

Fears and Challenges of Acting in the Pandemic Time

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

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E-learning has become a popular approach today. However, in drama/theater classes where exercises, rehearsals, and 'productions' are done on stage, such an approach was considered impossible, until Covid-19 pandemic strike occurred. The purpose of this paper is to reveal how acting classes dealt with the disruption, the process of selecting and implementing online meeting platforms, the new 'lesson plan' to finish the classes, the challenges due to the changes, and evaluation for future practices. The nature of the study is both explanatory and evaluative by action research. Primary data were collected using personal observations and questionnaires. Secondary data were taken from library research pertaining drama/theater, e-learning, online teaching, action research, thematic analysis, etc. By flipping from offline to online learning, acting classes turned out to be manageable. Radical and innovative adaptations should be made to make classes work online, including flipping offline to online meetings, implementing screen/camera knowledge, and using online platforms such as *Google Meet*, *Zoom*, *WA*, and *LINE*. Moreover, despite the fact that initially online meeting was threatening to the students and the teacher alike, using online meeting platforms for acting classes as blended learning was a good challenge, given appropriate situations and purposes.

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper I report the switch of teaching-learning process from offline to online modes during the pandemic era in Petra Christian University, especially in the English for Creative Industry Program of the English Department. The report focuses on Acting Classes which are naturally conducted in a theater studio. The aim is to reveal how acting classes flipped into online learning, what the online learning program was like, and how fears, challenges, and opportunities of online learning surfaced to provide insights for the possibility of online, or further blended, learning in drama/theater classes in the future. They all happened because of the advent of coronavirus type 19 or Covid-19.

The Covid-19 pandemic is (almost) over. However, its effects will stubbornly remain for some time in the future. To avoid the spread of the virus, governments have made different measures including restrictions to human contacts. The restrictions have given impacts to every walk of life, including business, education, tourism, etc. It has resulted in drastic changes in economic, social, and cultural sectors (ILO, 2020). For example, research by Ghosh (2020) revealed that due to Covid-19, the Indian government implemented a

stringent lockdown which fatally affected the economic affairs of the country, forcing millions of people to suffer from starvation. Covid-19 has also created social problems. A lot of people have lost their jobs and it has created social restlessness. That is why, for instance, the government of the People's Republic of China started providing online job consultations (Zhang, 2020). Covid-19 has indeed affected a lot of sectors. For instance, it has affected property business in the United Kingdom (French, 2020), manufacture in Africa, sports business in the United States (Ehrlich et al., 2020), etc. In short, Covid-19 has created difficulties worldwide.

Indonesia, of course, is not exempt from the strike of Covid-19. The Indonesian government has implemented several regulations to curb the spread of the virus. The regulations are controlled under *Lembaga Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan COVID-19* (Coronavirus Disease Response Acceleration Task Force), with the head of *Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana* (National Disaster Management Agency) as the leader in charge. The government controls the activities by issuing policies related to state budget relocations, national food security, national health enforcement, and education. In education the policy has been about the cancellation of the national examination, closure of offline classes from elementary to university levels (Djalante et al., 2020). The policy in education has made schools and campuses switch from offline to online classes.

Before the pandemic, there were online learning initiatives by some educators and institutions that were already aware of the internet-based classes, generally called e-learning. E-learning requires at least hardware (PC or Laptop), software (usually already installed in Windows), internet connection, and internet browser. When the pandemic began to force the full implementation of e-learning, however, almost all teachers, schools, and campuses were not quite ready. When the regulation was introduced, therefore, all education stakeholders—school/campus managements, teachers, students, parents—were shocked. The first problem was the technical requirements. Not all institutions had sufficient hardware, let alone software. Not all teachers were knowledgeable to use the equipment, if any. Not all parents (almost all) could provide their children with required devices. Even more, all were not ready with the 'new habit'. "A new habit of [online] learning in the education world has made culture shock for the students" (Kuning, 2021, p. 55). Kuning continues by quoting Putri et al. that the "culture shock in online learning can happen to students, teachers, and parents" (p. 58). The education sector has experienced a disruption which was predicted by some experts as one of the characteristics of this era.

The so-called 'culture shock' also happened to Petra Christian University (PCU). The management of PCU keenly paid attention to the government regulations which changed anytime depending on the current situations. They also prepared for the worse (which did come) of conducting online classes. While conducting online classes, PCU also prepared for hybrid classes when students could choose to learn online or offline. The management started installing necessary devices in classrooms and strengthening the internet connection. When it was completely online, teachers prepared their own access to the internet by purchasing packages from providers. The teachers were also given training on online and hybrid teaching, especially on the use of the equipment. It was a whole new game, a whole new habit.

The methodology I used in the study was close to action research. The data was taken from my observation of the class meetings and a questionnaire I delivered to the students. I considered it close to action research because it was not planned as action research should generally be conducted. It happened because of the disruption caused by Covid-19. In terms of purpose, though, the whole process was like action research. B.L. Berg and H. Lune (2012) stated about action research as follows:

The central purpose of action research is to come to some resolution and use it to take action toward improving the lives of the participants (stakeholders). In terms of evaluation, the researcher considers which actions might affect the best positive changes in the organization and lives of the participants. ... (p. 264).

This research was a ‘report’ on how Acting classes which flipped from stage to screen were conducted. The purpose of the research, as Berg and Lune stated, was to guide the students to undergo the changing process of the nature of the classes so that they could finish and learn enough from the learning and teaching processes. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis to uncover the phenomena and explain how they happened using the researcher’s lens. As the ‘researcher’ I analyzed the data based on the detailed information to make conclusions which might be developed into recommendations for further application (Heriyanto, 2018). Secondary data was taken from library research pertaining acting, drama/theater, hybrid learning, e-learning, online teaching, etc. This research also falls into the category of qualitative research since although computation was used, it was analyzed qualitatively to develop qualitative findings.

For the organization, referring to what Cambridge Judge Business School Program to “navigate digital disruptions,” I use the five steps they offer: “dealing with disruption, platform strategies, business models, challenges adapting, and ecosystem evolution” (Digital disruption, n.d.). The steps, of course, are for business context. However, I found it appropriate to be used in this paper since when I started organizing my draft, it was quite similar. My adaptation to the five steps is as follows: 1. dealing with the disruption, about the evaluation of the current condition related to the disruption by Covid-19. 2. Platform strategies, about the process of selecting and implementing online meeting platforms. 3. Business model, about the new ‘lesson plan’ to finish the classes. 4. Challenges adapting, about how the students and I face the challenges from the initial reactions to the changes to their final ‘performances.’ 5. Ecosystem evaluation, about the concluding thoughts and reflections on what were done and might be explored for future practices. As already indicated, the whole process was far from a neat arrangement. For example, the ‘lesson plan’ was done more or less instantly without a formal format such as the initial one called RPS (*Rencana Pembelajaran Semester* [Semester Learning Plan]). It was the result of, among others, the discussion with the students.

Dealing with the Disruption: From Stage to Screen

As a part of the English Department, English for Creative Industry Program offers ‘applied literature,’ which means approaching literature from the creative production as opposed to the academic analysis of literary works.

This program is a pathway for a career in the entertainment business: script-writing, acting, and directing, or a job in the media and publishing company: fiction-writing, copy-writing, and advertising (<http://inggris.petra.ac.id/curriculum>).

The drama-related courses offered are, among others, playwriting, play production, stage acting, film acting, and directing. Since the students are high school fresh graduates, teachers guide them step by step in learning dramatic theater, both in producing scripts and performing them. Students are introduced to the basics of theater since the 1st and 2nd semesters, starting from courses such as *Introduction to Play and Screenplay Writing* and *Basic Acting for Stage and Film to Playwriting to Directing for Stage and Stage Production* in 6th or 7th semesters.

Prior to the pandemic, e-learning was already implemented in the classes. It was basically used for online communications with the students, especially via PCU’s home online platform called Lentera (see <https://lentera.petra.ac.id>). Using Lentera, PCU’s home platform, teachers could initiate online discussions, post announcements, open assignment submissions, etc. On the other hand, offline contacts were inevitable especially in acting exercises, rehearsals, and productions. Students would meet one another offline for classes as well as assignments. They were used to doing their activities as teams on campus, especially in the English

Department's theatre studio called Petra Little Theatre (PLT) (<https://petralittletheatre.wixsite.com/petralittletheatre>).

When the announcement from the government about the 'lockdown' was received and implemented by PCU, I thought that it would only be for some weeks. It was about three weeks away from the Midterm examinations. I even thought that the examination, which was supposed to be a preparation for stage performance, could be carried out at PLT. It did not happen. I had to modify the midterm test format to online 'performance preparation.' While conducting the sudden online midterm test, I did it with the idea that the classes would be back to campus at the second half of the semester. In such a condition, I wrote 'online instruction' to the classes' LINE groups as follow:

Dear actors, for this week:¹

1. Please read chapter 4 for knowledge about music and musical.
2. Read Unit 5 carefully, especially 'I Remember Sky.'
3. Pay attention to:
 - i. Lyrics as poetry
 - ii. Poetry versus prose (to make it easy to get the idea of the song).
 - iii. Rhythm. Look at points like "In poetry these differences are used in a pattern to establish the meter and to deepen the image or feeling." Or "In lyrics, the simpler the language is, the more complex the underlying emotion is."
 - iv. Rhyme. How Rhyme helps you feel the lyric/ song.
4. You may have watched and listened to the video. Watch again and try to feel how the song (I Remember Sky) is interpreted. If necessary, try to goggle information related to the song.
5. Try working on your songs. Rewrite the lyrics, make it prose, check the rhythm and rhyme. If necessary, record as you sing it. Listen to it, have you interpreted the song well enough?
6. If you happen to be able to meet and rehearse with your partners, do so. Discuss and exchange inputs.
7. Memorize the lines and be ready for the real rehearsals in class later.
8. When necessary, we will do online class via Google Meet next week to discuss midterm assignment since our distant learning is until midterm.
9. In case you have questions, please post them online.
10. Thank you. Stay safe, stay healthy. Let's hope this 'Covid-19' problem is over soon. For the time being, enjoy learning at home.
11. I wrote it in the LINE groups after about two meetings with uncertainty of what the classes should be like, especially for the performances. I just told them that we would do online meetings, with the hope that after Midterm we would be back on campus. I told them that for "the real rehearsals in class later" they needed to do it online. They could not prepare it onstage; they had to do it online. It was the initial flip from stage to screen.

Platform Strategies: Acting Classes Go Online

When it was announced that classes should be done full online until the end of the semester, my students and I were at a loss. It was especially because acting classes were supposed to be 'practicum' classes. The Lesson Plan (RPS) which stated that after the Midterm would start the exercises, rehearsals, and performances on the actual theatre studio—PLT—was to be forgotten. Everything should be online. We really had to migrate from stage to screen, which was not live theatre performance promised land. We should figure out the best online platform for acting classes.

¹ This data was also used in my short article in *From Daring to Caring: Pandemic Best Practices in Higher Education* edited by Liauw Toong Tjiek et al. (2021, pp. 65-68).

I asked the students to explore especially Zoom and Google Meet because they were the only platforms, we were ready to access. They needed to check, for instance, if they could take turns doing the dialog smoothly, find good screen backgrounds, or make them look like facing one another. Unfortunately, there was an issue about the safety of Zoom from being hacked and a group told the class that they were indeed hacked. Therefore, most groups finally chose Google Meet. Some of the students were frustrated with the whole exploration process. Yet, they finally found out that there were no other better choices. Therefore, most groups used Google Meet, while one or two braved themselves to use Zoom.

In addition, I had to expand students' acting skills, especially since they would act online. It should be noted that before the pandemic we offered two realistic, Stanislavkian acting classes: stage and film acting. Acting in meeting platforms like Zoom or Google Meet turned out to be different from both. It should be a blend between stage and film acting. I found out that, first of all, it should still be live like stage acting, partly because it was impossible to make a video/film production due to the health protocols. It should also be like film acting since students had to face their web camera. Therefore, they also needed to be aware of the presence of the camera and understood the camera language. It was a new platform and students had to explore 'the unknown land.'

Business Model: The New Lesson Plan

With the policy that all classes should be online and thus acting class which was supposed to be a stage practicum should go online, I had to make adaptations from stage to screen activities. We were on 'Work from Home' (WFH) mode which was the policy adopted by the University. Thus, all activities should be done online from home. It was impossible to have direct contacts like visiting one another to rehearse. It came as a shock. Nobody was prepared. Therefore, I could not but change the plan, the learning and teaching model. To do so, I announced it to the students as the following:

Dear Actors,²

I have downloaded your works from Google Drive (if you did not submit it in Google Drive, please give notice at the group). Thus, with all the conditions we have, your midterm assignment is considered done.

After receiving news from the univ. and campuses elsewhere around the globe, I feel that classes like ours should really sacrifice our luxury to do things live. Time wise, waiting until the pandemic is over is also impossible, since next semester we should start with new subjects (we need to 'report' our academic process to DIKTI by certain schedules).

Our next project is the final project, which should be done at the second half of the semester. Since we are still in the WFH (Work from Home) condition, we won't have the chance to do the activities. To deal with it, after discussing with the directors, we arrange the following:

12. Please go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YB_xw6eIWhU as a model of our online production.
13. Your online activities will be audition, discussion with the directors, and rehearsals. The target is you will have a production like that in the video.
14. Please note that you will perform with the directors³, and you will need to choose the plays and directors. I will send you the summary of the play to choose later.
15. To make it effective, you will tell me which play(s) you want to audition. I will then send your names to them.

² See note 1.

³ Acting classes were in collaboration with Directing class. So, the actors were to choose directors' plays to audition. Only when they don't get any parts would they need to select their own play to perform without a director.

16. Remember that you HAVE TO do the audition. We will deal with those who don't get directors later.
17. We will start with the audition process this week. It may take some time before finally you can have your team, but after it, I think it will go more smoothly.
18. Let us have a google meet on our class schedule to discuss it. Tuesday the 14th at 13.30.

Thank you. Let's make the best of the circumstances. Stay healthy and happy. In case you have questions, please keep it until tmrw.

So, that was the 'lesson plan.' It was not systematic, not fixed. We should try it. Looking ahead to what would happen after the midterm, we were like groping in the dark. As a teacher, however, I had to prevent the students' spirit from falling.

Challenges Adapting: Fear and Challenges

As the Midterm Exam Period was over, we had to start the process. I started planning the adaptation from stage to screen performance. Since it was originally a staged, live performance, I decided that it should be a screen live performance. Thus, even though it was recorded as documentation, the main task was the screen performance which should be live via Google Meet or Zoom. The adaptation was in terms of the rehearsals, acting style from stage acting to screen acting (related to movement, gesture, expression, etc.), camera awareness, costume, property, set, etc. Meanwhile, I also made the students fill out a questionnaire about the process. There were 28 students of the two classes. I asked them 7 questions which, in general, were related to fear and challenges.

First, what I meant by fear was the feelings related to the change. When asked about what they felt when they were told that they would not perform live on stage, 100% answered with fear related adjectives such as 'sad' or 'unhappy', 'anxious', 'nervous', 'confused', 'conflicted', 'disappointed', 'panicked', even 'heartbroken.' Basically, they got lost on what they were supposed to do, they were afraid of the unknown online acting they had to undergo. One student wrote '*Frustrated, since acting is supposed to be done directly among actors, but now we have to act online.*' Another wrote '*Can't imagine how it will be.*' Still another wrote '*Confused, don't know what to do.*' While in general students were afraid of what to do, some were afraid of something technical, related to the internet connection. One student, for instance, wrote, '*Troubled because I need to make sure that my connection is fine.*' Another wrote, '*... a bit troubled, especially the internet.*' Listening from the discussions in class, I knew that some students did have double fears: acting online and internet connection.

The fears started to subside when I explained in detail what they had to do. I showed them some examples from Youtube, answered their questions, and gave them the plan for the second half of the semester. The related question in the questionnaire was, "After you were told what to do, what were your initial reactions?" Students who answered with fear related adjectives dropped to 64%. Feeling relieved, 11% of the students became positive. They used adjectives like 'excited,' 'happy,' 'challenged,' or just 'ok.' 21% of the students had mixed feelings, with double adjectives like 'surprised but happy,' 'surprised but optimistic & hopeful,' 'disappointed but challenged,' 'nervous but trying,' or 'excited but a bit confused.' From the class discussion, I could conclude that the positive feelings (happy, optimistic, hopeful, etc.) were because they finally saw the way out although they were still unsure about what they really had to do.

The fears dropped even further when they finally went through the process. The question was, "As the process went on, what did you feel?" Students who answered with fear related feelings dropped from 64% to 28.6%. Those who still had mixed feelings went down from 21% to 14.3%. Those who had positive feelings went up

from 11% to 50%. The adjectives used by those who still had the fear related or negative feelings were basically the same and some added with the word 'still' like 'still frustrated.' Some of those who had mixed feelings used more or less similar double adjectives. One student, for example, wrote 'still confused at first [but] started to get used to it.' Those who had positive feelings did not only write words like 'excited', but also 'fun.' It means that some of the students really enjoyed the process. More than that, the increasing number of students who had positive feelings had triggered the "threshold" or "critical mass" action (Granovetter, 1978; Oliver & Marwell, 1988; and Schelling, 1978, all as cited in Diermeier & Mieghem, 2000) to make the classes went well. This was because "collective action will occur only if there is a sufficiently large critical mass of agents who are willing to take the first step and thus trigger mass participation (pp.3-4). With 50% of the students having positive feelings and being enthusiastic in doing the acting project, the classes were alive. As far as my observation was concerned, in general students did take extra actions to make their online performance projects work.

The next point was the problems the students, and I, had to deal with. In the questionnaire, however, I stated it as challenges. They could write more than one answer to the question. From the answers, I could classify them into internet connection (71.4% mentions), device (10.7% mentions), communication (21.4% mentions), background noise (10.7% mentions) Acting online itself (50% mentions) and Time management (0.7% mentions).⁴

The first challenge the students faced, therefore, was the internet connections. Most students wrote 'bad connection,' 'Internet stability', or just 'the signal.' One student even wrote 'A lot of internet problems that caused me insane.' Another student wrote 'Lag or bad connection makes delay.' At the beginning of the pandemic, almost all were not ready with the internet connections. Some students might already have access, but when it was used to run the platforms like Google Meet or Zoom, they had problem with the stability. Some students had to go out and in again to the platforms during class. Some asked not to use camera in class discussions, which I allowed, but they had to use it when they did the rehearsals. Even worse, some could not join the class since suddenly the internet package just went out. In that case, they had to contact the provider and could come back when the class was almost over, or they were even unable to come back at all.

Related to internet connection, the second challenge the students mentioned was the device. One student, for instance, wrote 'Troubled laptop and software.' Although mentioned by only 10.7% of the students, it could also hinder the students from being active the classes' as well as groups' dynamics. It could be interpreted that not all students had up-to-date gadget or laptop. Some students also reported that they had to have their laptop repaired so that they could not join the group or class discussions for a certain period.

The next problem was communication. Some students found communicating with their friends online was a very hard challenge. For one thing, when they were discussing in the platform, there were "delayed sounds and actions." Another student called it "the input that comes late in other actors' mobiles." This problem might happen during the rehearsals process, and of course later in the performances. When they played as characters, they had to say their lines with certain speed and rhythm. Yet, using the platform they had to wait until they could listen to what the partner said before answering, even though only in a matter of seconds. Such a delay could make the dialog and action unrealistic. Another communication problem was the online discussion itself. "Sometimes it's hard to understand some feedbacks from each other," wrote one student. Two other students just wrote "miscommunication." It was indeed a different kind of communication compared to direct offline communication in the studio. They had to learn to be patient and really pay attention to what their partners said and meant.

⁴ Students mentioned one or more challenges. The percentage showed the number of students who mentioned the challenges.

Still related to communication challenge, the following one was background noise. Some students seemed to live in houses where they could not really have privacy when they were having classes online. They might not have a room for their own. Their family members, for example their little siblings, might just speak loudly without realizing that their voices disturbed students who were having online discussions. One student wrote “distractions, noises in my house.” Another student just mentioned “Surrounding at home.” The ‘background’ did not only interfere with the online discussion but also with the acting itself. Some students might feel embarrassed when their family knew them acting. One student wrote “I can’t act knowing they hear me.” Acting in front of strangers or others seemed to be less challenging to him/her than doing it around the family. The next challenge was acting online itself. A student reported, “sometimes, the sound and the screen don’t match.” It was due to the fact that the internet transmitted sound and picture at different speeds. The most common was the picture transmitted earlier than the sound so that as actors, s/he found it troublesome to respond to his/her partners’ lines. Another student mentioned “the difficulty to do adjustment to the room, moving the table, and marking the space.” The group seemed to try their best to show the setting of the play. They had to really adjust their own rooms to be the plays’ setting and, moreover, to be covered well by the camera. Another student was concerned about “the right lighting” since it was not just about the room lighting, but also how it looked in the camera. Still another student wrote “less movement.” Thus, it was blocking problem. Indeed, with the limitation of the still camera frame, s/he could not move as easily as s/he would onstage. Apart from their problem with their own actions in front of the still camera, they also had problem with their partners’ actions. One student stated that s/he “cannot see the other actors’ body language.” The final challenge the students faced was that they had difficulty in “having a good rehearsal.” This fact was related to the last challenge, which was time management.

Online class, especially acting, was a different ball game. Students should adjust their time to attend classes and to do their rehearsals. Classes, of course, should be the priorities. They could only rehearse outside the class time slots, in it was not easy especially when students took 20 to 24 credits, and they came from different batches. It seemed that by doing them online where direct meeting was not a problem, the student had more time, including evenings, to do rehearsals. In fact, tasks, including mine, were brought home and since things were new, we even felt that office or school time was full 24/7. Office or school hours became longer, from morning to evening, but still time was not enough. Therefore, scheduling online meetings, including rehearsals meeting, was quite hard and they had to sacrifice their rest time in the evenings for rehearsals activities.

In general, students had a lot of challenges with the shift from offline to online acting classes. They had to deal with their internet connection, their own devices, their schedules, their communication with fellow actors, background noise in their homes, acting online skills, and their time management. On the other hand, I also had my own challenges. I had to encourage my students, times and again, to finish their tasks. I also had to make them sure that they would be able to make it. I had to be ready to answer their questions via LINE or WA anytime. I had to pay attention to details which oftentimes I ignored owing to my limited time and energy. Yet again, we had to do it and to adapt the circumstances. We did it.

CONCLUSION

Ecosystem Evaluation: Conclusion and Recommendation

By ‘ecosystem evaluation,’ the Cambridge Judge Business School Program states that business should “examine the importance of ecosystems from the perspective of both a new entrant and an incumbent and be able to more accurately predict how new ecosystems are likely to evolve” (2022, p. 4). To see it in the small acting classes context, first of all, we can see three different ‘ecosystems’: pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic. As

it was mentioned before, the ‘normal’ pre-pandemic acting classes were stage and film acting. They were different in terms of the media; live on stage and recorded in the form of video/film. Both acting classes were supported by other classes. For stage acting there were theatre design, stage directing, stage production, and playwriting. For film acting there were film production and screenplay writing. The final outputs were designed to be produced at Petra Little Theatre (PLT) for stage acting and by Petra Indie Film for film acting.

At the beginning of the 2nd semester, 2019/2020 academic year, when the pandemic had not come to the country, the plan was that there were collaborations between acting classes and directing class. Acting students should audition for a performance role and the directing students had to manage the stage production process. During the pandemic, the stage acting and directing classes had to move to Google Meet or Zoom. They were still live, although for the documentation they needed to record it. Therefore, the collaboration format between acting and directing students should change. They all needed to learn to act and to direct in meeting platform productions. As I have discussed before, students had to face fears and challenges.

In the end, when they were asked to give reflections, the survey showed that 50% gave positive answers, 17.9% had mixed feelings, 14.2% wrote negative answers, and the rest of the answers (17.9%) were hard to categorize. One answer below represents the positive answers:

This pandemic is inevitable, and it was able to shake us from our original expectations of the class. However, through this pandemic, we are expected to find the solution in order to have a creative play like what we needed in offline classes. As long as we have the determination, whichever platform we use wouldn't be a problem.

This kind of student might enliven the classes. I could see that some students were quite active. The one who wrote it must have been one of them. However, there were 14.2% of the students who were not quite happy with what happened. This is a sample of their reflection:

I learned that being able to learn in campus was a privilege. Despite the long-learning hours, I was able to learn something properly. Now I am just reading materials and hope the explanations and instructions are enough for me to study well. I just wish the offline classes would start, because that's what most of us would wish for as well.

This student really longed for offline classes. By the time this report was written (2nd semester of 2021/ 2022 academic year), when it was announced that some students could study offline, some students enthusiastically took it. The writer of this reflection must have been one of them. Finally, there were also students with mixed feelings. The following example represents their feelings:

Truthfully, I am a bit glad that we are in this pandemic because I have been getting a lot of advantages while in this situation, but I cannot really say the same about the whole acting for stage class. I actually have been looking forward to this class since last semester in hope to actually get to play on the stage with my classmates. Unfortunately, this whole pandemic ruin that and I need to let this class go because I won't be having any other acting for stage classes in the future. So, I got mixed feelings about this whole pandemic situation. But, I'm still grateful that I still managed to get this class. Thank you, sir. Hope you have a nice day in this whole situation.

17.9% of the students more or less had the same feelings. They liked to study from home, but they also knew that some classes were better to be taken on campus.

Today (2nd semester of 2021/2022) PCU implements hybrid learning. This is because students who live out of town can choose to study online or offline, while those who live in Surabaya are expected to come to campus

unless they have good reasons such as being ill. From my experience in teaching my classes (The Craft of Play and Screenplay Writing and Theatre Design), hybrid class has not worked well for some class interactions. For a lecture, when the delivery is one way from me to the students, it works well although the room acoustics is not ideal. I can also use the break-out room feature when I want them to discuss in groups. When we do script reading, however, the devices and room acoustics cannot really support it. There are sound feedbacks, connection problems, awkward interaction between online and offline students, etc. Therefore, finally we must choose to do it full offline or full online. It ends up online since some students are still in their towns.

Therefore, I can conclude that the pandemic has given as a lot of lessons. First, when forced by the circumstances, we can do the unthinkable. We can migrate from offline to online classes. Second, online classes are possible, but the nature of the classes should be taken into consideration. Third, when we are finally back to the 'new normal' or whatever it is called post-pandemic, online classes can become a learning teaching mode of any class. For acting class, for instance, to save time and energy, students may discuss online first before they meet offline for the rehearsals. This is what may be called 'blended learning.' Classes may also be designed using online-offline combinations, where students do not need to come to class when it is not necessary. Teachers can design online lectures in certain meetings and students can access it either from home or from the study room in the library, for example. When they need to meet in persons, such as to do rehearsals, they are required to come to class or studio. In short, there are now more floors to dance on.

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