



Students' Perception on Online English Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic at Junior High Schools

Nurhakiki¹, Senorica Yulia Sari²

¹English Language and Literature Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Padang

²English Language and Literature Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Padang

Correspondence Email: nurhakiki54@gmail.com, senorica.ys@fbs.unp.a.id

Article History

Submitted: 2021-09-25

Accepted: 2021-09-29

Published: 2021-09-29

Abstract

The covid-19 pandemic becomes a challenge for most Indonesian students. Numerous schools have been closed because of government policies to prevent the spread of the virus. Online learning has been increasingly applied in an unlimited number of schools in Indonesia as a learning system during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Online learning has been implemented widely for decades in many countries, including Indonesia, but the progress is quite slow. This study aimed to examine students' perceptions of online English learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic in terms of personal factors. Students face internal or external difficulties during online English learning, which could affect their performance in online learning. This study found that lack of motivation, lack of computer skills, students' inflexibility, and students' surroundings or environment have become students' challenges that have affected their performance while learning online English.

Keywords:

Online Learning, EFL, Students' Perception

©2020 The Author(s) Publish by Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris FBS UNP. This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

How to Cite: Nurhakiki., & Sari, S. Y. (2021). Students' Perception on Online English Learning during Covid-19 Pandemic at Junior High Schools. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 10. (3): pp. 488-493, DOI:

[10.24036/jelt.v10i3.114434](https://doi.org/10.24036/jelt.v10i3.114434)

INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 (Corona Virus Diseases-19) pandemic has been a worldwide issue. According to Huang et al. (2020), the virus was discovered at the end of 2019 in a seafood market in Wuhan, China. In Indonesia, the number of COVID-19 pandemic cases has been getting higher since March 2020. Since then, the government has ruled most of the activities at home, including the teaching and learning processes usually conducted at school. All levels of education from elementary, middle, and senior high schools deal with school closures. School From Home (SFH) is a program that changes learning from school to learning or school from home. This policy has presented various problems, not to mention the learning scheme.

Learning can be explained as the process of anchoring information and associated materials. Lachmnan (1997) stated that learning is a change in behavior due to experience. By having different experiences, humans also act differently.

Learning is a long-life process that cannot be neglected in a human's life. Behavior is not there as it is. It must be learned consciously or unconsciously. Mayer (2019) says that online learning, also called e-learning and digital learning, supports learning, which is done and delivered through a digital device. Online learning has attracted much attention as it migrates conventional media such as books and face-to-face classroom interaction to online or computer-based media such as videos, educational games, illustrations, and applications. Online learning allows different exciting experiences to students, as it has dynamic objects, such as video, graphics, or animation.

Not all institutions are ready for sudden changes in their learning process. Isman, Gazi, and Aksal (2010) revealed that the transition from classroom to online learning affects student understanding. Students' personal backgrounds, such as culture and online learning experience, impacted their perceptions of online learning. Students who are already familiar with online learning and Internet technology might not find it difficult to conduct online learning classes compared to those unfamiliar with the online learning system. Other obstacles include a terrible Internet connection, lack of motivation, expensive data for the Internet, and inadequate facilities. Not only students who faced difficulties, but also teachers and school staff. Teachers must provide learning media and material for the students.

Previous studies have also been conducted. The first such study was conducted by Putri et al. (2020). This study aimed to identify the constraints of online teaching and learning processes at home due to the unprecedented situation of Covid-19. The challenges related to students were limited communication and socialization among students, a higher challenge for students with special education needs, and longer screen time. Another study was conducted by Mishra et al. (2020) to determine students' and teachers' perceptions of higher education in the online learning process during the pandemic. The study reveals that as time goes by, both teachers and lecturers and students get used to the online learning system, although it is still early to conclude whether this method can be effective in the future. These difficulties could be factors that influence students' online English learning. This literature aims to present some overview from various research studies on students' perception of factors affecting students' performance in online English learning.

SCOPE

The data for this article were obtained from a literature review, theories, observations, and small-scale interviews with some students. Recommendations were based on the writer's perspectives, experiences, and from what was gathered during the literature resources and interviews.

DISCUSSION

Students' Personal Factors

Lack of Motivation

Students are perceived to have lower motivation during online classes (Anwar & Wahid, 2021). Students' motivation is related to many aspects of online learning, such as poor online learning systems, inadequate facilities, lesson delivery,

and students' understanding of online classes. Hermanto and Srimulyani (2021) also stated that students were demotivated by online learning. Moreover, According to O'Malley & McCraw (as cited in Yuzulia, 2021), students think they do not obtain enough knowledge through online learning compared to offline or face-to-face learning. The students' lack of understanding led them to anxiety, which made them feel unmotivated.

Students also felt less motivated because of the boring material and no innovation in delivering the lesson (Laili & Nashir, 2021). Most teachers delivered and presented the materials in a short amount of time. The students did not have enough time to understand the material during class, and sometimes the teachers immediately gave them assignments without providing further explanation. To illustrate this case, the students in the interview said,

I became lazy during online learning. I did not understand lessons. And sometimes, the teacher gave the materials or assignments earlier, so the schedule was kind of change - R1

I did not understand the material because the teacher did not give us more explanation about the topic -R15

Online learning should engage students in exciting activities that keep them focused on online classes (Muthuprasad et al., 2021). There were many cases in which the students complained about the lack of explanation from the teachers. Learning a foreign language requires more than just written materials from textbooks. The students need to learn and master other skills than reading and writing.

Lack of Computer Skills

Another personal factor is a lack of computer skills. This is not only limited to computer skills but also inadequate computer facilities for students. Students have also not been trained enough to use computers as supporting learning media (Oyedotun, 2020). Moreover, students in developed countries tend to have limited technology and difficulties implementing online learning systems in schools (Sintema, 2020). In contrast, Hermanto and Suryani (2021) revealed that in the 4.0 industrial era, online learning should not be complex because students and teachers are already familiar with smartphones or gadgets in their daily lives. Even though students classified into the 'millennial' generation are considered better in using technologies, they still have to adjust to the newest standard in learning media or applications (Farrah & Al-Bakry, 2020).

The unpredictable situation of the Covid-19 outbreak forced students and teachers to use available online learning media, applications, and materials to substitute face-to-face learning. The successful implementation of online learning also depends on how students utilize their internet devices and technology skills. Lack of practical training regarding the use of online learning systems or applications is also a cause of adjustment to online learning (Oyedotun, 2020).

Students' Inflexibility

The sudden shift from offline to online learning makes most students completely adjust to the newly implemented learning system, mainly those who are not familiar with the system, such as students from rural areas or those with poor Internet access. The inability to adjust to the situation makes the students feel anxious and affects their learning performance and perceptions of online English learning. To illustrate this case:

For me, it was not easy. English itself is already a complex subject for me, and online learning made it more difficult – R6

The students used the conventional learning system, where the amount of time in one subject was longer than that in online learning. Although the students have more flexible time during online learning, the lack of teachers' explanations during the class has to be dealt with. This is in line with Yuzulia's (2021) study, which revealed that students have difficulty understanding the material in a small amount of time. Besides, a long duration of classes should also be avoided, so the students do not encounter much physical strain and give enough time to break in between the classes (Muthuprasad et al., 2021).

Moreover, in online learning, students are taught to be more disciplined, independent, responsible, and creative (Laili and Nashir 2021). Since online learning is more student-centered, students must also adjust to this learning style. The inflexibility as the students are accustomed to conventional learning methods makes them stressed and sometimes become impolite as they adapt to online learning methods (Muthuprasad et al., 2021).

Students' Surroundings

According to the data from the small-scale interviews with the students, their surroundings affected their study during online learning. According to Abuhammad (2020), parents struggle with technology, especially those with a lower level of education. Students from the interview stated that they did not like how their parents sometimes got mad at them to not help them do housework and only focused on their laptops or smartphones while they had some online classes. Some parents still do not know how online learning works. They thought that their children were wasting time on smartphones instead of studying.

The students' surroundings or environment, which are mainly new to the online learning concept, affect students in online learning. The students felt demotivated when they were trying hard to understand and focus on their studies, but suddenly, their parents called them to do housework, not knowing they had online classes. Sometimes, they also find it difficult to understand the lesson when the learning atmosphere is not conducive: noise from outside, loud noise from their sibling crying, and noise from motorcycles (Laili & Nashir, 2021). Students stated that online learning would be enjoyable if their environment were supportive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The sudden change from offline to online learning requires significant work to improve the learning process. Students need to know their needs, so they know what to improve and change. Since online learning is more student-centered, students have to be independent in achieving the learning objectives, not only depending on the teachers. Moreover, as students' facilitators in online learning, teachers need to evaluate the learning process to see if it meets the learning objectives or is suitable for implementation during online learning. One of the essential factors for students during online learning is their surroundings and the environment, including their parents. Parents must also understand their children's needs to improve online learning processes and experiences. Students also have to communicate well with their parents about the online learning process, so that there will be no more misunderstandings.

Teachers also need to improve their lesson delivery and use suitable materials in online classes, especially English subjects. English has been viewed as a challenging and complex subject by most students, mainly those from rural areas where the foreign language is not spoken much in their daily lives. Therefore, exciting and enjoyable learning materials and lesson delivery should also be critical considerations when designing online courses or classes. Practical training in the use of online learning systems and applications should also be considered, as no students and teachers are left behind due to the sudden transition from face-to-face to online learning.

CONCLUSION

The covid-19 outbreak has become a new challenge for many people at all levels, including students. Online learning has been increasingly implemented as one of the solutions to make learning possible even from home. Schools eventually have to follow government regulations, even if the facilities and equipment are not ready.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that some factors affect students' perception of online English learning, such as lack of motivation, students' environment or surroundings, students' inflexibility, and lack of computer skills. Some modifications, regulations, innovations, and evaluations need to be performed to reduce or remove factors affecting students' performance and perceptions of online English learning.

REFERENCES

- Abuhammad, S. (2020). Barriers to distance learning during the COVID-19 outbreak: A qualitative review from parents' perspective. *Heliyon*, 6(11). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e05482>
- Anwar, I.W., & Wahid, J.H.J. (2021). Learners' perception on online learning implementation during covid-19 pandemic, *JOLLT Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 9(2), 126-138, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v9i2.3576>
- Farrah, M. & Al-Bakry, G. H. (2020). Online learning for EFL students in Palestinian universities during corona pandemic: Advantages, challenges and solutions. *Indonesian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 3(2), 65-78. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.25134/ijli.v3i2.3677>

- Hermanto, Y. B., & Srimulyani, V. A. (2021). The challenges of online learning during the covid-19 pandemic. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran*, 54(1), 46–57. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jpp.v54i1>
- Huang, C., Wang, Y., Li, X., Ren, L., Zhao, J., Hu, Y., Zhang, L., Fan, G., Xu, J., Gu, X., & Cheng, Z. (2020). Clinical features of patients infected with 2019 novel coronavirus in Wuhan, China. *The Lancet*, 395(10223), 497–506.
- Isman, A., Gazi, Z. A. & Aksal, F. A. (2010). Students' perceptions of online learning. *Educational Technology*, 50(3), 53-54. Retrieved March 30, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44429807>
- Lachmnan, S. J. (1997). Learning is a process: toward an improved definition of learning. *Journal of Psychology*, 131, 477-480.
- Laili, R. N., & Nashir, M. (2021). Higher education students' perception on online learning during covid-19 pandemic. *Edukatif : Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 3(3), 689–697. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v3i3.422>
- Mayer, R. E. (2019). Thirty years of research on online learning. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 33(2), 152-159.
- Mishra, L., Gupta, T. & Shree, A. (2020). Online teaching-learning in higher education during lockdown period of covid-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 1, 100012.
- Muthuprasad, T., Aiswarya, S., Aditya, K. S., & Jha, G. K. (2021). Students' perception and preference for online education in India during covid -19 pandemic. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 3(1), 100101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2020.100101>
- Oyedotun, T. D. (2020). Sudden change of pedagogy in education driven by COVID-19: Perspectives and evaluation from a developing country. *Research in Globalization*, 2, 100029. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resglo.2020.100029>
- Putri, R. S., Purwanto, A., Pramono, R., Asbari, M., Wijayanti, L. M., Hyun, C. C. (2020). Impact of the covid-19 pandemic on online home learning: An explorative study of primary schools in Indonesia. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(5), 4809 – 4818.
- Sintema, E. J. (2020). Effect of covid-19 on the performance of Grade 12 students: Implications for STEM education. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 16(7). <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejmste/7893>
- Yuzulia, I. (2021). The challenges of online learning during pandemic: students' voice. *Wanastra: Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 13(1), 08–12. <https://doi.org/10.31294/w.v13i1.9759>