



What Students Think About Online Learning: The Voice from The Maritime Higher Education Students

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Abstract. This study explored the perspective of Indonesian maritime higher education students about English online learning. Online learning becomes challenging for them who usually stay and learn in the dormitory. The purposive sampling method was used to choose the 172 participants. The data collection techniques used questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. They were designed to elicit the participants' perceptions and problems toward the use of online technology platforms in studying from home. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The result of the study showed that cadets had a positive perception of the use of online technology platforms in studying from home. Meanwhile, there were some barriers to the use of online technology: the problems of anxiety, opportunity, and motivation. The results also showed that technological problems such as connectivity and devices were the main factors contributing to the Indonesian maritime cadets' barriers. Following the study results, the recommendations for addressing the problems were proposed.

Keywords: online learning, perspective, barriers, maritime higher education.

1 Introduction

As a vocational school that should hold 70% of practical learning, the online learning creates a huge problem. There are no activities in the laboratories, simulator and workshop while replaced by online learning using zoom, elearning, google meet and other platforms. Those application become the solution, so students can still learn without having to gather with their friends (Daniel, 2020). Both positive and negative effects of online learning faced by students. It can be more effective since there is less time needed to prepare the lesson (Cakrawati, 2017). Yet, the students can demotivate since there is no interaction among students and between student and teacher. Yunhadi, et.al (2020) found that things that can make students demotivated are there is no interaction with friends, and they are not engaging directly in the learning process.

According to Pop, et al (2011), the new technology-enhanced communication tools give EFL teachers many advantages, namely improving chances to build the effective learning environment for students, and improving the inclusiveness of education in

maximizing the students' abilities. In this case, online learning is hoped to maximize the ability of students and teachers. The demotivated students become a challenge for teachers to motivate them. Teachers should be creative in preparing the activities so that students feel confident and motivated, Nuraini (2016). In this manner, teachers should organize the way they teach creatively so that the quality of online learning can be moved forward.

However, the online learning rises various perceptions both negative and positive from students. As Meiza et.al (2020) said, there are various of students' understanding to operate the device as well as the internet network problem especially in remote area. This problem makes students cannot join the class. The difficult communication with lecturers becomes another problem that students feel (Aguilera-Hermida, 2020). These affects the readiness of students in attending college to decrease (Saifuddin, 2018).

Based on the material analysis conducted by Ahmmed et al (2020), it could be concluded that speaking skill is the most important skill among the three maritime higher education competencies. Meanwhile, the English mastery is very important in conducting communication at sea, as stated by Čampara et.al (2020). The skill is used to communicate between vessels, vessel to port and the intraship communication among the crew. English is stated as the International language for maritime communication so that all the people engage in this business are compulsory to master it. The English mastery is needed to decrease number of accidents happens at sea because of the communication problem.

Since the importance of English mastery in maritime higher education, the learning activities must be conducted well during the online learning. Students in maritime higher education are different with the common academy students. They spend two years living in dormitory that shapes their characteristics to be passive. Most of them also do not update with technological development. So that, the online learning becomes a new challenge for them. The author is interested in analyzing the needs of students in online learning. By referring to the results of this research the goal of learning will be achieved easily.

Students' Perception

Perceptions is one of the psychological aspects important for human in responding the surrounding phenomena (Moskowitz & Orgel, 1969). Moreover, it is the ability to discriminate, classify, focus on an object and then be interpreted. It is given when someone receives the stimulus from outside which is capture by the auxiliary organs which then enter the brain. In the brain, there is a thought process that ultimately manifests in an understanding (Sarwono, 2012).

In teaching-learning activities, students' perceptions give positive effect on the quality of interaction and communication. It is indicated that if the individual has a good view of something or other people, it will also benefit him/herself. Perception can also be considered an individual's interpretation of something (Amir et al., 2020). Perception is conveyed in the form of idea or action, human idea based on their experience.

2 Research Method

This research used both qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the students' of maritime higher education perception during the online learning. This research used a purposive sampling technique in selecting sample. According to Etikan et.al (2016), that purposive sampling is a technique to find and choose individuals or groups of individuals who are professional and have good information about an interesting phenomenon. This technique is to focus on people with particular characteristics who would be better able to help with the study. The data were gathered from cadets in seven maritime higher education. Total 172 cadets participated in this study. The cadets were third, fifth and seventh grade of the nautical, technical and port and shipping management program in the academic year 2020/2021. The participants were chosen because they can provide valuable information about perception to online learning.

The data of this study was collected by web-based questionnaires and semi structured interview. The combination of two instruments offered for elaboration, clarification, interpretation and data confirmation, Diaab (2016). The questionnaires were made in google form and spread using Whatsapp application. In addition, the interviews conducted to cadets. There were 5 cadets being interviewed. The questions are induced to transmit (1) the participants' preference of the technology platforms; (2) choice of the materials and activities that the cadets need to carry out in online learning to improve their oral performance; and (3) barriers they faced during online learning.

The questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. There were 9 questions related to students' perception. The questions were about their preference of online or offline learning, the advantage of online learning, and whether they are motivated or not. Using Likert scales, the scores represented levels of agreement with the statement. The scores in this study were rated into 1) strongly disagree, 2) disagree, 3) agree, and 4) strongly agree. Finally, the data analysis from the results of semi structured were transcribed to support and justify the results obtained from the questionnaires.

3 Results & Discussion

During pandemic covid 19, online learning were introduced for teaching learning process in maritime higher education. Lecturers and cadets were forced to use online technology platforms that they were not familiar yet. The classes were no longer in room or laboratory environment, but they transit into classroom links or virtual classroom using website or internet connection. From the questionnaire data, there are 172 cadets from either state or private maritime higher educations in Indonesia participated in this study, that can be shown in the table (1).

Table 1. The distribution of cadets

Category	Sub Category	Total	Frequency
Semester	Third	108	63%
	Fifth	23	13%

	Seventh	41	24%
Study Program	Nautical	77	45%
	Technical	72	42%
	Port and Shipping Management	23	13%

From the table we can see that the participants came from three study programs; Nautical, technical as well as Port and shipping management. From the level, they were coming from the third, fifth and seventh semester. The third semester students are those who are living in dormitory. It makes them not update with the technology. Meanwhile the fifth and seventh students are those who are living outside dormitory.

The survey of 172 cadets from Indonesian maritime higher education showed that they had different views on the expectations of the usage of new technology in online learning in the table (2) below.

Table 2. Cadets' perceptions of the use online technologies in online learning

What do you feel about the following points?	SD	D	A	SA
I prefer practice doing online rather than face to face	9%	23%	46%	22%
Practicing online learning helps me to learn more effectively	3%	23%	50%	24%
I can develop my confidence through practicing online learning using technology	2%	14%	52%	32%
I can understand more if I self-practice by utilizing online technology platform	2%	24%	49%	26%
I think practicing speaking skills through online technology platform more fun and challenging	2%	16%	53%	28%
I think the material provided in online learning help me to improve my ability in English	3%	13%	52%	33%
I think the use of online learning saves effort and time	0%	16%	50%	34%
I can be more motivated in studying English by online learning	3%	21%	50%	26%
I think the activities given by lecturers in online learning are appropriate for improving my English	3%	17%	56%	24%

Key: 1) strongly disagree (SD), 2) disagree (D), 3) agree (A), and 4) strongly agree (SA)

In relation to the perceptions of the cadets toward the use of technology platforms in English online learning, it could be concluded that they had positive perception towards its implementation. Based on the table (2), the majority of cadets (>60%) prefer used online learning than the face to face learning. There were only 32% who prefer the offline learning. Regarding the advantages, there were 74% who thought that online

learning helps them more effectively in learning. Another advantage is online learning can develop the cadets' confidence. It was said by 84% of cadets.

Online learning is also said can make cadets understand more the courses, as said by 75% of them. The most important thing, 85% of cadets thought that it can improve their ability of learning English. Regarding to the characteristic, 81% of cadets said that it was fun and challenging. Moreover, it could save efforts and time as said by 84% of cadets. Lastly, 76% of cadets talked about the activities. They said that the activities were appropriate to improve their English skill.

Most of cadets agree that the use of online learning saves effort and time. This is in line with the opinion of Rusli, et al (2020) which stated that the technological tools can be accessed anywhere and anytime without any limitations on space and time. In other words, online learning is considered to be simpler than the traditional ones. It is supported by Verawardina, et.al (2020) which said that online learning is simpler and more effective. In addition, the use of online learning is flexible, improves the effectiveness of knowledge, eliminates barriers from the fear of talking to others, is efficient in cost because the students do not have to travel, and allows self-pacing (Arkoful & Abaidoo, 2014).

According to the result of questionnaires, there were many advantages in doing online learning. Online learning can develop the cadets' confidence, improve their English skill and motivation to learn. It is in line with Arkoful&Abaidoo (2014) who argued that online learning can reduce the shyness. Students who usually keep silent during face-to-face learning become active in online learning. Those students are not afraid or shy to share their opinions or ideas through an online learning platform.

In other case, there are several students disagree with the use of online technology platforms in practicing online learning with some reasons which are gathered from interview. The first is it is said that online learning is not as intensive as offline learning. They need extra time to prepare the lesson and ask students to join. Consequently, there is no enough time for performing. In other word it is not effective. As said by Arkoful & Abaidoo, 2014, the online learning is less effective since there is lack of communication among learners, cheating may happen because there is no enough control, the subject that needs more practical skills cannot be done, and it spend more cost in time and money. Second, they feel that both the lecturer and the students are not serious in the learning process. This condition demotivates students to learn. The result is same as Yunhadi, et al (2020) which says that online learning demotivate students since there is no interaction between lecturers and cadets. The last, they had problem about the internet connection especially for those living in remote area. The barriers make them difficult to join the learning.

4 Conclusion

This research reveals the students' perception toward the online learning. There were two types of perceptions; positive an negative. Through online learning experiences, the learning process becomes accessible and flexible because it can be held anywhere and anytime. Furthermore, it can increase positive attitudes such as discipline,

responsibility, independent, and efficient learning. However, the negative perceptions also arouse. Online learning made students demotivate in learning because there were no interaction with friends and teacher.

In view of the findings of the study, some solutions are recommended to overcome the negative perceptions in the online learning. Lecturers should reconsider and enhance their strength and skills to utilize different technology platforms. Lecturers should use the innovative and creative methodology and strategies to encourage and motivate the cadets' speaking performance. This is in line with the recommendation of Rajitha & Alamelu (2020) that teachers need to design activities, special guidance and an appropriate teaching model to improve the confidence and improvement of the students. Lecturers should be able to choose the appropriate technology platforms. There should be a range of activities and a comfortable learning atmosphere so that the cadets are engaged in learning confidently and actively without fear and shyness. More chances need to be offered to the cadets so that they can do more self-practice and interact with their classmates.

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