

Effectiveness of English Language E-learning among Tertiary Education Students during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The unprecedented global pandemic Covid-19 has changed our lives. The pandemic has also impacted the education sector. The significant change of educational methods from face-to-face learning to e-learning has undoubtedly resulted in a significant impact on the perceptions and effectiveness of e-learning among English language learners. This research is to ascertain the perceptions and effectiveness of learning English via e-learning through online surveys involving 337 students from a public university in Malaysia. The result on perceptions indicates that flexibility, freedom and interactivity are the reasons why students have positive inclinations towards e-learning, whilst less interaction with teachers, technical problems, and lack of conducive learning experience are the negative perceptions indicated by respondents. The result on the effectiveness of learning English via e-learning shows those students responded positively in learning writing, reading, listening and speaking. Generally, students were both impartial, and enjoyed e-learning. It is hoped that this research would broaden and widen the spectrum of e-learning among students during the pandemic.

Keywords: English language learners; perception; effectiveness; e-learning; Covid-19

INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 is a rather challenging year due to the transmission of the Covid-19 virus. The spread of the virus has a significant impact on society as a whole. All activities are disrupted, including economic, educational, and social activities. The repercussions on education have seen a dramatic change from traditional teaching methods to online learning. These changes are not only happening in Malaysia, but all educational institutions worldwide are adapting the same alternative teaching and learning (T&L) methods. Such changes are inevitable to reduce the risk and protect students from being infected by the virus. Teachers are forced to utilise various online teaching platforms, including Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Classroom or the in-house applications, whilst students are forced to adapt to making themselves comfortable

using all the required applications (Budsaba–Kanoksilapatham, 2021). For example, in the case of a Romanian University, the students reacted positively to the sudden changes, even though they did not have any prior experience of online learning. They believed that online platforms allowed them to complete the tasks faster and improved the quality of the assessments or the assignments they completed (Maier et al., 2020). Despite the positive outlook of online learning, the repercussions of prolonged online learning should also be inspected. The isolations have impacted students and teachers mentally due to the unavailability of face-to-face interaction, lack of guidance, and high level of distractions (Akpınar, 2020). The repercussions or the disadvantages of online learning or e-learning have impacted students and teachers all around the world.

The negative repercussions of Covid-19 and online learning could affect the students and teachers for an extended period of time. Therefore, to curb the long-term mental and physical impacts of online learning on students and teachers, teachers need to ascertain the adversities students face during e-learning amid the pandemic. Understanding students' hardships involves understanding the perceptions and views of students on e-learning. By grasping the perceptions, it would allow the process of change and enhancement to better e-learning (Gullifer & Tyson, 2010). Owing to that matter, this study aims to ascertain the perceptions and the effectiveness of e-learning among tertiary level students at a public university, Universiti Utara Malaysia.

It must be noted, however, that in the case of Malaysia, e-learning is not a new teaching and learning method. Before the pandemic, particularly in Universiti Utara Malaysia, e-learning had already been integrated as a part of physical or face to face lessons with a certain portion, better known as blended learning. The percentage of blended learning differs depending on the subject's curriculum design. Currently, even though e-learning is fully utilised in the university, students' perception and the effectiveness of e-learning, especially among English language learners, need to be adequately explored.

Due to that matter, we conducted this research to shed light on these issues. Therefore, the objectives of this research were to investigate the perceptions of students on learning English via online learning and to ascertain the effectiveness of learning English via online learning. Students were forced to change their mode of study due to the unprecedented pandemic. As a result, the students struggled to adapt to the changes. On the other hand, public universities like Universiti Utara Malaysia were not ready for the sudden changes. Students and teachers in Malaysia specifically struggled for many reasons, such as internet connectivity, not having decent devices for the learning and teaching process, lack of a conducive learning environment, and many other factors. For instance, a 20-year-old student from Universiti Malaya, Norlieda Khaleeda Mohd Azmi, had to climb a hill in the backyard of her house in Kelantan to gain a better signal and stable internet connection (Idris, 2020). This is an example of the lack of internet coverage and connectivity in some parts of Malaysia. Hence, students from these underprivileged parts of Malaysia are not ready for e-learning which requires a stable internet connection. Apart from Norlieda Khaleeda, another student caught the headlines on the matter of struggling with the lack of good internet connectivity. Her name is Veveonah, who had to climb a tree and camp in the forest to get stable internet connectivity in Sabah, Malaysia (Abdullah, 2020). This is another example of why the issue of e-learning should be investigated and researched constantly, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. These two university students, Norlieda Khaleeda and Veveonah, are the beacons of online learning problems among university students in Malaysia. Their stories have simultaneously inspired Malaysians and have ironically unveiled the adversities of e-learning. Owing to that matter, this research paper, having known the problems faced by university students who hail from some parts of underprivileged states in Malaysia, aims to ascertain the perceptions of students

from Universiti Utara Malaysia and understand the effectiveness of e-learning, specifically in English language learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

ADVANTAGES OF E-LEARNING

The advantages of online learning may well influence the perceptions of students. To get an idea of what the perceptions are from the students, it is vital to comprehend the advantages of online learning. Online learning has been discussed in depth by various scholars. The discussion also provides a variety of online learning in terms of learning environments. According to Moore et al. (2010), e-learning and distance learning have different characteristics. But, in this chapter, we refer to all of the terms as e-learning since this research is not intended to jot down the particular aspect.

In terms of advantages of e-learning, Thai et al. (2019), Jo'rayev (2020), Hue Dung (2020), Zylfiu and Rasimi (2020), Jayara (2020) and Anwar et al. (2020) discussed the advantages of learning. These studies agreed that online learning enables students to indulge in having autonomy of space and time. In order to further explain the other advantages of e-learning, Thai et al.'s study seek to ascertain the comparison between face-to-face learning, fully e-learning, blended learning and flipped classroom and its relationship with students' learning performance. Flipped classroom learning and blended learning indicate positive changes to students' self-efficacy. This results in positive perceptions among the 106 students who participated in the study cancelling out negative perceptions as flexibility of time and space play a salient role (Thai et al., 2019). However, that is not the case for isolated cases such as participant A and B from Sabah. They had to travel because they could not choose where and when they wanted to study. Hence, in the Malaysian context, whilst many researchers indicate positive perceptions among students due to the flexibility of time and space, it is not the case for some tertiary level students: They must travel and choose the right timing, depending on the circumstances of whether to enter classes and to attend the examination.

Nonetheless, the advantages of e-learning can be proven by many other researchers. For instance, studies by Jo'rayev (2020) and Anwar et al. (2020) similarly looked at the organisation of e-learning. Their respondents believe that e-learning is well organised. Furthermore, Jo'rayev highlights the efficiency of resource utilisation as another advantage of e-learning, while Anwar et al. consider that e-learning enhances students' interest in learning as an additional advantage in their findings. Nonetheless, the challenges identified in the research of Jo'rayev (2020) & Anwar et al. (2020) research might primarily focus more on resource utilisation. Still, in Malaysia, that is another area that could further be explored as many students have had to experience similar challenges.

Most scholars have an aligned agreement on the advantages of having flexibility and the indulgence of time and space in e-learning. Hue Dung (2020) studied the advantages and disadvantages of virtual learning, gauging the information from 205 students and 16 lecturers, and found that the advantages include having more autonomy for self-study, unearthing new and exciting forms of learning, as well as having a more extensive repertoire of online resources. On top of that, easy access to resources, the opportunity of repeatedly watching recorded lectures for understanding, getting direct access and interactions with scholars worldwide, the access to various online tools, as well as cost-effectiveness are highlighted as the advantages of online learning (Jayara, 2020). Besides that, open communication among students, as well as between teachers and students are another advantage of online learning, according to Zylfiu and Rasimi (2020), who also highlight time and space flexibility as a major advantage of online learning.

DISADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES OF E-LEARNING

On the flip side of the advantages of online learning, there are a few scholars who have collected information on the disadvantages of online learning as well. Hue Dung (2020), Jayara (2020), and Zylfiu and Rasimi (2020) state that inadequate internet connection is one of the disadvantages of online learning. Hue dung (2020) listed tiredness, boredom, loss of concentration and IT literacy as additional disadvantages in his study. Jayara (2020) highlights the disadvantages from different angles, such as the lack of immediate response and students' lack of self-discipline. Apart from that, the disadvantages of online learning include frustrations experienced due to isolation during Covid-19 lockdown, the lack of student-teacher cooperation and the lack of motivation (Zylfiu & Rasimi, 2020). These are the disadvantages that researchers identified in relation to the pandemic and how education worldwide had to adapt to online learning quickly. Most results discovered similar advantages and disadvantages. Nonetheless, there are various aspects which have to be taken into consideration. Firstly, the fact that while there are those who enjoy the luxury of having good internet connection and the required equipment for online learning, there are also the underprivileged who do not have the luxury of such facilities, such as adequate internet connection and computer appliances. In order to dive deeper into these aspects from different angles, we review studies on aspects that influence satisfaction and perception towards online learning.

One of the challenges of online learning is technology. Various literature highlight technology as one of the challenges. Nambiar (2020), Putri et al. (2020), Aguilera-Hermida (2020), and Rajab et al. (2020) highlight the availability of technology and technology literacy as the two main challenges pertaining to technology. These two factors impact the perceptions and satisfaction of students and teachers in the midst of adapting to the new learning norm. Despite that, researchers foreground other aspects as well in their respective research. Class modules and modifications of practical classes are the facets that resulted from the perception and experience of 407 students and 70 teachers from colleges in universities in Bangalore City (Nambiar, 2020). The modification of the learning module is essential as Barber (2020) highlights the salient role of course structure in impacting students and teachers' perceptions of online learning, foregrounding knowledge of the instructors and facilities, classroom-factor interactions and motivation in his research.

There is no denying that motivation has played a significant role in learning. Apart from Baber (2020), who discusses motivation in his study, Rasmitadila et al. (2020) discuss motivation as one of the challenges teachers face regarding online learning. Besides that, in their research, they discuss challenges and support for teachers as a result of surveying an Indonesian Home School Programme that comprises 67 teachers who responded to the survey. In another research that highlights motivation, Aguilera-Hermida (2020), studied 270 students' use and acceptance of emergency online learning owing to Covid-19, which results in attitude, motivation, self-efficacy, and technology use significantly impact cognitive engagement and academic performance of students. This perpetuates notable challenges for students and teachers in maintaining their motivation for online learning.

Besides that, time is another factor that highly influences students and teachers' perceptions of online learning. Long hours of screen time, mentioned by Putri et al. (2020), time management by Khalil et al. (2020) and excessive workload by Alchamdani et al. (2020) are among the time-related challenges. Students and teachers spend most of their time in front of their laptops and any other devices due to tasks they have to complete. The challenges are significantly intertwined with one another. Due to the incomplete adaptation of regular physical classes to online classes, workload seems to be in excess. Several other factors play their roles in students' and teachers' efforts to complete their tasks. In other words, owing to the normal face-to-face class adaptation process and various other factors, time management and excessive

workloads are massively becoming a stumbling block for students and teachers in embarking on their learning and teaching journey in the midst of the uncertainties of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, researchers highlight many other challenges that influence students' and teachers' perceptions of online learning. As mentioned earlier, Putri et al. (2020) foreground time and technology as the challenges in online learning. They qualitatively discuss limited communication and socialisation among students, conundrums for special needs students, self-discipline and the rise of internet bills as the challenges faced by 15 students and teachers in Tangerang, Indonesia. Anwar et al. (2020) raise the issue of the lack of a physical learning environment, interactions with instructors and response time as challenges for postgraduates and undergraduates in Pakistan. In short, these studies explore different loopholes of online learning as learning institutions adjust and adapt to the pandemic.

In a globalised world where the internet facilitates border crossing, internet inadequacy is still regarded as one of the challenges students and teachers face in several countries. Alchamdani et al. (2020) conduct a study to ascertain the impact of online learning on 170 students from multiple universities in South Sulawesi, resulting in several adverse effects on students' online learning experience. Inadequate internet connection and excessive workload were the main opposing challenges. Owing to that matter, students could not communicate with their lecturers clearly and were unable to focus on their studies.

As a result of the inability to focus on their studies, students undeniably feel anxious about their performance and economic condition, which is also part of the challenges for students at the Institute of Art, Yogyakarta Indonesia (Simamora, 2020). This shows an example of how adaptation to online classes affects the psychological impact on people. Similarly, Rajab et al. (2020) also highlight stress as an effect on human psychology in their study. Communication, student assessments, technology literacy, and the online experience are the aspects they study to comprehend challenges students and staff face at a medical college in Saudi Arabia. Students, staff and teachers were identified as the ones who face these challenges. In other words, time, internet adequacy, psychological impact, motivation and IT literacy are the major challenges faced by students, staff and teachers in the education sector.

METHODOLOGY

This research collected data using Google form questionnaires and interviews that were conducted with students. In order to meticulously study the data for this research, this paper focuses on the data collected from Google form as the data from the survey could be explored further for future research. In order to enrich the data of this research, the researchers used descriptive analysis of the data received from the questionnaires. The questionnaire consists of 5 parts: part 1; to explain the objective of the survey, part 2; to obtain details on informant demographics which include age, gender, year of study, IT skills, and experience of e-learning. Part 3 covers the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning. Part 4 is on the effectiveness of e-learning, and part 5 consists of 1 question to comprehend students' acceptance of e-learning. The questionnaire was distributed to the informants who took English courses in Universiti Utara Malaysia. The informant could choose whether to participate in the survey or not.

About the informants, this research uses criterion sampling, in which the research seeks to comprehend the perceptions and effectiveness of e-learning from students enrolled in English courses in UUM (see Table 1). The informants are students who registered for English subjects and are taught by the authors in semester A201. The subjects are English Proficiency 2 (SBLE2113), English Proficiency 3 (SBLE3123), Public Speaking Skills (SBLE3163) and English for Professional Communication (SBLE3173).

TABLE 1. English courses in UUM

	SUBJECT CODE, NAME AND GROUP	NUMBERS OF STUDENT
1	SBLE 2113 English Proficiency 2 - Group AB	30
2	SBLE 2113 English Proficiency 2 - Group AF	29
3	SBLE 2113 English Proficiency 2 - Group AV	30
4	SBLE 3123 English Proficiency 3 - Group Q	30
5	SBLE 3123 English Proficiency 3 - Group AG	30
6	SBLE 3123 English Proficiency 3 - Group AL	30
7	SBLE 3163 Public Speaking Skills - Group A	22
8	SBLE 3163 Public Speaking Skills - Group C	21
9	SBLE 3173 English For Professional Communication - Group J	27
10	SBLE 3173 English For Professional Communication - Group AF	30
11	SBLE 3173 English For Professional Communication - Group AL	27
12	SBLE 3173 English For Professional Communication - Group AK	27
	Total	337

Questionnaire links were distributed to 337 students or informants via the WhatsApp group of each class. They were given a period of time to fill out the questionnaire for two days. As a result, this research received 242 responses or a 71.81% response rate. All of the findings will be discussed further in the following section.

FINDINGS

The demographic information indicates that participants who voluntarily participated in this survey are around 19 to 26 years old. The majority of informants are 21 years old (81 persons), followed by 20 years old (62 persons), and 57 persons are 22 years old. The rest are 23, 24—19 and 26 years old, who represent 21, 13, 6 and 1 persons respectively. Furthermore, 75.5% of informants are female, male 21.2% and 3.3% prefer not to say their gender. This can be seen in Figure 1 and 2.

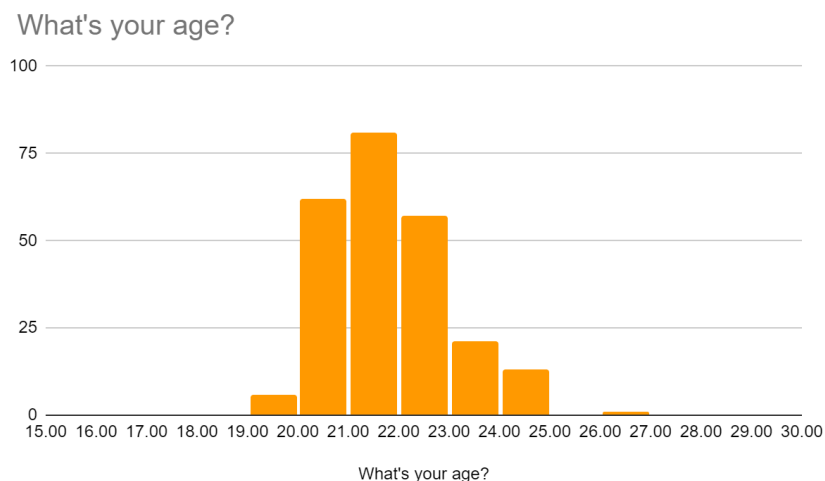


FIGURE 1. Demographic information

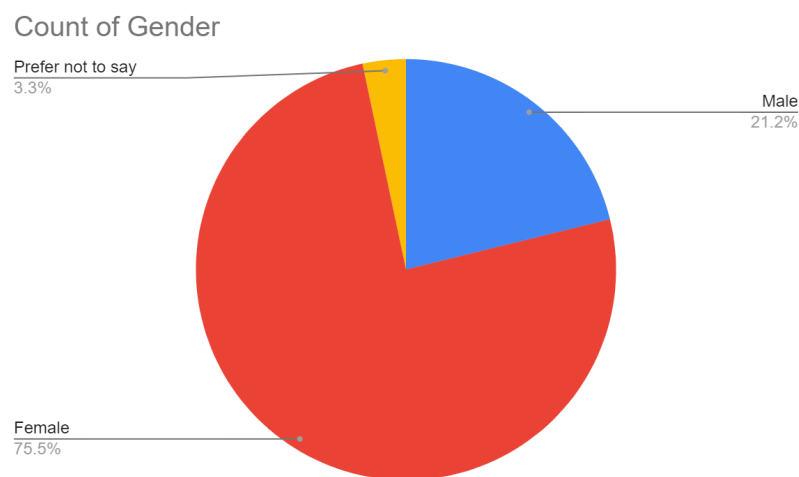


FIGURE 2. Gender information

The informants also described their level of IT skills, as shown in Figure 4. Most of the informants have medium-level IT skills (around 85.5%), and 9.1% have low-level IT skills. There are few informants (5.4%) with high level IT skills.

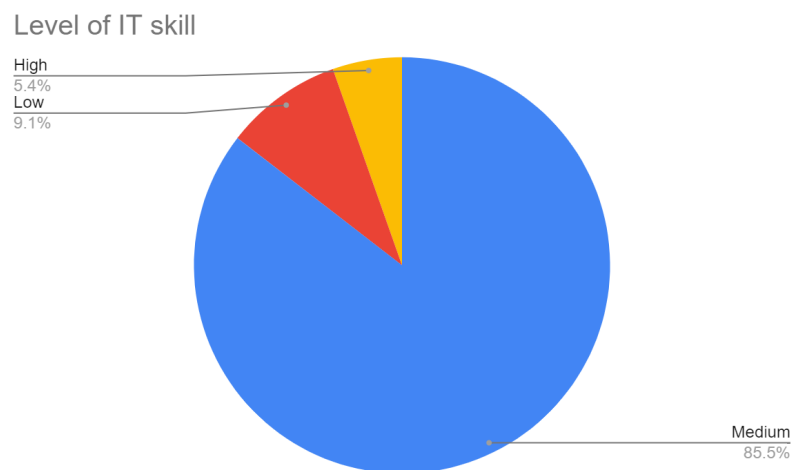


FIGURE 4. Level of IT skill

Have you ever participated in any online classes before the Covid 19 pandemic?

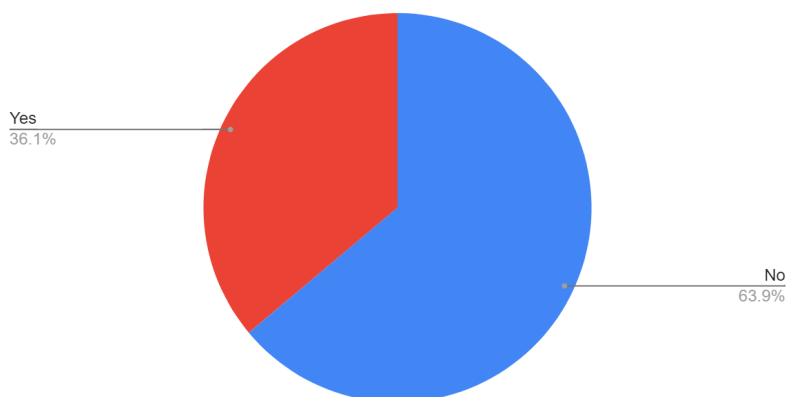


Figure 5. Survey results on the number of participations in online classes

Besides, 63.9 % of informants have no experience taking part in any e-learning classes. The rest of the informants (36.1 %) said they had experienced engaging with e-learning before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic (see Figure 5). The findings of students' perceptions will be discussed further in the following section.

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF E-LEARNING

In the survey, we asked informants about the advantages and disadvantages of getting to know students' perceptions of e-learning (see Figures 6 and 7). In this survey, we discovered that all of the informants realised the advantages of e-learning. The students' answers were "learning anytime, anywhere", "learning at your own pace", and "staying at home during a pandemic". The responses by the students are somewhat similar to previous research conducted by Thai et al. (2019), Jo'rayev (2020), Hue Dung (2020), Zylfiu and Rasimi (2020) and Anwar et al. (2020), as they agreed that students have the power to control the time and space of which, when and where they study. In detail, there are multiple answers that the informants choose. As many as 43 informants decided e-learning to offer to learn anytime anywhere, learning at your own pace, and being able to stay at home. In addition, 32 informants added their responses were able to find various learning materials, and 24 informants chose two answers; learning anytime, anywhere and being able to stay at home. This indicates that students want to have the flexibility of time and space to learn English via e-learning and have the flexibility to search for more learning materials.

What are the advantages of e- learning?

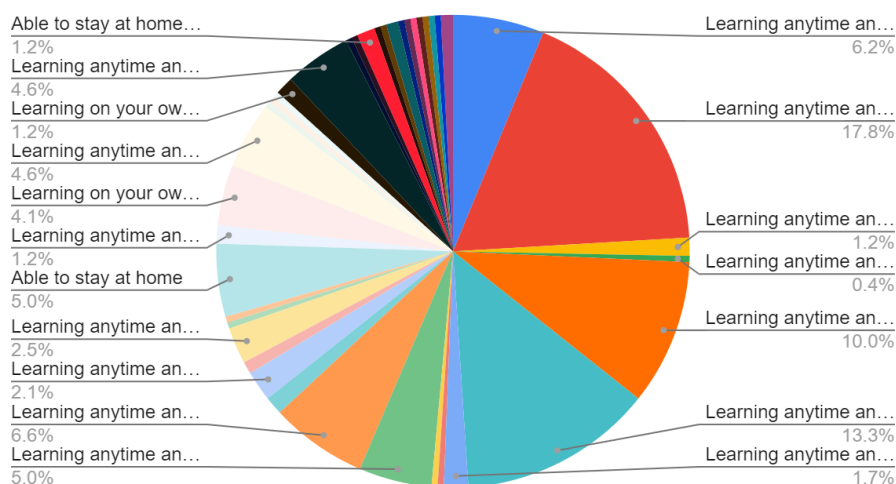


FIGURE 6. Survey results on the advantages of e-learning

What are the disadvantages of e- learning?

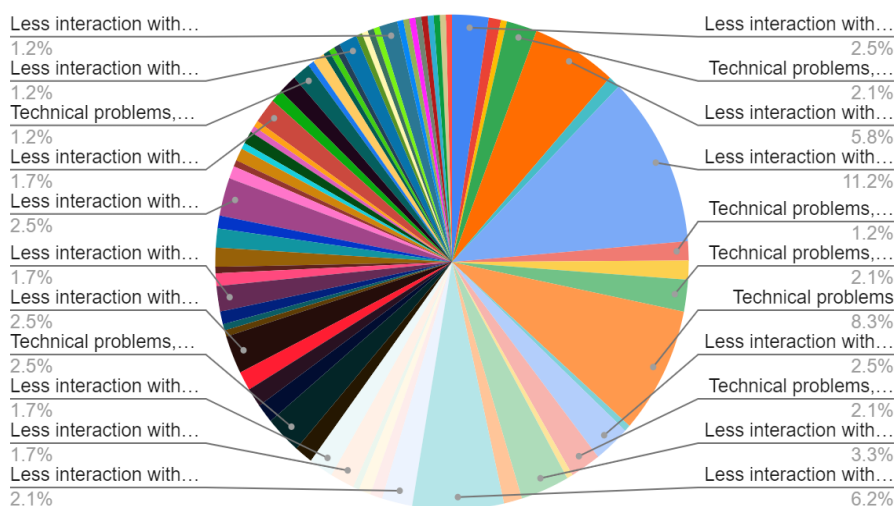


FIGURE 7. Survey results on the disadvantages of e-learning

Besides that, the informants also shared their thoughts about the disadvantages of e-learning. Based on the data gathered, we found that less interaction with teachers and technical problems are major learning issues because most informants chose respective disadvantages as their answers. Facing technical issues includes having inadequate internet connections (Hue Dung, 2020; Jayara, 2020; Zylfiu & Rasimi, 2020). The problem of not having an efficient internet connection has always been the common theme among students of Universiti Utara Malaysia, which is similar to Alchamdani et al. (2020)'s research. Their research resulted in internet connection as one of the main adverse problems that influenced university students from South Sulawesi. Apart from internet connection, which is one of the technical problems students face, not having the proper equipment for online learning such as computers and mobile phones which could support the use of various mobile applications functioning for online learning as stated by various studies in Nambiar (2020), Putri et al. (2020), Aguilera-Hermida (2020) and Rajab et al. (2020). Due to the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, students were forced to lock themselves down at respective places whilst having to adapt and adopt the online learning process with whatever technology they had in possession at that time.

In addition, apart from not having a proper internet connection as well as proper equipment, the environment of which the students were forced to be was one of the external forces which influence the perceptions of students of Universiti Utara Malaysia on learning English via e-learning. Other disadvantages highlighted by informants are lack of learning conditions at home, lack of self-discipline, extra cost, family problems, and difficulty understanding the subject matter. This shows that besides the advantages of e-learning, students are struggling and facing problems in their academic journey, and some of the issues are beyond their capacity. The effectiveness of e-learning in terms of language learning will be dissected in the following sections.

EFFECTIVENESS OF E-LEARNING

This research focuses on the effectiveness of e-learning to learn the English language in terms of writing, speaking, listening and reading skills. The study of the effectiveness of e-learning, which is divided into four main components: writing, speaking, listening and reading skills, are not as detailed as they should be for this research paper on students of Universiti Utara Malaysia. In order to ascertain further the effectiveness of learning writing skills via e-learning, there are certain lingual aspects that one should consider. For instance, Hinrichs (2021) explored the aspect of learning writing in English via e-learning, and the result covers syntactic complexity, the level of students' independence, self-efficacy and overall writing skills in his study on learning writing via e-learning. These show that there are some aspects that this research paper does not cover in detail compared to Hinrichs's, for instance. Nonetheless, this research is to ascertain, from the perspective of students, whether learning writing via e-learning could improve their writing skills or not. Another component of English language skill is writing. Students are asked if the study of English writing via e-learning enhances their writing skills. The findings on whether learning English via e-learning can enhance writing skill can be seen in Figure 8.

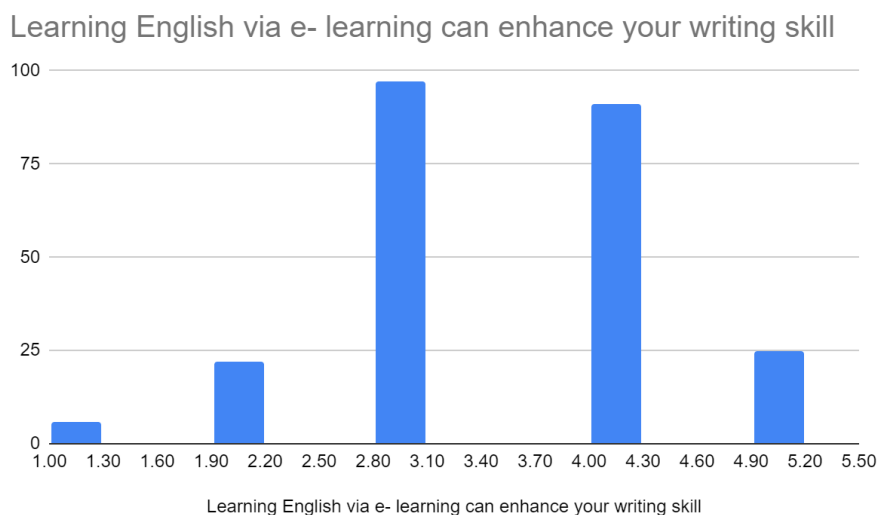


FIGURE 8. Survey results on writing skill learning English via e-learning

Our findings indicate that a total of 97 people state that they are on a scale of 3, which they were neutral and were not sure whether virtual learning was capable or not in improving their writing skills. 91 and 25 people respectively agree and strongly agree that e-learning can strengthen their particular skills. Only 22 and 6 persons on the contrary side disagree and strongly disagree. This finding in Figure 9 shows the positiveness of e-learning, and e-learning is possible to enhance their writing skill.

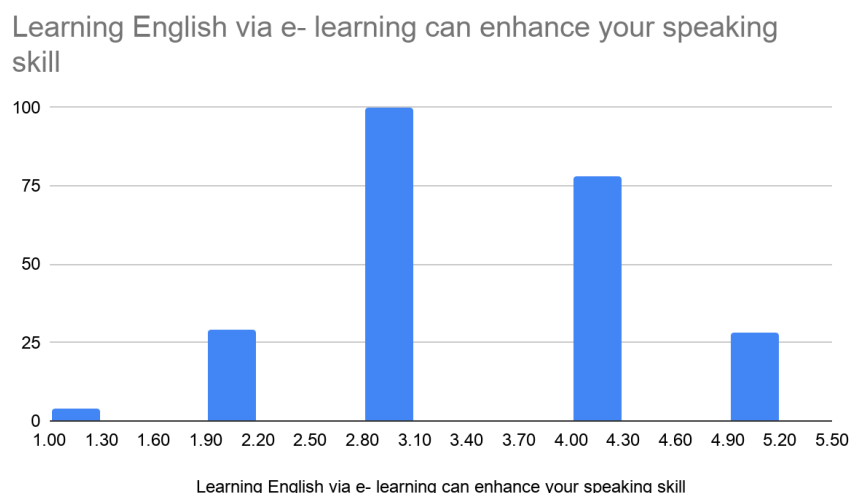


FIGURE 9. Survey results on speaking skill learning English via e-learning

Learning how to speak via e-learning based on Syafiq et al. (2021) shows a level of positive reactions among students of an Indonesian university as the 85 students had managed to improve their speaking skills via e-learning in the aspects of fluency, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary and content. Syafiq et al.'s research shows nuances of positive impacts of learning speaking skills via e-learning which is also reflected in the result of our research paper, which focuses on students of Universiti Utara Malaysia. On the matter of learning speaking skills via online learning, 100 students are rather impartial about this. However, there are more than 100 students who positively believe that learning speaking skills via online learning could enhance their skills: more than 75 students agree, and approximately more than 25 others strongly agree on this. This shows a positive perception among students on learning speaking skills via e-learning. This illustrates that students could utilise the various platforms that the internet has to offer in order to improve their speaking skills as such Youtube, as shown in Syafiq et al.'s study, Tiktok, Twitter, Facebook and many other social media platforms in which students have the luxury to explore and improve their speaking skills. In other words, based on the graph above, students of Universiti Utara Malaysia show a positive reaction to learning speaking skills via e-learning.



FIGURE 10. Survey results on listening skill learning English via e-learning

On the other hand, more than 150 students strongly agree and agree that e-learning could enhance their listening skill. On the other hand, over 50 students are impartial if e-learning could enhance their listening skills. This again indicates positive perceptions among students, believing that they could enhance their listening skills through online learning (see Figure 10). Nonetheless, the positive perceptions among students on learning English speaking skills via e-learning are completely dependent on the materials given by the teachers. Puluhalawa et al. (2021) prove that the listening materials play an important role in the effectiveness of enhancing students' listening skills. Hence, the number of students who have positive inclinations on the notion that e-learning could enhance their listening skills have received a proper set of listening materials from the instructors. In other words, the online materials given to the students for e-learning, based on Puluhalawa et al., and the perceptions shown by Universiti Utara Malaysia's students, indicate that learning English via e-learning could enhance listening skills.

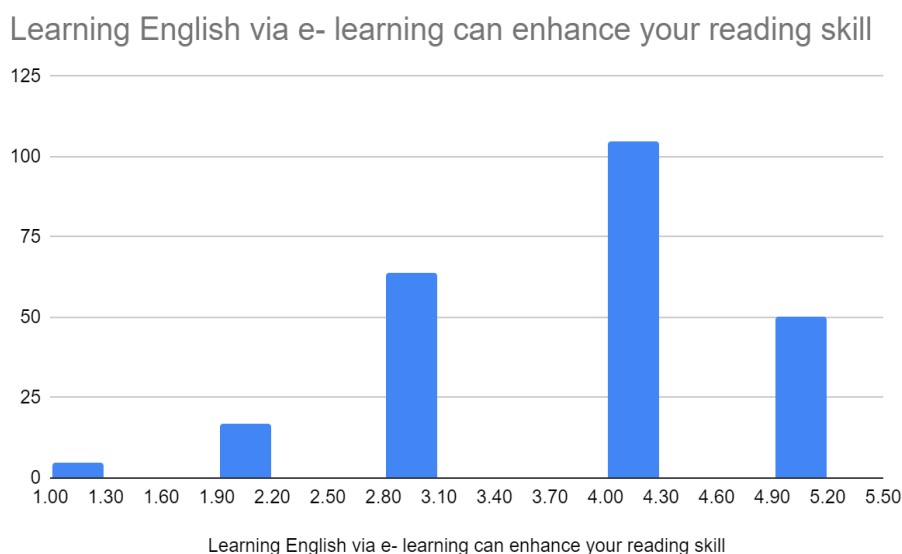


FIGURE 11. Survey results on reading skill learning English via e-learning

The number of students who agree that learning reading skills via online learning is doubled the number of students who strongly agree on this, as shown in Figure 11. In spite of that, the conundrums of internet connections and commercials are highlighted by Van et al. (2021) in the aspect of enhancing reading skills via e-learning. Despite the positive inclination of Universiti Utara Malaysia students towards learning reading via e-learning, there are also quite a large number of students who are in a state of ambivalence on this matter. This could possibly be due to the reasons which Van et al. (2021) highlighted. Nonetheless, these two factors, i.e. internet connection and commercials, should not be dismissed in ascertaining UUM students' perception on learning reading skills via e-learning. In short, students' perceptions of learning reading skills via e-learning are positively perceived.

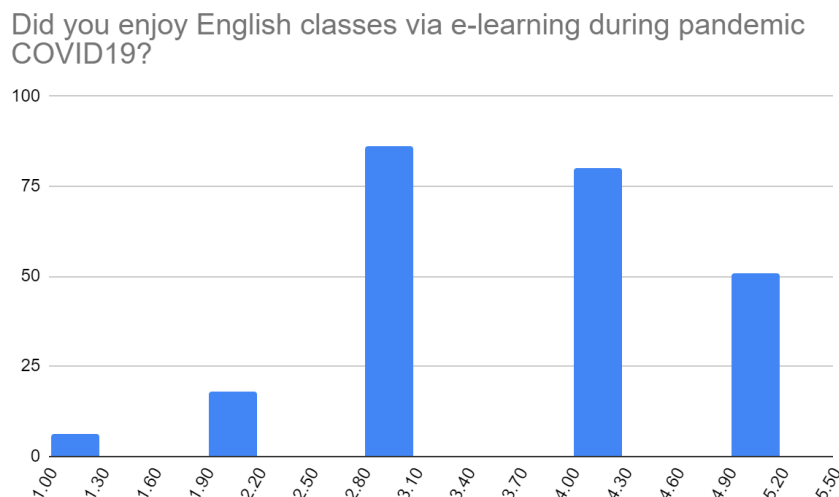


FIGURE 12. Survey results for the question ‘Did you enjoy English classes via e-learning during pandemic COVID19?’

The margin between the number of students who agree and are impartial on whether they enjoy learning via e-learning is rather small. Nonetheless, the number of students who vehemently agree that they enjoy e-learning have approximately twice the number of students who disagree or strongly disagree on the enjoyment of e-learning. In short, the number of students who enjoy learning online English courses is significantly positive despite having an approximately equal yet significant number of students who are impartial or strongly disagree or disagree with this motion, as shown in Figure 12.

DISCUSSION

The problems in relation to online learning might not stem from the online English course, but it might stem from the various difficulties they face due to yearning for face-to-face interaction and technical problems, added with lack of learning conditions at home, lack of self-discipline, extra cost, family problems and difficulty in understanding the subject matter. The yearning for face-to-face interaction and technical problems are discussed in the literature. Putri et al. (2020), Alchamdani (2020), Aguilera-Hermida (2020), Hue Dung (2020), Jayara (2020), Nambiar (2020) and Zylfiu and Rasimi (2020) discuss the technical problem, which includes the inadequacy of the internet as well as not having a proper communication tool, e.g., laptop; smartphone and etc. Inability to experience an uninterrupted internet connection is one of the major problems. Students usually struggle to participate in class, submit assignments on time, face online examinations, and communicate well with fellow classmates owing to the internet connection. This racks up internet bills and quota usage in the household, pressuring parents and other family members, sparking another intertwined hurdle whilst affecting the psychological aspects of students and their family members. As a result, it affects the motivation of students to participate in online learning, as Prasad and Raturi (2021) highlight a significantly strong relationship between internet and technology use with students’ motivation.

It can be deduced that most countries are not ready to embrace the sudden shift in the learning landscape. Students, parents and teachers are constantly struggling to cope with the demand of learning, heavily coupled with the demand on technical hurdles they have to encounter. The conundrums highlighted in this study could act as beacons for future suggestions on improving the facilities and aiding the students who are unfortunately less equipped compared to the other students. Students are mostly halted by the two notable

problems, negatively influencing their motivations; psychological aspects such as anxiety and stress, self-discipline and level of performance, as Rajab et al. (2020) have mentioned in their study.

Stress is one of the challenges faced by students owing to several other interconnected factors, as this matter is also foregrounded by Simamora (2020) in the literature, discussing students' anxiety as a result of dealing with online learning. This illustrates that even though students are generally positive about how online learning could enhance their listening; speaking; writing, and reading skills, it can be deduced that the challenges and the disadvantages of online learning, despite its time and space advantages, could as well negatively impact students. The only obvious factor that influences students' positive perception is the ability to learn anywhere and anytime, which is having the autonomy to choose when and where they study. In spite of that, students' negative perceptions are technical problems which include not having a stable internet connection as well as proper equipment coupled with experiencing family problems, lack of conducive learning environment at home and extra internet cost.

On the other hand, the effectiveness of learning English via e-learning is generally stated by UUM students to be effective despite having quite a number of students who are impartial and disagree on this motion. The students who are impartial and disagree could possibly be another research exploration in the future, which is to further ascertain the factors of why students are impartial and even disagree with the motion that learning English via e-learning could enhance their writing, reading, listening and speaking skills. However, this study does not probe deeper into each of these components. This study ascertains the effectiveness of learning all these skills from the perspectives of UUM students, primarily on what they think of the effectiveness of learning all these skills via e-learning. In order to ascertain further the effectiveness of each skill, future research could dive deeper into each of these skills to properly comprehend the effectiveness.

In spite of that, in general, based on this study and Bagata (2020)'s, there is a positive inclination to online learning among students in Indonesia. Bagata's study resonates with the study in which UUM students, based on the result above, generally perceive that learning all the four English proficiency components via e-learning could enhance their English proficiency. However, there are a number of students who are neutral, not knowing if learning English via e-learning could enhance their reading, listening, writing and speaking skills. On top of that, most students have a positive reaction to whether they enjoy learning English online. It can be deduced based on the result that while students are enjoying learning English via e-learning, there are students who are relatively neutral on this aspect.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research reveal that students realise the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning. The advantages of e-learning garnered are aligned with the results of other scholars which are time flexibility, freedom and interactivity. Findings on the advantages obtained from the results indicate the positive perceptions of students on learning English via e-learning. Students enjoy having the privilege of time and space in learning English. Apart from the positive perceptions of learning English via e-learning, the negative perceptions of learning English via e-learning are garnered through the disadvantages of e-learning collected from the students. The informants also sketch up the disadvantages of e-learning which show that they are facing issues minimal interaction with teachers and technical problems. The technical problems include the inadequacy of internet connection and equipment. The advantages and disadvantages led to positive and negative perceptions of e-learning.

Meanwhile, in terms of effectiveness, the findings indicate that there are significant positive impacts of e-learning which specifically enhance students' writing, speaking, reading and listening skills. However, the improvement of e-learning still needs to be looked into because there are students who face problems and disagree that e-learning is able to improve the said skills. For future research, each aspect of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills could further be explored and investigated in order to dive deeper into the effectiveness of online learning. On top of that, the economic background of students could further be investigated as one of the factors that influences the perceptions and effectiveness of learning English via e-learning. Thus, it is the duty of academics to improve the effectiveness of the curriculum so that the learning environment becomes more conducive, holistic and indiscriminate for students.

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