

SECOND YEAR EFL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND MOTIVATIONS EXPERIENCING ONLINE LEARNING SYSTEM AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the second year EFL university students' perceptions and motivations experiencing online learning system amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. This study used qualitative descriptive approach with descriptive research as the research design. The participants of this study were 22 second year students of English Education Department, University of Islam Malang. To investigate students' perceptions and motivations, the researcher used two instruments, online questionnaire and interview, as the methods of collecting data. The findings of this study showed that the EFL students' perceptions and motivations experiencing online learning system differed from each other. Firstly, students' perceptions were positive in some aspects such as the role of the lecturers in explaining learning materials and were negative in terms of the effectiveness of online learning system since they faced some difficulties such as unstable networks, less interaction, and less control, etc. Secondly, some of the students were motivated; they always motivate their selves to study even though the situation was uncomfortable. However, some others were less motivated since the online learning system has never been felt before, and also the pandemic has been running for a long time; the students felt bored with the situation and even lost their motivations.

Keywords: Students' Perceptions, Students' Motivations, Online Learning

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information and communication technology has affected many sectors including education. In recent years, online learning or electronic learning has begun to be applied by various institutions. The online learning is considered to be an alternative to a more flexible and practical learning process, and it is also considered to be closer to the current generation of students who are known to be very integrated with technology products. This is a form of digitalization in the world of education caused by technology. According to Carliner (1999), online learning is the use of computer to present the educational material. Anderson & Elloumi (2004) point out that online learning is distance learning carried out by the teachers and students with the help of internet to interact with each other, access the learning materials, gain knowledge, and provide support during the learning process. Dhull and Sakshi (2017) adds that online learning includes various technologies such as worldwide web, email, chat, audio, and video conference delivered over computer networks to spread education. This helps students to learn at their own pace and convenience. Therefore, students can access the material provided by the teachers anytime and from everywhere through

electronic learning (Suartama, 2014). In the distance learning as today, it is very helpful for both teachers and students that conduct teaching and learning from home. Furthermore, Ghirardini (2011) adds that through electronic learning, effective teaching method such as practicing with related feedback, customizing learning ways based on students' needs, incorporating collaborative activities with independent study, and utilizing simulation and game can be applicable.

However, the online learning system before 2020 was still not as massive as it is today. The peak use of the online learning system began in 2020 when the Corona virus attacked the entire world and forced people to do activities in their respective homes, including teaching and learning activities. In November 2019, the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) was firstly detected in Wuhan, South China. This virus is known as contagious virus that spreads out around the world rapidly. Roxby (2020) states that a disease affected various countries around the world at the same period is called pandemic. Indonesia is one of the countries affected by this virus in early March 2020. According to Directorate General of Disease Prevention and Control (2020), Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a virus that has never been identified in humans, and it is classified as a new virus. Regarding to this kind of situation, the Indonesian government took significant steps to address this new situation to protect the society. On March 15, 2020, President Joko Widodo issued some policies for the Indonesian society to implement public distancing. He entreated the society to work, study, and perform religious practice from home.

This situation has influenced multiple sectors, including education. The Indonesian Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Anwar Makarim, released a Circular Note for educational institutions such as schools and higher education to stop conventional teaching and learning activities and conduct online learning from home through e-learning platforms. Various e-learning platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, Google Classroom, Ruang Guru, Rumah Belajar and so on are the platforms that are recommended by him to use by teachers to conduct the teaching and learning process. In Indonesia, those e-learning platforms become popular issues since they are commonly used and installed to help teachers and students in online learning process.

However, not all Indonesian students have experiences in online learning system, so this thing becomes a new experience that needs adaptation. There will be various views of the students about this learning system. It means that the students will have different perceptions about online learning since it is a new thing in Indonesian education. Furthermore, the motivations of the students in online learning will also differ among them. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how are students' perceptions and motivations experiencing online learning system applied in their education. In other word, the researcher wanted to know that the students still learn well or not through online learning system amidst the Covid-19 outbreak.

By considering this kind of situation, the researcher was interested in investigating students' perceptions and motivations after experiencing online learning activities. According to Stone and Nielsen (1982), perception is a cognitive structure of sensory stimuli related to a particular person, object, or event. Lathers (1996) adds that perception is the cognitive process of individuals to interpret and understand the world around them. Furthermore, Walgito (2010) continues that perception is a process of receiving a stimulus by individuals through sensory means (sensory process), then the stimulus is organized and interpreted so that the individuals realize and understand the stimulus in the senses (process of perception). While, motivation is a stimulant within people to achieve a specific target (Johnstone, 1999). Motivation can also be said as a process from a person to achieve a goal, and it needs an action (Beck, 1978). Prihartanta (2015) adds that motivation is a psychological

phenomenon that arises in a person in the form of an urge to act with a specific purpose. In other words, motivation is plan or desire to succeed and avoid failure in life. People who have good motivation means that they have power to achieve success in life.

It is very valuable for the teachers to know the perceptions of the students so that they can understand the students better. Furthermore, this study also observed the motivations of the students so that the teachers can know the students' motivations to study during the pandemic situation. Therefore, the researcher conducted a study to investigate students' perceptions and motivations experiencing online learning system amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative descriptive methodology was the design of this research. According to Raco (2013), the research method is a scientific activity carried out in stages beginning with the determination of topics, data collection, and data analysis. Furthermore, Kumar (2011) states that this research is classified as qualitative research since the purpose of the research is mainly to describe a situation, phenomenon, problem or event. Qualitative research methods were utilized by the researcher to examine how participants in a study perceive and interpret various aspects of their environment. This approach refers to process-oriented methods applied to understand, interpret, describe, and develop a theory in a phenomenon or setting.

The participants of this study were the fourth semester students of English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Islam Malang. There are four classes in this semester, namely 4A, 4B, 4C, and 4D. The researcher took 4 students randomly from class 4A, 10 students from class 4B, 4 students from class 4C, and 4 students from class 4D, so there were 22 students consist of 8 males and 14 females as the participants of this study.

In a study, there must be an instrument that is used by researcher to collect the data. According to Arikunto (2002), instrument refers to equipments to collect the data using a method. It shows that instrument plays important role in a study to obtain the data accurately. In this study, the researcher used two instruments namely questionnaire and interview to obtain the data of the study. Furthermore, the next step that was done by the researcher was determining the technique of collecting data. Arikunto (2002) states that there are five methods in collecting data; interview, observation, test, questionnaire, and documentation. Therefore, in this study the researcher collected the data by using two kinds of them namely questionnaire and interview. The researcher identified the responses of the students about online learning system, and it was along with the objectives of the study to investigate the perceptions and motivations of the students about online learning by providing online questionnaire and interview for collecting the data. The type of questionnaire in this study were close-ended questionnaire adopted from the expert that used a rating scale questionnaire consists of a 5-point Likert Scale: strongly agree (5), agree (4), neutral (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). In this questionnaire, there were ten statements related to perception and motivation of the students experiencing online learning that were provided online in the form of Google Form. Then in the interview, there were ten questions adopted from questionnaire. The purpose of the researcher conducting an interview was to find out data deeply.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used formula from Sugiyono (2015) to analyze the questionnaire data, namely $p = f/n \times 100$ (p: percentage, f: frequency of each questionnaire response, and n: numbers of respondents in total). Then, to analyze the interview transcript, an interactive model of analysis was the data

analysis technique that was used by the researcher. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), there are three analysis components in this model, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

The data of this research needs to be tested so that the resulting data is valid and reliable. According to Sugiyono (2015), data or findings in qualitative research can be believed to be valid if the data reported by the researcher are in accordance with the circumstances that have occurred to the research participants. Furthermore, to measure the credibility of the data the researcher used data triangulation. Raco (2013) states that data triangulation means using more than one data and analysis techniques. Sugiyono (2015) also states that in credibility testing triangulation is defined as checking data from various sources in various techniques and times.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

After the data from the online questionnaire and interview were obtained by the researcher, then the findings were presented in this subchapter. The findings presented the data from two research questions; firstly, what are the perceptions of the fourth semester students of English Education Department of University of Islam Malang experiencing online learning system? Secondly, how are the motivations of the fourth semester students of English Education Department of University of Islam Malang experiencing online learning system?

Students' Perceptions

The researcher presented the data obtained from the online questionnaire and interview section as follow:

Table 1. The Data from the Questionnaire

No	Statements	Scale	Frequency	Percentage
1.	The lecturers explain the learning materials well during online learning.	5	1	4.5%
		4	4	18.2%
		3	14	63.6%
		2	3	13.6%
		1	0	0%
2.	The learning materials delivered by the lecturers during online learning are in accordance with the syllabus or course outline.	5	0	0%
		4	12	54.5%
		3	8	36.4%
		2	1	4.5%
		1	1	4.5%
3.	The lecturers conduct question and answer activities about the learning materials during online learning.	5	2	9.1%
		4	6	27.3%
		3	11	50%
		2	3	13.6%
		1	0	0%
4.	Online learning system is effective amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.	5	0	0%
		4	4	18.2%
		3	5	22.7%
		2	10	45.5%
		1	3	13.6%
5.	My English skills improve during online learning amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.	5	0	0%
		4	2	9.1%
		3	11	50%
		2	6	27.3%
		1	3	13.6%

Based on the findings, most of the students perceived positively in some aspects such as the role of the lecturers in explaining learning materials well, delivering materials based on syllabus or course outline, and

conducting question-and-answer activities. Some of them also stated that in the online learning they have more time to study and can study easily without wasting money and time to go to campus. In addition, they became independent learners since they study by their selves and their own ways, and they can know more about Internet and electronics.

"I think that the teacher has told us and explained the material well, but because of we cannot meet face to face, only in social media, actually it become a problem to understand." (P6)

"Yes right, because in the first meeting the teachers showed the syllabus, like in this stage we would like to learn this material, the next meeting, until the end of semester." (P3)

"Usually, the lecturers open the question-and-answer, but sometimes the lecturers only give the materials and give the assignments." (P5)

"I think yes because we have much time to study in this online class system. I push myself to study even though I am lazy. Every day I must an activity related to English such as listening English music, reading English book, and watching English videos." (P2)

As said by Indrakusuma and Putri (2016), electronic learning can provide some benefits such as cost efficiency, flexibility, and independent learning. Arkorful and Abaidoo (2015) point out that electronic learning can be cost effective since the students do not need to travel. It also allows self-pacing so that each student can learn at their own pace, either fast or slow. The previous research carried out by Bali and Liu (2018) found that some of the students felt very comfortable in online learning since it led them to be innovative using computer technology. It also has efficient cost and allows students to make efforts at their own pace.

Unluckily, some of the students perceive negatively in terms of their English skills and effectiveness of online learning. The majority of the students felt that their English skills were stuck and even decreased because of less practice. In addition, they thought that the online learning system is not effective because of so many difficulties they found such as unstable network, less control, and less interaction.

"I think my English skill is stuck because online class is not effective like offline class, so my English speaking is not improving." (P1)

"No, decreased, even I think my English knowledge is better when I am in senior high school than right now. The factor is environment, English is about practice, so if about the skill I think decreased, but about knowledge only improve a little bit but not maximum." (P7)

"Honestly, my skill during online learning is less to improve because online learning is not motivated me, like I am lazy to study." (P9)

"It is not effective because the signal is unstable and I don't have much time to ask the materials that I don't understand." (P1)

"In my opinion, for me personally, not effective, the first problem is signal. The students who live in remote area are difficult to find good signal, so that their learning is stunted. Sometimes, some lecturers didn't understand that and don't want to know, like only take unilateral decision. Also, to master the materials are very difficult in this pandemic because of less interaction." (P7)

As stated by Arkorful and Abaidoo (2015), as an educational method, electronic learning can make students experience contemplation, isolation, and lack of interactions and relationships. In the previous research, Agung, Surtikanti, and Quinones (2020) found three main obstacles in conducting online learning such as

availability and sustainability of internet connection, accessibility of teaching media, and the compatibility of tools to access the media.

Students' Motivations

The researcher presented the data obtained from the online questionnaire and interview section as follow:

Table 2. The Data from the Questionnaire

No	Statements	Scale	Frequency	Percentage
6.	I am motivated and enthusiastic about learning English during online learning amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.	5	0	0%
		4	4	18.2%
		3	10	45.5%
		2	8	36.4%
		1	0	0%
7.	I want to learn the instructional media used by the lecturers for online learning amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.	5	0	0%
		4	10	45.5%
		3	9	40.9%
		2	3	13.6%
		1	0	0%
8.	I ask the lecturers when I have difficulty learning English during online learning.	5	2	9.1%
		4	9	40.9%
		3	5	22.7%
		2	5	22.7%
		1	1	4.5%
9.	I diligently work on assignments given by the lecturers during online learning amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.	5	1	4.5%
		4	11	50%
		3	9	40.9%
		2	0	0%
		1	1	4.5%
10.	I keep learning English amidst the Covid-19 pandemic even though I don't have any assignments.	5	0	0%
		4	8	36.4%
		3	11	50.0%
		2	3	13.6%
		1	0	0%

From the findings, the motivations of the students experiencing online learning system were different from each other. The majority of the students were motivated; they always motivate their selves to study even though the situation was uncomfortable. Then, the willingness of most of the students to learn the instructional media given by the lecturers was positive, and they also asked their difficulties in learning to their lecturers and also their friends who had a better understanding about the materials.

"I motivate myself because online learning is only the way to me to get the knowledge in order that my study is worthwhile. I read the materials given by the lecturers, or follow the helpful seminar for improve my English skill, or watching YouTube." (P5)

"Yes of course, I am kind a motivated a little bit by online learning because like I said before, I have to study by myself. This online learning makes me easy to study because I don't have to prepare to going to school, so I am kind a exited and little bit motivated." (P12)

"I learn every application and platforms that my teachers give to me because I want to improve my English skill." (P1)

"I will learn the instructional media because I think this media is important for me when I am studying English during the pandemic." (P9)

"I usually ask my friends, and sometimes I also ask my lecturers via WhatsApp." (P1)

"Yes, sometimes I chat the lecturers privately, or sometimes in group. I also ask to my friends." (P5)

As stated by Sardiman (2008), motivation has functions such as to encourage students to do certain activities, give direction, and determine action. In addition, most of the students were diligent to work on assignments given by the lecturers during online learning. They also kept learning English even though they didn't have any assignments, and they did it by various ways based on their preference.

"Yes, alhamdulillah as long as I have online class, I haven't missed the tasks, but I am ever late to submit because firstly I don't realize I have tasks and secondly, I don't know the due date." (P2)

"Yes, diligent. Every day, I work on my assignments, never late from the deadline. In the beginning on online learning, I cannot to work on my assignments because I am shocked, but by the time I can manage my time and more focus." (P11)

"I don't know it's called learning or no, because I think English is language and about habit, so I only like watching some vlogs like Linguamarina, or English discussion, or some vloggers via YouTube, only like that." (P3)

"Yes, I have schedule for myself to read English book at least 3 pages in a day." (P10)

The previous research carried out by Harandi (2015) showed that there is significant relationship between electronic learning and students' motivation, and the findings indicated that the students' motivation were increasing when teachers applied electronic learning. While El-Seoud, El-Khouly, and Taj-Eddin (2015) found that the motivation of undergraduate students increased by the use of interactive features of e-learning in the online learning process.

Unfortunately, some of the students were less motivated; they have less motivation and enthusiasm to study English during online learning. It happened since this online learning system has never been felt before, and also this pandemic has been running for a long time, so the students felt bored with this situation and even lost their motivations.

"Actually, in the beginning of the online learning I still have motivation to learn because willy-nilly we have to adapt with the situation, so we need to hold and keep our spirit, our motivation although through online learning, but because I wait for a long time, this pandemic, it breaks my motivation." (P6)

"I am not motivated to study because bored I think, such as cannot meet my friends, every day in front of screen, self-confusion, so I am not motivated to study. Then, in the house I cannot focus, if in Malang I can focus to study." (P11)

As said by Arkorful and Abaidoo (2015), as an educational method, electronic learning can make students experience contemplation, isolation, and lack of interactions and relationships. Therefore, strong motivation and time management skill were needed to reduce these effects.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings and discussions from the previous chapter, the researcher then drew conclusions. Firstly, most of the students perceived positively in some aspects such as the role of the lecturers in explaining learning materials well, delivering materials based on syllabus or course outline, and conducting question-and-answer activities. Some of them also stated that in the online learning they have more time to study and can study easily without wasting money and time to go to campus. In addition, they became independent learners since they study by their selves and their own ways, and they can know more about

Internet and electronics. Unluckily, some of the students perceive negatively in terms of their English skills and effectiveness of online learning. The majority of the students felt that their English skills were stuck and even decreased because of less practice. In addition, they thought that the online learning system is not effective because of so many difficulties they found such as unstable network, less control, and less interaction.

Secondly, the majority of the students were motivated; they always motivate their selves to study even though the situation was uncomfortable. Then, the willingness of most of the students to learn the instructional media given by the lecturers was positive, and they also asked their difficulties in learning to their lecturers and also their friends who had a better understanding about the materials. Unfortunately, some of the students were less motivated; they have less motivation and enthusiasm to study English during online learning. It happened since this online learning system has never been felt before, and also this pandemic has been running for a long time, so the students felt bored with this situation and even lost their motivations.

Finally, the suggestions of this research came up with some ideas addressed to English lecturers, English students, and future researchers. The researcher suggested the lecturers to have to give and explain the materials to the students as good as possible, not only sharing materials without explanation and giving assignments, in order that the students can understand the materials well. The lecturers should also motivate and remind the students to study hard even though the situation was not comfortable because of Covid-19 pandemic. Then for the students, they have to always motivate their selves to study hard even though the situation was not comfortable for them. In the next research, for future researchers who take interest in the field of students' perceptions and motivations experiencing online learning can use more instruments and participants in data collection to verify the results clearer and more detailed.

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