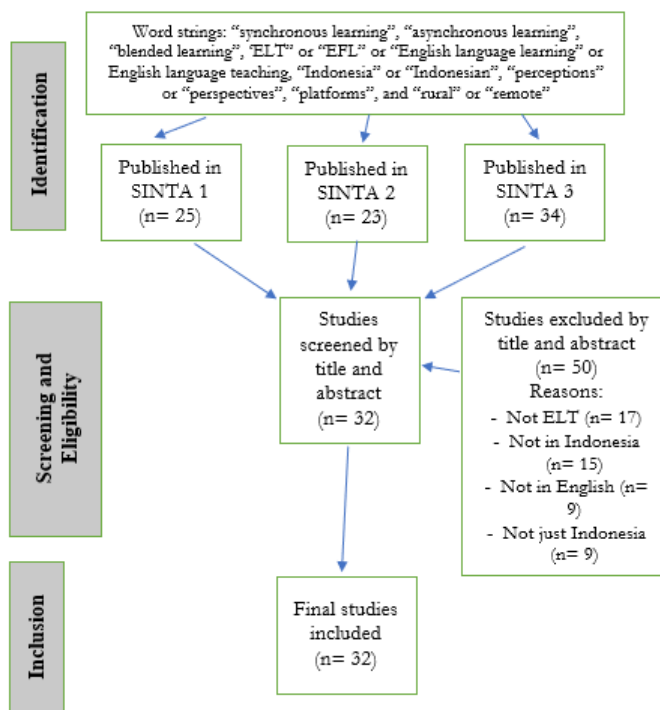

Figure 1. PRISMA design

Identification phase

The identification phase was the first step where relevant papers from reputable journals were accessed. The researcher did a searching process in Google Scholar and GARUDA of all relevant papers from journals accredited by Science and Technology Index (SINTA) rank 1 (SINTA 1), rank 2 (SINTA 2), and rank 3 (SINTA 3) within three years from 2020 – 2022. We used SINTA KEMDIKBUD website which can be accessed in https://sinta.kemdikbud.go.id/, the only accredited Indonesian journal search portal provided by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, to check the accreditation of the journals. The restriction of journal types and accreditation was done to ensure that only papers directly related to the research foci were considered as evidence, for review.

The search phase commenced by searching the articles using the word string such as "synchronous learning", "asynchronous learning", "blended learning", "Indonesian context", "Indonesia", "EFL or ELT", "English language learning" or "English language teaching", "teachers' perspectives or perceptions", "students' perceptions or perspectives", "platforms", "rural learning" or "remote learning". The aforementioned word sequences were entered as complete title and keyword queries. We conducted a comprehensive literature search by utilizing two academic search engines, namely Google Scholar and Mendeley Web. Following the discovery of the papers, we conducted an initial screening process, wherein they selected all publications that had been published in accredited journals categorized as SINTA 1, SINTA 2, or SINTA 3.

During the identification process, we found a total of 82 articles, from publications that are accredited by SINTA 1 SINTA 2 and SINTA 3. Out of these 26 articles were discovered in journals with SINTA 1 accreditation while 23 articles were found in journals accredited by SINTA 2. Additionally, 34 articles were located in journals with SINTA 3 accreditation. Afterward, the articles underwent a screening and eligibility process to select the ones for our research scope.

Screening and Eligibility

During the screening and eligibility phase, the main purpose was to filter out the papers that met the predetermined criteria based on their title and abstract. The researcher made sure to exclude any papers that were not relevant, to the research. Out of a total of 50 exclusions, 32 papers that were deemed suitable. These chosen articles specifically addressed the research questions. On the hand the excluded articles mainly discussed instructional modes such as synchronous, asynchronous and blended learning but failed to meet our criteria for various reasons including non-ELT focus (17 articles), non-English language (9 articles) research subjects or objects, beyond the Indonesian context (9 articles) and research subjects or objects not originating from Indonesia (15 articles).

Inclusion

The process of inclusion involved selecting papers from the Screening and Eligibility phase. These papers were articles that focused on examining approaches to learning, such, as asynchronous, synchronous and blended learning. The articles specifically looked at how these learning methods were implemented in rural settings, if applicable. Additionally, the criteria took into account the perspectives of both students and teachers regarding these modes of learning the platforms used by teachers and the challenges faced by both parties. Moreover, the criteria aimed to explore any strategies employed to overcome these obstacles. In total, there were 32 selected papers; 8 from journals accredited by SINTA 1, 15 from journals accredited by SINTA 2, and 9 from journals accredited by SINTA 3.

The selected papers have been organized, and each paper has been assigned a code to facilitate efficient access. This approach not helps researchers locate the papers, but also enhances the overall effectiveness of scholarly communication. Additionally, a list of codes or names have been compiled and assigned to each paper from SINTA journals, in the provided tables to offer an overview. The list of the selected articles can be seen in the appendix section.

Data Synthesis or Analysis

The researcher manually synthesized the data using Bowen (2021) document analysis framework. The researcher carefully selected the papers that make up the dataset and conducted an analysis to extract important information related to the research inquiries. This detailed analysis involved examining each section of the articles to extract the data needed to address the research questions. The process continued by presenting the integrated data, in the findings section organizing it into subheadings that corresponded to the areas of interest.

FINDINGS

In this section, we present and explore the synchronous, asynchronous, and blended modes which have been utilized by English teachers in Indonesia. This research has examined the three modalities implementation in Indonesian context using a systematic literature review framework involving examining the implementations of these modalities, differences or similarities of implementation in cities and rural areas, digital platforms utilization, teacher and students' viewpoints, challenges and solutions in 32 papers from 2020 to 2022 from qualified journals in SINTA tiers. To present the findings, subheadings of each research question are used.

RQ1: What are the current trends and patterns in the utilization of synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning modes within educational contexts, as evidenced by research published in journals accredited by SINTA 1, SINTA 2, and SINTA 3?

The synthesized data provided an overview of the research landscape, in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) education in Indonesia. It focuses on synchronous, asynchronous and blended learning modes. The researcher synthesized research papers published in journals accredited under SINTA 1 SINTA 2 and SINTA 3. The data covers the years 2020 to 2022 highlighting the number of

research papers dedicated to each learning mode across accreditation levels.

Interestingly, the data reveals a changing pattern of interest. In SINTA 1 journals, there was an increase in the number of papers addressing these learning modes over the three-year period. Starting with one paper in 2020, it rose to three papers in 2021; and further increased to four papers in 2022. A similar trend was observed in SINTA 2 journals where research output progressively grew from four papers in 2020 to eight papers in 2022. On the hand, there were no variations among the selected papers from SINTA 3 journals across the years; three papers were consistently published each year; in 2020, 2021 and again in 2022.

These trends showcase how preferences and priorities, within the practitioners are evolving differently across levels of SINTA accreditation. As the number of research papers addressing synchronous, asynchronous and blended learning modes varies over time, they offer insights, into the changing importance of these teaching methods, in educational research.

Chart 1 below shows paper distribution over time and SINTA accreditations, capturing the subtle aspects of this study which also answers the research question 1.
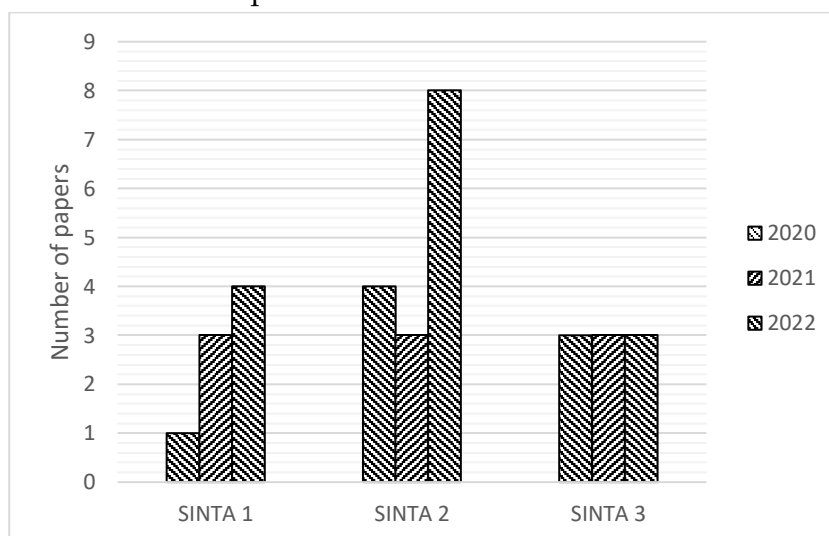
Figure 1. Selected papers over time in SINTA accreditations

RQ2: How have the synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning implemented?

This study found that the implementation of the three learning modes is applied uniquely. The synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning were mostly integrated with strategies, techniques, method, or medias using various platforms. Some of the papers also discussed the integration of these thee learning modes (two or three of them). The researchers generated three themes from the synthesis result which are presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4.
The synthesis result of learning modes implementation

Learning mode	Implementation	Article codes	Articles
Synchronous and Real-time interaction	Students and teachers used Zoom, Google Meet, Cisco WebEx, WhatsApp, and Instagram for real-time communication and debates in the learning mode. Feedback and interactive online classes with speaking activities were possible. To make this mode effective, use Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which emphasizes online conversation. Students' language abilities have improved while taking classes with this approach.	P1S1, P7S1, P8S2, P15S2, P2S3, P3S3, P8S3	Lintangsari, Emaliana, and Kusumawardani, 2022 Amin and Sundari (2020) Larasati (2022) Tusino, Pedanakusuma, Dewi, and Saputro (2022) Hasby, Wahyono, and Supraba (2021) Istiqomah (2021) Gloriez (2022)
Asynchronous Engagement and accessibility	Learning management systems (LMS) and mobile messaging apps gave students convenient and flexible access to virtual classes and learning resources. Google Classroom, Edmodo, Moodle, Schoology, Plickers, Quizziz, and WhatsApp enabled asynchronous learning. Students might participate at their own	P1S1, P5S1, P1S2, P3S2, P6S2, P14S2, P1S3, P5S3, P6S3, P9S3	Lintangsari et al. (2022) Rinekso, Rodliyah, and Pertiwi (2021) Utomo and Sulistyowati (2022) Kusuma, Santosa, and Myartawan (2020) Akhmad and

	speed with these resources. Communicative Language Teaching was used for this.		Saleh (2022) Suherman et al. (2021) Masita (2020) Nggawu and Alam (2022) Riwayatiningsih and Sulistyani (2020) Septianingsih and Erliza (2021)
Blended learning modalities	Using platforms and an LMS, blended learning blends face-to-face and digital interactions. To improve learning, this strategy uses multimedia presentations, e books, simulations, collaboration tools, and synchronous and asynchronous aspects. Flipping classrooms utilizing recorded materials and real-time sessions encourages interactive involvement and dynamic investigation. The Nominal Group technique (NGT) and LMS-video conferencing solutions allow teachers to incorporate asynchronous components into learning dynamics. Common learning tools include Padlet for asynchronous exercises, Edmodo for content sharing, WhatsApp and Zoom for interaction and discussion, and Wattpad for publishing. For large classes, blended learning meets students' needs and abilities.	P2S1, P3S1, P6S1, P8S1, P2S2, P4S2, P5S2, P9S2, P10S2, P11S2, P4S3, P6S3, P7S3.	Wardana, Dharmayanti, and Arsana (2022) Kusuma (2022) Yulian (2021) Sukirman et al., (2022) Suriman, Tadeko, Manurung, Usman, and Yuliyani (2022) Rianto (2020) Muhria and Wandari (2022) Rozimela (2021) Fadhillah, Raja, and Putrawan (2020) Widiarti, Yufrizal, and Sudirman (2020) Etfita, Wahyuni, Satriani, Alber, and Asnawi (2022) Riwayatiningsih and Sulistyani (2020) Setyaningsih (2020)

RQ 3: Are there any articles discussing about differences of synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning implementation between schools/universities in cities and in rural areas?

The research findings reveal a limited number of articles discussing the implementation of synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning modes in urban and rural settings. Among the 32 articles reviewed, only two articles, coded as P3S1 and P10S3, specifically address the implementation of these learning modes rural areas. Interestingly, the distribution of these articles across different SINTA tiers indicates a relatively low percentage, with only 0.03% representing both the SINTA 1 and SINTA 3 categories. In addition, no articles from journals accredited by SINTA 2 were identified as focusing on this specific topic. Table 5 below presents the data.

Table 5.
The selected article distribution of learning modes implementation in urban and rural areas from SINTA tiers

SINTA tier	Article Code	Number of articles	Percentage
SINTA 1	P3S1	1	0.03%
SINTA 2	-	0	0%
SINTA 3	P10S3	1	0.03%

Despite the number of articles, the research findings emphasize that there is no significant difference, in terms of how learning modes have been implemented, perceived or faced with challenges in city and rural areas. Both urban and rural educational environments have embraced synchronous and asynchronous learning methods in response to the difficulties brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. It is worth noting that students and teachers in both settings demonstrate attitudes towards synchronous learning. However slow internet connections posed challenges to its effectiveness when compared to face-to-face instruction. Additionally, variations arise in terms of learning motivation, styles and alignment with course objectives, between these two contexts.

Additionally, the research suggests that both students and teachers have a positive viewpoint of the learning modes although inadequate information about their perceptions, challenges, and

implementation discussed in the papers. It can be deduced that various digital platforms have been utilized to facilitate the learning, including the LMS such as Google Classroom, Edmodo, or Moodle, messaging applications such as WhatsApp and email, and other online collaboration tools such as Padlet. It is also reasonable to assume that blended learning modes were employed in the contexts. The combination of asynchronous elements likely contributed to diverse learning experiences in rural areas during the remote teaching. Nevertheless, specific details regarding the implementation process were not explicitly covered in the provided data.

To clarify the implementation, perception, and challenges, perhaps strategies to encounter the challenges, here, the researcher provides key inferences that are drawn from the selected papers regarding the adoption of synchronous, asynchronous and blended learning methods, in both city and rural settings. These key findings are summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 6.
The key inferences of the learning modes implementation in urban and rural settings

No.	Key inferences	Explanation
1	Limited research focus	Based on the research, both urban and rural environments pay attention to these learning modes. Out of the 32 publications examined, only two discuss how these approaches are applied in rural settings. This suggests that authoritative publications, SINTA 1 2 and 3 do not prioritize this topic.
2	Equivalence in implementation	Although it is not as many as articles talking about the learning modes in urban context, the findings still portray that urban and rural areas use learning methods in a more or less similar way. Both settings have implemented synchronous, asynchronous and blended learning as a response, to the COVID 19. This demonstrates that educational institutions, in parts of Indonesia have embraced similar distance learning approaches.
3	Challenges and positive perceptions	Studies reveal that teachers and students in urban and rural areas have positive viewpoints regardless of where they are implemented.

		However, slow internet connections and inadequate supporting tools pose challenges to the learning. Furthermore, there is evidence supporting the idea that asynchronous learning, which allows students to learn at their pace offers flexibility and benefits.
4	Platform utilization	Teachers in urban and rural schools shared similar platforms for synchronous and asynchronous, or maybe also blended learning. The teachers in these setting preferred to use WhatsApp and LMS for the asynchronous learning mode, and real-time applications such as Zoom and Google Meet for the synchronous learning.
5	Lack of detailed insights (additional inference)	The available data do not provide sufficient information about how the students and teachers perceive, implement, and encounter issues with blended learning instruction. Although there are some indications, the data do not go in detail, which could suggest a gap. Nevertheless, the researcher assumes that the blended learning mode (if it is implemented) will be the combination of the traditional face-to-face meeting with the used platforms.

RQ 4: What and how platforms have been utilized by schools and universities in each type of learning modes?

The synthesized data represent a range of platforms used for different types of learning including synchronous, asynchronous and blended modes. We found these platforms based on the goals of instruction, available resources and technological capabilities of the schools. Table 7 displays the overview of the platforms used in various learning modes across different educational contexts. We have identified 21 platforms that have been utilized to support aspects of the learning process. Here is Table 7.

Table 7.

Platforms for each learning mode, and their application

No.	Platform	Total	Learning Mode and Implementation
1	Zoom	9	Zoom was widely utilized as a platform in synchronous learning which was predominantly used in blended learning mode that integrate both synchronous and asynchronous elements. It functions as a tool, for real time communication and interaction supporting both blended and fully online scenarios.
2	Google Meet	7	Google meet was the second frequent used platform during remote teaching. It was commonly used in blended learning mode that combine the asynchronous components. This platform facilitates real-time collaboration and active participation, amongst the participants.
3	Microsoft Team	1	Microsoft Teams was used in synchronous learning mode within a blended learning environment. It facilitates communication collaboration allowing for both interaction a flexible engagement
4	Google Classroom	11	Google Classroom was widely used within the three learning modes. It was employed in blended learning scenarios with both synchronous and asynchronous elements, as well as in settings combining face-to-face and asynchronous approaches. It was also utilized purely for asynchronous learning, providing a hub for content sharing, assignment submission, and interaction outside real-time sessions.
5	WhatsApp	8	WhatsApp has been proven to be useful to be implemented, especially in blended learning mode where face-to-face, asynchronous and synchronous approach are adopted, as well as in purely asynchronous modes. The platforms have provided a means for participations to communicate, share resources, and collaborate with one another.
6	LMS (Schoology 2, Borneo e-learning, 1)	8	Learning Management Systems such as Schoology and Borneo e-learning were employed in synchronous contexts and also blended learning approach integrating synchronous and asynchronous mode. These

			platforms have helped with delivering content, evaluating progress, and promoting interaction in supporting the teaching learning process.
7	Mentimeter	1	Mentimeter was utilized in a learning environment in an asynchronous mode. The platform has provided a presentation tool that helps to engage learners and enhance their learning experiences.
8	Kahoot	2	Kahoot was employed in blended learning with asynchronous mode. It creates an interactive dimension to asynchronous learning materials.
9	Facebook	2	Facebook was utilized in a blended learning incorporating traditional face-to-face, synchronous, and asynchronous context. It functions as a platform for communication, collaboration, and the sharing of content.
10	Edmodo	3	Edmodo was used frequently in blended learning mode, involving both synchronous and asynchronous elements. It served as a platform for sharing content facilitating communication, enabling interactions outside of rea-time sessions.
11	Moodle	3	Moodle was utilized in a blended learning incorporating synchronous, asynchronous and face-to-face learning mode. It has been used as a platform for sharing materials, conducting assessments, and facilitating communication accommodating teaching approaches.
12	Email	2	Email has been used primarily in the asynchronous mode. It has served as a way to facilitated communication, share information, and promote interaction.
13	Multimedia presentations and animations	1	These tools were incorporated into a blended learning context combining a traditional face-to-face and online component improving the delivery of content, and promoting participations.
14	Google Form	1	Google Form was utilized for asynchronous learning. It has been a potential tool for assessment or information gathering.
15	Instagram	2	Instagram has been utilized in blended learning incorporating a combination of traditional face-to-face, asynchronous, and synchronous learning. It was a platform for the

			content sharing and real-time engagement.
16	Quizziz	3	Quizziz was employed in various learning modes: blended learning, asynchronous, and synchronous learning. It has facilitated assessments, as well as, offering platforms to support asynchronous mode.
17	Class Dojo	1	Class Dojo was used for asynchronous learning functioning as a tool for communication and managing the classroom.
18	Plickers	1	Plickers was utilized in various learning mode incorporating traditional face-to-face and virtual learning. It has provided a tool for real-time engagement and assessment.
19	Padlet	1	Padlet was used for synchronous learning to enhance engagement and interaction in real-time sessions.
20	Web	1	The web was utilized as a platform incorporating a combination of a traditional face-to-face, time and self-paced elements for content delivery and interactions.
21	Message board	1	Message board was utilized in a blended learning combining both traditional face-to-face and online elements. It has served as a platform for students to engage in communication and interaction.

RQ 5: what are the students' and teachers' perspectives towards those modes of learning? Positive or Negative?

This study reveals that generally the teachers and students perceived positive perceptions towards the implementation of synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning.

English teachers' perceptions

In the data obtained from journals accredited by SINTA 1, there is an inadequate information about how the teachers perceived the learning modalities. None of selected articles provided excerpts that offer insights on the teachers' attitudes, challenges, and experiences towards the learning modes. On the other hand, there found 1 article (out of 15) reported the perception of English teacher towards the implementation of the three learning modes in SINTA 2 done by

Kusuma (2022). There perceived positive and negative perceptions of the learning modes; however, the majority of the teachers agreed that the asynchronous, synchronous, and blended learning mode facilitated them with efficient learning that they could still hold the class in spite of having the ERT. Nevertheless, since the learning modes were relatively new, there is a necessity for development, and innovative strategies to facilitate the teaching and learning.

Differently, from the selected papers accredited by SINTA 3, 2 out of 9 articles reported the perceptions of the teachers (Gloriez, 2022; Siregar, 2020). According to the findings, majority of the teachers perceived positive viewpoints towards the utilized learning modalities. Specifically, the adoption of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was accepted as an appropriate approach to adopt for the learning modes (Gloriez, 2022) because it was effective in improving students' English competence and achieving learning objectives.

Students' perceptions

The selected articles published in SINTA 1 accredited journals generally reflect student perceptions. 4 out of 8 papers support this finding (Lintangsari et al., 2022; Rinekso et al., 2021; Santoso, 2021). It was found that most students hold an attitude towards using platforms such as Google Classroom, Zoom and WhatsApp in these three learning modes. They viewed these platforms as practical and beneficial for creating learning experiences while also being effective for achieving learning objectives. One specific teaching model highlighted as positive is the Flipped Classroom approach which has aided students in their preparation, understanding, confidence building and performance during teaching sessions – in learning mode (Yulian, 2021). This positive acceptance of platforms serves as validation for the effectiveness of these three learning modes.

Furthermore, papers from SINTA 2 accredited journals also report positive perceptions despite acknowledging some technical challenges that are viewed negatively. Out of the 15 articles
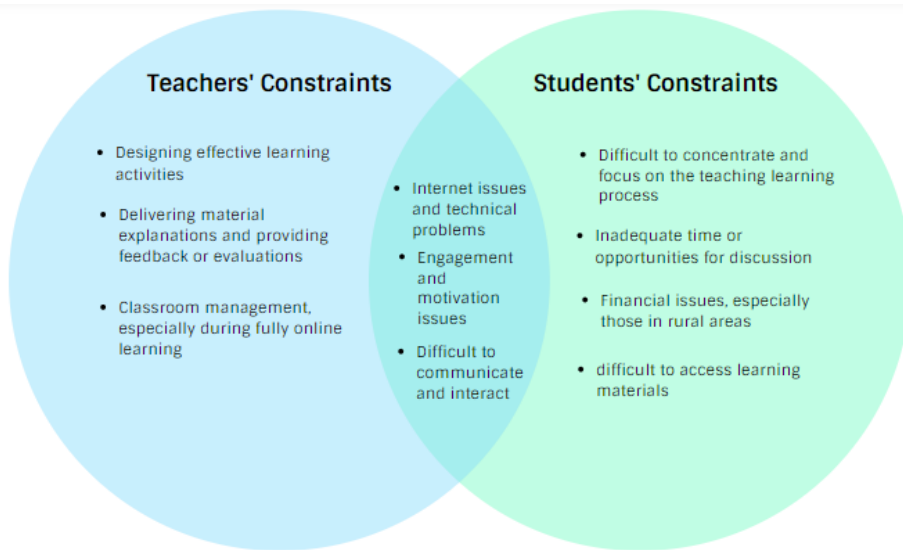
reviewed, a majority of them (11 out of 15) discuss the perceptions from students who have experienced the synchronous, asynchronous and blended learning (Akhmad & Saleh, 2022; Dewi & Santosa, 2022; Fadhillah et al., 2020; A. A. I. R. S. Kusuma et al., 2020; Larasati, 2022; Rianto, 2020; Suherman et al., 2021; Suriaman et al., 2022; Tusino et al., 2022; Utomo & Sulistyowati, 2022; Widiarti et al., 2020).

The students viewed generally positive and accepted the implementation of the learning modes. Nevertheless, 1 out of 11 studies revealed a neutral perception of the students that they could not feel essential elements that influence their learning due to the activities or platforms which had been used by the teachers were less motivating (Dewi & Santosa, 2022). Overall, the positive views encompass convenience and flexibility allowing them to work at their pace. The techniques, strategies, or approach that were adopted or used during the learning activities allow the students to take control of their learning process. Yet, the challenges faced by students related to the technical stuff such as internet restrictions or slow connection, bandwidth, platforms unfamiliarity, and some others should become the concern for future implementation of the synchronous, asynchronous, or blended learning.

Furthermore, from papers published in SINTA 3, it was found out that students' perceptions regarding the learning modes were also positive. 7 out of 10 papers discussed about this (Etfita et al., 2022; Hasby et al., 2021; Istiqomah, 2021; Masita, 2020; Riwayatiningsih & Sulistyani, 2020; Septianingsih & Erliza, 2021; Setyaningsih, 2020). This is believed to be due to the adoption of approaches such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and the utilization of platforms, across these three modes of learning. They also shared positive responses towards the utilization of various digital platforms, like Plickers, Padlet, Google Meet, Zoom and other similar ones.

RQ 6: What are the challenges faced by teachers and students while implementing the learning modes?

The challenges of teachers and students are illustrated in Figure 3 below.

Teachers' Constraints

- Designing effective learning activities
- Delivering material explanations and providing feedback or evaluations
- Classroom management, especially during fully online learning

- Internet issues and technical problems
- Engagement and motivation issues
- Difficult to communicate and interact

Students' Constraints

- Difficult to concentrate and focus on the teaching learning process
- Inadequate time or opportunities for discussion
- Financial issues, especially those in rural areas
- difficult to access learning materials

Figure 3. Challenges faced by teachers and students

The study indicates that students as well as teachers had challenges or obstacles in implementing synchronous, asynchronous, or blended learning modalities. Both students and teachers frequently encountered comparable obstacles connected to technology, such as problems with internet connectivity, limited bandwidth, unfamiliarity with platforms, and unreliable electricity. They also faced obstructions in terms of motivation and engagement, as well as difficulty establishing relationships and communication. In addition to these common hurdles, they also encountered individual obstacles.

According to the viewpoints of teachers, obstacles encountered during the implementation of different learning modes included the design of learning activities, communication and support strategies, provision of feedback and engagement, delivery of evaluations and explanations, monitoring and control of the class, as well as insufficient training to the platform utilization. In contrast, the

students encountered several challenges that encompassed not just technical obstacles and issues related to engagement and motivation, but also lacking of focus, restricted opportunities for contact, financial limitations, and impediments in obtaining learning materials.

In response to the challenges above, both teaches and students have devised a range of strategies as the solutions as presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8.

Teachers and students' strategies

No.	Teachers' strategies	Students' strategies
1	Participating in professional development programs to enhance their skills on utilizing the platforms.	Using search engines such as Google for browsing the learning materials
2	Watching and reading many references for creating and conducting effective online learning environment	Utilizing applications such as Microsoft Office for assignment and presentation
3	Creating representative lesson plans for online teaching, especially	Using e-dictionaries to help with unfamiliar vocabularies
4	Doing trial and errors related to designing interactive online activities to grab students' attention to the class activities, and to boost engagement.	Sparing time to learn how to use digital platforms properly and efficiently
5	Using various tools and approaches; not solely rely on one platform	Utilizing social media for improving skills and knowledge related to the English skills and learning materials
6	Utilizing educational applications such as Mentimeter and Kahoot for assessment and classroom gamification	
7	Maximizing the use of Google Classroom to create flexibility for students to access the learning materials	
8	Utilizing WhatsApp features for low-bandwidth areas such as voice-note/voice recordings,	

	videos for explanations, document files for uploading the materials
9	Maximizing the features of social media, such as Facebook or Instagram for polls, group discussions, and sharing learning material
10	Creating positive discussion environment by respecting students' contributions or achievements, as well as motivating those who are still less active during the class.

DISCUSSION

The idea for this systematic literature review (SLR) study stems from the necessity of comprehending the implementation of the three learning modalities during the Covid-19 pandemic in a more comprehensive and holistic view. Since the COVID-19 outbreak was officially decided as a worldwide pandemic in March 2020, the Indonesian government had to shift the traditional face-to-face classroom activities into online learning, forcing teachers and students to use various platforms to fulfill the classroom activities and meet the learning objectives (Amin & Sundari, 2020; Rahmani, 2021; Suherman et al., 2021). Teachers, including English teachers, were obligated to adapt their teaching methods in response to the "new" conditions. This adaptation involved incorporating a pedagogical approach that used the synchronous and asynchronous learning modalities for implementation within the classroom setting. Two years since the commencement of the pandemic, Indonesia has successfully managed the outbreak and subsequently reopened schools and universities, although under restricted conditions. In this context, a blended learning mode was employed to accommodate offline and online learning (Kristiyanto et al., 2020; Syahrudin et al., 2022).

As a result of these shifts, numerous researchers have undertaken studies on the application of synchronous, asynchronous, or blended learning modalities within the Indonesian context (e.g. Asrobi, Surayya, & Prasetyaningrum, 2021; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Nggawu & Alam, 2022; Septianingsih & Erliza, 2021; Suherman, Yunita, & Hadiati, 2021b, and many more.). They have pointed out the benefits, drawbacks, effectiveness, challenges, peculiarity, platform utilization, stakeholders' perceptions, and implementation procedures of the learning modes. Nevertheless, these studies focus primarily on examining a single learning mode, whether it is synchronous, asynchronous, or blended. The approach mentioned above is not inadequate, but we believe that articles encompassing comprehensive insights into the implementations of the three learning modes would offer more enriched, comprehensive, and holistic perspectives. Furthermore, readers would find it much easier to compare the implementation of the learning modalities if the discussion is discussed in a single article. This is the gap that we, in this study, would like to fill in. Through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design, we have unraveled approximately six core points of the issues synthesized from the selected articles published in journals accredited by SINTA 1, SINTA 2, and SINTA 3 ranging from 2020-2022, in which the results have been presented in the finding section above.

The first question demonstrates a dynamic shift in research interest over a three-year period, with a rise in the number of papers in SINTA 1 journals covering synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning modes. This developing tendency is important, starting with only one paper in 2020 and steadily increasing to three papers in 2021 and four papers in 2022. A similar pattern could be found in SINTA 2 journals, where published research ascended from four papers in 2020 to eight papers in 2022. Nonetheless, three papers were published in SINTA 3 journals from 2020 to 2022, indicating a constant quantity of publications. This trend reflects changing educational research selections and interests in

synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning modes. This trend is most likely affected by the framework of acceptance of a new scenario (Ahmad & Karim, 2019; Granić & Marangunić, 2019; Kashdan & Silvia, 2009) in which there is a strong need for gaining information about new things and the need to alter instructional strategies (Bakia et al., 2012; Bozkurt & Sharma, Ramesh, 2020; Daniel, 2020; Means et al., 2009).

Proceeding to the implementation of the three learning modes, the study discovered that each learning mode was distinctively applied and integrated with various strategies, techniques, methods, and media utilizing different platforms. Teachers, for example, used video conferencing platforms such as Zoom or Google Meet and integrated them with social media and messaging applications such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook following the characteristics of real-time interaction to satisfy the virtual face-to-face interaction during the online class when using the synchronous learning mode (e.g. Amin & Sundari, 2020; Asrobi et al., 2021; Hasby et al., 2021; Istiqomah, 2021; Lintangsari et al., 2022; Perveen, 2016; Tusino et al., 2022).

The Synchronous learning implementation has also been effectively connected with the approach of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to enhance student communication during the teaching learning process, and keep prcatising English during the lesson. On the other hand, teachers who implemented the asynchronous learning (e.g. Akhmad & Saleh, 2022; Kusuma et al., 2020; Rinekso et al., 2021; Suherman et al., 2021a; Utomo & Sulistyowati, 2022) utilized Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Google Classroom, Schoology, Edmodo, or Moodle, and integrated them with educational applications like Padlet, Plickers, Quizziz, or Kahoot, as well as social media and messaging applications such as WhatsApp or Instagram. It was purposely done to offer flexible learning opportunities for the students, enabling them to establish their own learning pace underpinning the

principles of asynchronous learning (Daniel, 2020; Fuller, 2021; Johnson et al., 2022).

In addition, blended learning, combining traditional face-to-face and virtual classes, incorporated multimedia resources, simulations, and collaborative tools of both synchronous and asynchronous learning (e.g. Muhria & Wandari, 2022; Rianto, 2020; Riwayatiningsih & Sulistyani, 2020; Suriaman et al., 2022; Wardana et al., 2022; Widiarti et al., 2020; Yulian, 2021). Aiming at multifaceted the learning dynamic and accommodating the gaps in learning caused by the remote teaching, teachers who adopted the blended learning mode utilized multi platforms to create adequate learning environment (D. Li, 2022; Paudel, 2020; Picciano, 2017; Suriaman et al., 2022).

One notable finding is the similarity in adopting various learning modalities between urban and rural regions. People might have thought there would be a wide gap between these two settings in responding to the school closure and new learning policies. Teachers with many limitations kept doing their best to implement the learning modes. Despite the limited number of articles addressing this issue, it was noted that schools in both settings adopted comparable approaches to remote instruction to respond to the challenges caused by the pandemic (I. P. . Kusuma, 2022; Septianingsih & Erliza, 2021). However, variations emerged in learning motivation, styles, and alignment with the course objectives between these two settings. The preference for face-to-face learning among students residing in rural areas is based on their experience of encountering fewer challenges in conventional classroom settings than online programs encompassing limited access to learning materials, difficulties practicing English, and technical issues. (Avrinia, 2022; I. P. . Kusuma, 2022; Septianingsih & Erliza, 2021).

In addition to implementing the three learning modes, we noticed both students and teachers encountered challenges and obstacles while adopting the modalities. The main problems include internet restrictions (e.g., slow internet connection and limited

bandwidth), unstable electricity, and also technical problems such as digital platforms unfamiliarity or technology illiterate. Teachers, precisely, encountered various challenges related to the teaching process including preparation of classroom activities, controlling students' submission deadline, providing feedback, inability to check students' genuine progress, and classroom management (Akhmad & Saleh, 2022; Amin & Sundari, 2020; Kusuma et al., 2020; Kusuma, 2022; Nugroho et al., 2021; Rianto, 2020; Riwayatiningsih & Sulistyani, 2020; Suriaman et al., 2022; Utomo & Sulistyowati, 2022). Comparably, in the students' cases, they faced difficulties especially in logging-in or accessing the platforms assigned by the teachers, struggling to comprehend the lesson materials, facing obstacles in managing group activities, and experiencing less creative and demotivated in searching for knowledge, and feeling hesitant to speak in English particularly when required to do so in front of a camera (Akhmad & Saleh, 2022; Etfita et al., 2022; Hasby et al., 2021; A. A. I. R. S. Kusuma et al., 2020; Larasati, 2022; Lintangsari et al., 2022; Nggawu & Alam, 2022; Septianingsih & Erliza, 2021).

Despite challenges and obstacles offered by the synchronous, asynchronous learning, and blended learning modalities related to technical issues, internet restrictions, and platform unfamiliarity, both teachers and students agreed that these learning modes have helped them fulfill the necessities of English teaching-learning. Teachers perceived the efficiency and effectiveness of these learning modes in maintaining classroom activities during the remote teaching period. They claimed that online learning forced them to be more creative in designing classroom activities; otherwise, the students would not engage actively. Likewise, students, as well, had positive viewpoints toward the implementation of these learning modes. They emphasized that the platforms' practicality, convenience, and flexibility truly helped them cater to the learning process. The adoption of Flipped Classroom, for instance, was highly appreciated by the students because it was favorable in

improving their preparedness, material understanding, confidence, and performance during the classroom process.

Overall, this study has offered significant contributions to the understanding of the trends, implementation, perspectives, and challenges associated with synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning modes in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in Indonesia. The dynamic research environment, along with favorable perceptions from both teachers and students, highlights the increasing significance of these instructional methods in addressing the difficulties brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. This study also has augmented previous research by presenting all core aspects of the learning modalities implementation comprehensively that fulfill the informational needs of English language teachers (even teachers of other subjects), educators, and practitioners regarding the deployment of the learning modes in one package. Nonetheless, as the purpose of this study is primarily to present the synthesis data from selected papers, we do not provide any suggestions or constructive solutions to assist teachers and students with their hurdles. Thus, we invite further research to offer inventive strategies to improve the efficacy of the learning modalities and overcome the technical and motivational barriers confronted by the teachers and students.

CONCLUSION

Addressing the needs of EFL teachers, educators, and practitioners on the implementations of synchronous, asynchronous, and learning modes in Indonesia, this current study presents a systematic review result of thirty-two research articles from qualified journals accredited by SINTA 1, SINTA 2, and SINTA 3 about the utilization of synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning modes. The findings underscore five core points including (1) the trends of research interests across different tiers of journal accreditation which indicates that researchers, practitioners, or educators have become more aware of the significance of these

learning modes as a response of the transitioned classroom activities during and after the COVID-19 pandemic; (2) the implementation of the learning modes; (3) different implementation and perception in urban and rural setting; (4) the most utilized platforms; (5) perceptions of teachers and students toward the implementation of the learning modes; and (6) challenges confronted by teachers and students, as well their strategies to overcome the hurdles.

Furthermore, this review has emphasized how important technology is in helping with the emergency remote teaching. It also emphasizes the importance of continuous professional development to improve teachers' digital skills. As education keeps changing, the information we have gathered presented in this review can be really helpful for teachers and policy makers who want to or need to adapt or apply the synchronous, asynchronous, and blended learning mode. If we tackle the technical challenges and encourage new ideas EFL education in Indonesia can keep evolving and flourishing. This will ultimately help teachers and students have better language learning experiences.

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