

A Correlational Study on The Relationship Between Students' Readiness And Attitudes Towards Online English Language Learning

Kamilah Zainuddin^{1,*}, Tengku Ahmad Badrul Shah Raja Hussin¹, and Noor Asmaa' Hussein¹

¹General Studies Department, Politeknik Kota Bharu, 16450 Ketereh, Kelantan, Malaysia

*Corresponding author: mila@pkb.edu.my

Abstract

Malaysia's teaching and learning practices have transformed substantially since the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak. This study examined the relationship between students' readiness and attitudes for Online English Language Learning. The data for this study were gathered using a set of questionnaires distributed to 34 Semester 1 students pursuing a Diploma in Accountancy and a Diploma in Marketing from Politeknik Kota Bharu. The findings indicated that there was a positive relationship between readiness and attitudes for Online English Language Learning among students. Many challenges that hindered OELL were also identified. This study brings new insight into the lecturers' pedagogical implementations. Thus, training or workshop on online learning advancements for the lecturers was recommended to meet the 21st-century learning demands.

Keywords: - online learning, students' readiness, attitudes, challenges

1. Introduction

Online learning has become a significant aspect of schooling has many advantages when it comes to learning (Appana, 2008). Polytechnic Malaysia, like many other higher education institutions throughout the world, has shifted from traditional or face-to-face classroom settings to online learning environments. However, students taking online courses face challenges that they have never encountered in traditional teaching and learning atmosphere (Tsai, 2009) and may impact their learning performance (Davies and Graffs, 2005). Adaptation is done by participating in English lessons or assessments through virtual classrooms or self-study materials. All of these are potentially new modes of learning for many students.

According to Klimova (2011), one of the supports for e-learning is the Learning Management System or LMS. LMS is special software that provides multipurpose support for teaching and learning. LMS contains a set of tools for creating, administering, and distributing e-learning courses. LMS serves as the means for communication, testing, and feedback, which distinguishes it from other web-based training software.

The Communicative English 1 module has two major components. The 1-hour weekly lecture carried out via Google Meet or Microsoft Teams, while the 2-hour lessons were delivered thru a Learning Management System (LMS) known as Curriculum Information Document Online System or CIDOS. Politeknik Kota Bharu uses CIDOS 3.5, a platform equipped with several online activities and resources such as google slides, e-

note, chat, forum, external tools, and moodle link related pages called BigBlueButton (BBB).

The CIDOS LMS is a web-based solution that allows lecturers to keep track of the instruction paper inventory, teaching and learning resources, and information that is sharing in one place. It is a tool that facilitates teaching and learning (T&L) using the internet. Lecturers can provide many videos and self-study resources such as worksheets, notes, a blog, pop quizzes and various self-assessment exercises to the students. The lecturers can also record and keep track of all activities done by students in CIDOS 3.5.

1.1 Research Objectives

The followings are the main objectives of this study:

- i. To identify the level of students' readiness to participate in Online English Language Learning.
- ii. To identify the level of students' attitude towards Online English Language Learning.
- iii. To identify the challenges faced by students during Online English Language Learning.
- iv. To examine the relationship between students' readiness and attitudes on Online English Language Learning.

2. Literature Review

E-learning seems to be on the way to being the latest trend in education. E-learning is sometimes described as technology. Welsh et al. (2003) defined E-learning as the use of computer network technologies, mainly over or over the Internet, to

provide knowledge and guidance to individuals.

Smart and Cappel (2006) stated that students with more technical experience are more likely to have a positive attitude toward E-learning or online classes compared to those who do not. This is because students' attitudes and opinions may be influenced by their computer anxiety and personality. The personality variations such as extroversion may affect students' views on distance language learning.

According to Clarke and Hermens (2001), online learning is student-centred so that students can set their tempo and activities can be tailored to a student's desired learning style. Compared to the tasks seen in a textbook or workbook, videos, graphics, and songs, for example, have made the activities more engaging (Zamari, 2011).

Literature indicates that the internet has much potential and plays a vital role in language learning. Rosenberg (2001) described e-learning as the use of internet technology to provide different solutions to learners. Functioning as a virtual library, the internet enables language learners to access documents and various other learning materials which are authentic and beneficial for their language acquisition. Zamari (2011) stated that as the internet becomes more readily accessible, institutions have extended the use of online language materials and course delivery systems.

The accessibility of the Internet in educational institutions and at home and innovative multimedia presentations of language learning activities on the web propel the integration of web-based language learning activities into language lessons. At present, most of these activities are used not to dehumanize classroom-learning experiences but rather to support language acquisition outside of those taught in the classroom. Many studies reported positive feedback from the language learners, mainly because internet language learning materials motivate them to learn the language since they can attempt the activities at their own pace and reduce anxiety or fear in making mistakes in front of the teacher or classmates. Nevertheless, there are still many areas that could be covered when studying the perception of language learners.

3. Methodology

This study employed the survey questionnaire as a method to collect quantitative data. The questionnaire was administered online to 34 students who enrolled in DUE10012 Communicative English 1 module. These students were pursuing their Diploma in Accountancy and Diploma in Marketing in Politeknik Kota Bharu. The students were

selected based on the 100% attendance and participation during the 14 weeks of the Online English Language Learning period.

The instrument was adapted from Zamari (2011). There are 3 sections in the questionnaire. Section A of the instrument was intended to gather information regarding demographic factors of the respondents which included information about their backgrounds such as gender, age, the program of study and social status. Section B and C consist of items asking for student's perceptions on their readiness and attitudes toward OELL. Section B and C were scored using a five-point Likert scale.

The data in this study were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The reliability of the instruments was measured. It could be concluded that the 30 items instrument is reliable as the Cronbach alpha values range from 0.845 to 0.886. The mean scores for the level of attitude and readiness were interpreted based on Table 1 below.

Table 1: Interpretation of mean scores.

Mean Scores	Interpretation
1.0 to 2.33	Low
2.34 to 3.66	Medium
3.67 to 5.00	High

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Students' Readiness for the OELL

The analysis indicated that the students who were aware of how to learn well through OELL were at a high level ($M=4.53$, $SD=0.61$). It shows that the respondents are ready and alert with the online classes. According to Yacob (2011), the implementation of online learning has made the students realize the importance of online education in their studies.

Another interesting finding was that the respondents have a high level of self-responsibility and good time management to treat their online English classes ($M=4.06$, $SD=0.814$). Besides, the students' ability to arrange their schedule correctly even though they are at home ($M=4.00$, $SD=0.719$) was also at a high level.

The respondents' willingness to complete all the previous tasks before attending OELL is also at a high level ($M=4.09$, $SD=0.830$). The analysis showed that the students are very positive and ready for OELL. Chamorro, (2018) suggested that online courses are the best option for students to study

English because they can manage their own time and access it anywhere. In conclusion, the students are found to be ready and prepared in terms of time management, self-awareness, and self-responsibility for their OELL.

4.2 Students' Attitudes towards the OELL

The first research question investigated learners' attitudes toward the study and learning in the OELL course. The findings indicated that students' attitudes toward the OELL are at the range from medium to high level since the mean values stood at 3.76 to 4.74. Many of the students had an optimistic and encouraging attitude about the Online English Language Learning enrolled. The results were in line with the results by Hotho (2000) and Ushida (2005) who studied learners' attitudes and motivations in various foreign language teaching environments and found that students had favourable attitudes towards OELL as well as were highly motivated.

The respondents who felt that OELL was an effective way to learn and fun with the varieties of the materials provided were at a high level ($M=4.74$, $SD=0.511$) None of the students had a negative attitude toward this. A well-planned and laid out materials provided online will make it students easy to keep track of and enjoy their learning. The workload provided must be provided sufficiently so that they could finish everything within an acceptable time.

The positive experience that they went through made students think that Online delivery for English Language learning provides a supportive language learning environment was at a high level ($M=4.12$, $SD=0.729$). OELL eliminates barriers and allows language learners to learn a language without the time and place constraints (Altunay, 2019). Through distance education, students could study or enhance a foreign language since they may attend virtual lessons from anywhere using computers or mobile devices. Students will be more relaxing to turn in the work on the assignments and tests at their leisure and when they had the time, just like an open book course. Hence, it will reduce their nervousness or anxiety in the OELL course compared to a traditional classroom.

An important finding was that the students who believed that online English language learning enhanced students' language knowledge was at a moderate level ($M=3.76$, $SD=0.955$). This is following a study by Smart and Kappel (2006) which found that students gain certain benefits from an e-language programme, such as the flexibility and convenience of OELL.

4.3 The Challenges in OELL

Being in an OELL classroom is a completely different experience from being in a normal classroom. Teachers and students face many challenges due to many factors the most challenging undertakings for both teachers and students throughout the world have been transferring to fully online learning. Hence, the learning environment at home will need a new adaptation by the students.

The analysis on the challenges faced by the students for OELL indicated that they were at a high level ($M=4.09$, $SD=0.753$). The finding shows the students encountered many challenges in online learning. Firstly, the findings on the insufficient lecture hours for an Online English course per semester was at a moderate level ($M=3.64$, $SD=0.895$). The student complaint that there was a lack of face-to-face interaction in a classroom setting with the lecturer. Some students believed that online education made it harder to strengthen their command of the English language.

The OELL course requires the students' independent learning from reading materials to downloading. However, the students show a moderate level of indication that they lacked proper gadgets or devices (e.g., laptop, personal computer, tablet, etc.) for their OELL and frequently use a hand-phone during the OELL ($M=3.44$, $SD=1.05$). Prebianca et al., (2014) suggested that there are certain issues in distant learning environments. These issues include a lack of constant internet access, a lack of technical equipment such as computers, mobile tools, cameras, and other cameras, technical issues, students', or teachers' negative beliefs about distance education.

Students who complained that they did not have access to a high-speed internet connection necessary for OE was also at a moderate level ($M=3.09$, $SD=1.24$). As a result, they were having difficulty joining their OELL and other platforms that required an internet connection. Internet accessibility is the backbone of online learning (LeLoup and Ponterio, 2002 and Chantel (2002).

4.4 The Relationship between Students' Readiness and Attitudes for OELL

Table 2 showed the correlation between student's readiness and their attitudes towards OELL. The result from Pearson Correlation analysis indicated that there was a moderate positive association ($R=0.723$) between the students' readiness with their attitudes for OELL. In general, as the students' readiness increases, their attitudes towards OELL will also increase.

Table 2: The correlation between student's readiness and their attitudes for OELL.

		Students' Attitudes
Students' Readiness Towards Online English Learning.	Pearson Correlation	.723**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	34

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. (2-tailed).

Furthermore, the univariate regression analysis was done to find out the contribution percentage of the students' attitudes onto the students' readiness towards OELL. The data were analysed descriptively, and it was found that the students' attitudes have contributed 52.3% to the students' readiness level towards OELL as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: The regression analysis on the contribution of the attitudes to the students' readiness towards OELL.

Variable	Readiness		t	p	Contribution
	B	β			
Constant	1.301		2.925	.006	
Attitudes	.641	.723	2.925	.000	52.3%
F = 35.058			R = 0.723		
Sig F = $p < 0.05$			R ² = 0.523		

5. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between students' readiness and their attitudes towards Online English Language Learning (OELL). Based on the finding, there is a significantly strong positive correlation between students' readiness and attitudes towards the OELL. Lecturers, therefore, must acknowledge the students' readiness and take advantage of their positive attitudes to upkeep the students' motivation towards OELL. The high level of readiness and positive attitudes towards OELL among students need to be maintained and enhanced so that the students could keep on engaging actively in OELL.

Students were found to experience challenges and several disappointments in OELL. Amongst their concerns were the internet connections and learning facilities which not adequate. The Politeknik Kota Bharu management should address the students' complaints and provide sufficient online learning facilities to support students in their

second language acquisition. The management can conduct training or workshops on online learning advancements for the lecturers and students to meet the 21st-century learning demands. Finally, the lecturers and the students must be aware that the students' attitudes and challenges will have the adverse effect and contribute to the improvement of OELL.

References

- Altunay, D. (2019). EFL students' views on distance English language learning in a public university in Turkey. *Studies in English Language Teaching*, 7(1), 121-134.
- Appana, S. (2008). A review of benefits and limitations of online learning in the context of the student, the instructor and the tenured faculty. *International Journal on E-learning*, 7(1), 5-22.
- Chamorro, M. L. M. (2018). *Comparing online English language learning and face-to-face English language learning at El Bosque University in Colombia*. Virginia Commonwealth University.
- Chantel, R. G. (2002). New technology, new literacy: Creating a bridge for English language learners. *New England Reading Association Journal*, 38(3), 45.
- Clarke, T., & Hermens, A. (2001). Corporate developments and strategic alliances in e-learning. *Education+ Training*.
- Davies, J., & Graff, M. (2005). Performance in e-learning: online participation and student grades. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 36(4), 657-663.
- Hotho, S. (2000). "Same" or "different"? A comparative examination of classroom factors in second language settings. *Foreign Language Annals*, 33(3), 320-329.
- Klimova, B. F. (2011). Evaluating writing in English as a second language. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 28, 390-394.
- LeLoup, J. W., & Ponterio, R. (2000). On the Net: Foreign Language Teacher Resources. *Language Learning and Technology*, 6(9).
- Prebianca, G. V., Santos Junior, V. P. D., & Finardi, K. R. (2014). Analysis of an educational software for language learning: insights from the Theory of Structural Cognitive Modifiability and Human-Computer Interaction. *DELTA: Documentação de Estudos em Lingüística Teórica e Aplicada*, 30, 95-114.
- Rosenberg, M.J. (2001). *E-Learning: Strategies for Delivering Knowledge in the Digital Age*. Vol. 9, McGraw-Hill, New York.
- Smart, K. L., & Cappel, J. J. (2006). Students' perceptions of online learning: A comparative study. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research*, 5(1), 201-219.

- Tsai, F. J., Huang, W. L., & Chan, C. C. (2009). Occupational stress and burnout of lawyers. *Journal of occupational health*, 51(5), 443-450.
- Ushida, E. (2005). The Role of Students' Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning in Online Language Courses. *CALICO Journal*, 49-78.
- Welsh, E. T., Wanberg, C. R., Brown, K. G., & Simmering, M. J. (2003). E-learning: emerging uses, empirical results and future directions. *international Journal of Training and Development*, 7(4), 245-258.
- Yacob, A., Kadir, A. Z. A., Zainudin, O., & Zurairah, A. (2012). Student awareness towards e-learning in education. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 67, 93-101.
- Zamari, Z. M., Adnan, A. H. M., Idris, S. L., & Yusof, J. (2012). Students' perception of using online language learning materials. *Procedia-social and behavioral sciences*, 67, 611-620.