

Individual factors that keep online English learners from greater success: The case of HCMC Open University

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ABSTRACT

A variety of challenges in online training are found in numerous learning environments such as cultural background, accessibility, technology, learning content and so on. In the developed or western societies, online training has been developing in a stable way for decades, while numerous typical obstacles seem to be visible in developing countries including student support, flexibility, teaching and learning activities, access, academic confidence, localization and attitudes (Andersson, 2008). These difficulties are not excluded in the context of the online English training system (OETS) at Ho Chi Minh City Open University (HCMCOU). Although this institution ever makes effort to limit these possible challenges for ages, plenty of impactful issues leading to serious difficulties of OETS also obviously exist. Hence, to fully explore the key factors that cause greater barriers in this training system, a qualitative on traditions of biography and grounded theory method was applied. The qualitative data is to be collected from the responses on open-ended questionnaires sent for 30 online English majors and indirect interviews with 5 salient learners were also conducted. The findings show that some minor limitations of learners such as negative learning habits, willpower shortage and neglected learning perception lead to greater barriers to online English training.

1. Introduction

The term online learning seems to be various in the eyes of educational experts in diverse training environments. As Masrom (2007) defined e-learning is considered as online learning which is closely connected to computer-based training in pedagogical thinking. Gervacio (2011) added e-learning is the working effectiveness of online tutors and learners in various online learning activities. The concept of online English training in HCMCOU is defined as the process of applying for technological advance and a learning management system (LMS) which applies the software for managing the documents, reports, the administration,

tracking, reporting and delivering all education courses or developing training programs. This application helps to facilitate flexible time and space for accessing learning content and administrative management (Black, Beck, Dawson, Jinks, & DiPietro, 2007). This online training model occurs in the condition of face to face learning on screen through the activities of video conferences which makes learners have a real feeling of lively learning environment like face to face on campus. Apparently, whenever the new online training model applied, it is unavoidable to cope with thousands of challenges in the online training process such as the learning content, the instructional designs, the inadequate infrastructures, the qualifications of instructors or teachers, the competence of learners, the motivations of social demands, and the developmental strategies of government.

Actually, the online training system in each tertiary institution is established to benefit learners, meet the requirements of social demands, and complete the educational goals. Thus, a great amount of financial investment is put into various projects of infrastructure and human resources to assure the quality of online training progress. However, in process of conducting online training, plenty of objective and subjective factors making OETS stuck in some definite barriers. Normally, these online training challenges in developing countries outweigh those in developed countries due to numerous convenience and limitations. Evidence shows that Andersson (2008) listed a typical case of Sri Lanka in which 37 enabling and disabling factors (in Romania, there are 36 enabling and disabling factors, Tarsi & Rabies, *Social Behavioral Science* 186 (2015), 376-380) were categorized into eight main challenges as student support, flexibility, teaching and learning activities, access, academic confidence, localization, attitudes (Andersson, 2008). Apparently, these obstacles are not the exceptions in OETS at HCMCOU organization in particular or in Vietnam in general.

To be honest, due to the awareness of the importance of technological development, the worldwide education trend, the mission and vision of HCMCOU in strategies of “striving to be a leading public inter-disciplinary university in Vietnam” and “promoting a society with active learning by offering flexible and obtainable methods of education to students and affirming the identity of HCMCOU in Southeast Asia by 2023” (VBER, 2018), HCMCOU - this institution never stop making efforts to meet the educational goals but it is unavoidable to escape some visible and uncontrolled barriers related to learners’ learning conditions and motivations.

In fact, HCMCOU even though has been dominated the distance training system in form of part time or full-time face to face on campus for decades. This means that HCMCOU has more experience in getting used to training for various learners and has applied a variety of e-learning tools as email, a digital portfolio, internet-based learning, web-based learning and various learning and teaching activities. Nevertheless, whenever performing the online English training in LMS system, numerous obstacles have been encountered in different manners for both internal and external factors. The questions are raised whether or not the crucial problems are chiefly originated from three barriers normally occur in the setting of developing societies as the accessibility (Wi-Fi) or internet connection), technology (computer, laptop smartphones...) or the content (online teaching materials, instructional design). The answers seem to be visible when the research of Nguyen (2008) in Da Nang University indicated that

the most difficulty of OETS mentioned mainly focuses on technology. He also added the application of new technologies in the particular Vietnamese social setting needs to be noticed. It means that technological problems strongly influence the further improvement of the syllabus design quality and material development (Nguyen, 2008). Continuously, in 2009, he explored the characteristics of the potential users was one of the most decisive factors that greatly influenced the learning outcome due to various aspects of learners like knowledge, age, sex, physical abilities, education, cultural or ethnic background, training, motivation, goals, and personality, computing experience (Nguyen, 2009). Besides, the barriers of content need to be taken into consideration for its importance in engaging the learners in meaningful tasks (Nguyen, 2009). Similarly, more challenges of ICT using are also discussed such as the current IT ability of the teacher and their perceptions about enablers and inhibitors of ICT use in modern language teaching at higher education institutions in Vietnam (Dang, 2011). However, until 2011, Nguyen in his paper *"Learners' reflections on and perceptions of computer-mediated communication in a language classroom: A Vietnamese perspective"*, indicated that Vietnamese learners almost had good reflections and perceptions of computer-mediated communicative application into collaborative learning (Nguyen, 2011). This means that applying technological advances and media in language learning completely benefits learners in their computer skills, collaborative experience, confidence in future courses, and more than that technological applying in the learning process helped to inspire the willingness in recommending this technology-embedded course to the next learning generations. These investigations strongly support the responses of technology, its applications, and technological using abilities which are not the key problems leading to barriers in the OETS at HCMCOU. Indeed, with the mission of taking responsibilities in leading online education, integrating into the worldwide educational training model and helping learners complete their learning goals, HCMCOU has put great investment in three vital needs of online training such as providing strong Wi-Fi connection, facilitating more technological advances, establishing LMS system, designing updating the valuable learning contents, training teachers, instructing learners in learning accessing process, providing available accounts, books, links and the like to support all training courses. However, after the long run of conducting this OETS on LMS system, HCMCOU learners have been found in difficult situations and the learning outcomes have not been qualified as expected. Thus, this paper is carried out to explore the core limitations that lead to serious obstacles of learners in this OETS.

To conduct this research, a quantitative approach with the traditions of biography and grounded theory method was applied. In process of collecting data, the open-ended questionnaire was raised to 30 online learners in English major and indirect interviews with 5 salient learners were also carried out. The research questions chiefly focus on three aspects:

1. What are the limitations of learners?
2. Why do the limitations of learners lead to greater barriers to online English learning at HCMCOU?
3. How can these limitations of learners cause greater barriers in the online English training system (OETS)?

The outcomes clarified that most learners are mainly limited to negative learning habits, willpower shortage and neglected learning perceptions. These limitations strongly influence the quality of online English training.

2. Conceptual framework

Awareness of global development of e-learning, the mission, and vision of HCMCOU institute in society, various aspects of technology, financial support, instructional team, and facilities and the like are greatly invested. However, in the process of performing English online training, a series of other factors are explored. The most popular ones that directly influence the learning outcome effectiveness are learning motivations, traditions, learning and family background.

Andersson (2008) observed the context of e-learning in Sri Lanka and stated eight general types of barriers which directly influence the online training quality as student, teacher, institution, support, course, technology, cost and society. These barriers are stated in sub-categories including learners' motivation, conflicting priorities, academic confidence, technological confidence, gender, age, teacher's and learners' technological confidence, new teaching and learning styles, confidence, motivation and commitment, qualification and competence, time and knowledge management, staff development, students' and teachers' support faculty and social support for students, employers and faculty support employees curriculum designing, pedagogical model, subject content, teaching and learning activities, flexibility (delivery mode), localization, availabilities of educational resources, accessibility, software and material designing, cost, and localization technology, accessing rates, tuition fees, institutional economy and budget teachers' and students' roles, e-learning attitudes and IT ability, principles and regulation. These perspectives were supported by McGill, Klobas, and Renzi (2014) when they emphasized five basic issues of institution, developer, instructor, student and technology (McGill et al., 2014).

However, other researchers believed that teachers, institutions, support, courses, technologies and cost are not the most influential issues. The most impactful factors that need to be taken into consideration are the policy and ICT use for teaching and learning activities and organizational culture (Czerniewicz & Brown, 2009). Until 2011, Nguyen expressed his disagreement that ICT was not the crucial challenge by demonstrating the evidence that learners almost had a good impression and perceptions of computer-mediated communicative application into collaborative learning. This implication shows that technological application and media in language learning are completely beneficial to learners because learners have opportunities to promote computer skills, communicative skills, collaborative experience, and confidence in learning courses.

Ehlers (2009) explained that the troubles might occur in OETS whenever quality development in organizations was limited. It is completely reasonable because most higher educational institutes were often restricted to bureaucratic documentation, and even disregards the development of quality as an organization's holistic culture (Ehlers, 2009). However, in 2013, Carter denied this perspective and stated that once a university made the decision to invest in English online training, itself makes efforts to overcome all barriers related to social presence

and teacher presence, social constructivist pedagogy, and orientation students' online learning platform (Carter, 2013).

In fact, it is believed that the most prior concern mainly focuses on learners, their relations and social presence due to learners' central roles (learners' center theory). It means that without learners the online learning activities are not carried out. This admitted that learner social presence played an important role and was defined as the capacity of learners to project themselves in a social and effective way (Rourke, Anderson, Garrison, & Archer, 2007). Besides, social constructivist pedagogy which positively influenced learners' perceptions of the course is also mentioned. Actually, the definition of the social constructivist pedagogy was understood as the relationships between learners with instructors, or learners and their peers in negotiation and making meaning from the curriculum (Carter, 2013). These challenges were continuously discussed in form of systematically examining the conditions associated with the continuation of online initiatives in universities (McGill et al., 2014).

Through these illustrations, it is affirmed that online training is an extremely challenging process which requires more intensive investment and collaboration of numerous individuals as well as the synchronous development between infrastructure and superstructure. Especially, in HCMCOU, learners are provided with all necessities to conduct the online course in an efficient fashion. Nevertheless, nearly one-third of learners cannot complete their credits or meet the requirements of the courses due to some minor learning limitations.

The definition of learning limitation is comprehended as the learning difficulty due to the condition of attentive problems, hyperactivity, or dyslexia. Learning conditions are decisive factors that affect learning outcomes. As Brennan (2009) gave data on learning limitations based on the source of statistics Canada in the survey of participation and activity limitation in 2006. These limitations were obviously different due to numerous variations of age, sex, education, employment, social status. Brennan (2009) added learning limitations were evaluated in an equal way among all age groups of adult learners. This implied that learning limitation is a phenomenon of lifelong nature. Moreover, the learning condition among males and females was not distinguished. Multiple limitations as developmental, seeing, hearing, emotional psychological memory, communication, mobility, agility and pain were significantly illustrated (Brennan, Gombac, & Sleightholm, 2006). Similarly, the differences in employment and labor force status contribute to the learning limitation. It is illustrated that "people with mild learning conditions were more likely to report that they were employed than those with severe learning limitations" (Brennan et al., 2006).

Learning habits or study habits are defined as the adopted way and the manner that a student project for readings after classroom learning to master the subject (Azikiwe, 1998). It is also considered as a study routine including frequent studying sessions, material reviewing, self-testing, learned material rehearing, learning in a conducive environment, and even the attitudes of learners towards learning activities or the gained scores throughout learning performance (Shazia, 2014).

Likewise, Shazia (2014) emphasized that whether learners are able to study in an efficient and effective way or not, depends upon their study habits. Honestly, learning habits are characteristically used by learners when left to work by themselves with little or no direction. It is definitely valuable if each learner might discover and be nurtured for the aims of developing learning efficient study skills. To attain these study skills, learners had to be taught to their involved reference, reading listening, study habits and strategies. Whenever learners have positive attitudes, strong physical condition and balanced emotional state, and specific planning with time, place, and learning period, their learning improved (Crow, 1956). This is also illustrated by Shazia (2014) when he explored the significant importance of positive learning habits in an individual, to be truthful, proper learning habits help learners to attain mental peace and enable them to communicate in an impressive fashion. It is quite natural that each individual frequently becomes a slave of habits whether good or bad. But it is more intelligent to have positive habits which can benefit the learners. Hence, it is more effective to utilize every second to obtain and acquire knowledge and practice good study habits instead of spending time playing and taking part in leisure activities. Nevertheless, the majority of the learners have no good awareness of academic learning importance. As a result, the proper study habits and techniques are absent and learners are failed to achieve their maximum goals within the limited time schedule. Students getting habituated to learn in certain fixed ways, tend to keep their daily routine effectively and have equal distribution to all subjects. This is obviously crucial in the learning process. Actually, (Urh & Jereb, 2014) cited that learning habits which occur conscious or unconscious level and can be described as methods and means of obtaining information. They are beneficial to students in making their efforts to solve problems, developing skills to acquire knowledge and completing school (Urh & Jereb, 2014).

Miller et al. (2012) presented the relevant and current trend of research was willpower. Actually, willpower has been demonstrated as the ability of moderation of self-manage suffers following a mental task requirement. Willpower was distinguished in the situation of resource dependence theory and non-limited resource theory. With the dependent resource, it is easy to be out of mental exertion and tends to show the worse response inhibition and performance following a task with strong self-control demands. In contrast, mental exertion can be motivated and energized in non-limited resource theory (Miller et al., 2012). This explains for reasons why learners need to have adequate capacity and strong determination to emerge themselves in various learning materials even more extensive learning without materials if they expect to attain greater learning achievement.

Previous research explored numerous perceptions of learners in online language training in many aspects as learner general perceptions of social presence, satisfied perception with the instructors, perceptions of scored high in terms, perception of contributed significantly to the predictor equation, learners' perceived learning (Richardson & Swan, 2003). It also displayed "perceptions of the online delivery of the course satisfaction, benefits and barriers" (Carter, 2013). Overall, learning perception is not separated from learning attitudes towards OETS in some aspects learning conditions, motivations and learning experience learning styles.

3. Research methodology

Research setting

Being one of the most reputable tertiary institutions providing learners numerous learning environments as face to face on site or distance learning through technological advances and technology application, HCMCOU has recently been setting up the online training system with the aim of offering face to face on screen English training courses to satisfy learners' needs and to meet social demands. Although this online English training system (OETS) has just been released for more than one year it has attracted a great number of online learners. Average number of learners for each semester is more than one hundred and all of them are equally distributed into 3 classes. For OETS at HCMCOU, three semesters per school year are required. This means that the total number of learners a year is over three hundred. Although the number of learners in OETS may not compare with other educational organizations in Asian region, for the new-born tertiary OETS, this enrolment rate in online English training courses is considered successful. At present, the percentage of learners is greatly increasing according to statistics. However, After the long observation of performances of the learners in doing designed assignments, communicating between learners and the instructor, or among learners, in sharing in the discussion board, or debating in the online forum, and even in directly interacting face to face on screen through video conference, learning dedication is going down and learners' presence tends to be less regular than that at the first two weeks of opening course though the feedbacks of interesting, practical and useful learning programs, helpful training team and qualified service are displayed. Hence, the decision of doing this research to explore the specific limitations of learners influencing on the learning process and its outcome. It is believed to be more reliable when the researcher is also the instructor who has been responsible for online teaching level 1 of English Listening and English-speaking skills within three successive semesters and has spent much time observing and explore her learner conditions and barriers.

Research objectives

This research is aimed to explore key limitations that make greater barriers to online English learning at HCMCOU through the understanding background of learners based on some independent variables, learning external and learning internal factors. The learners' background is exposed in details including information of gender, major, location, semesters, learning styles, learning schedule, website accessing, online learning pressure, instructors' interaction, instructors' presence, class activities, exercises learning methods, learners' perception, exercise models and learners' interests in online English learning. These fundamental criteria are valuable in exploring the learning attitudes, learning method, behaviors, cognit, collaborative ability, and connective ability of learners. And this exploration is obviously help not only for the learners in their improvement of English language skills, knowledge background, and autonomy but also for the instructors in making some innovations in their online content designing, teaching methods, and interaction ability. Furthermore, the study was aimed to contribute to develop the potential OETS, as well as to advertise HCMCOU image in the region and all over the world through its investments in state-of-the-art facilities, professional

instructors, and administrative management in spite of short time making effort in a new area of OETS.

Research methods

In this paper, qualitative research working with the traditions of biography and grounded theory method was applied. Beginning with the traditional method of biography, the lives of 5 learners participating in the research were explored through some aspects of discipline origin as anthropology, literature, history, psychology, sociology. These five selected participants have had strong motivations in online English learning such as completing all online assignments and never skipping any video conference. The data collection in this biography method was chiefly conducted by directly getting the interviewing responses of 5 salient learners participating in this study. Then, two full stories of these 5 research participants were put into two groups; one consists of 2 male participants (one is Mr. Nguyen An Vu and another is Mr. Van Ngoc Duc), who have shared the same learning background, interests, motivations and conditions; another group includes 3 females (as Ms. Cam Van, MS Phuong Thai and Ms. Truc), who share most of the similarities in learning motivations and conditions were directly interviewed for accessing more vital information. Besides, due to the characteristics of the grounded theory approach mainly focuses on developing a theory grounded in data from the field. Thus, the data collection was carried out by using the survey with the open-ended questionnaire which was designed and sent to all 35 English major learners in two classes of online English training through LMS system. Then the answers of 30 respondents were collected and displayed in tables. The data analysis was conducted in procedures of open coding, and selective coding after categorizing. Finally, the theory or theoretical model was expressed in form of narrative.

4. Results and discussion

To explore the meaning, the characteristics and the influences of online English training system (OETS), as well as to understand serious consequence caused by minor limitations as negative habits, willpower shortage and, series of details or information related to learners' condition, learning background and motivations and should be taken into account in definite research approaches and grounded theory.

Starting up with the biography method, the different individual information of five learners who participated in the online learning course has been explored in some aspects of anthropology, literature, history, psychology, sociology. In general, five selected learners are all at the age of working. This means that learners have set certain goals for the learning process, so they easily have positive feedback or more contribution to lessons. Furthermore, they live in different provinces but have the same cultural system of the South of Vietnam. This is really helpful to interact among their peers on screen face to face whenever taking part in video conferences or discussion in forum. However, due to the special characteristics of these online courses are providing lifelong learning, offering different opportunities for all people in society. This leads to the mixed level of English communication and the less able learners tend to lose their confidence and inspiration to express themselves while the better learners seem to be centered on most of the learning activities.

Take an example of narrative method of biography approach, two particular learners (Mr. Duc and Mr. Vu) were invited to a face to face interview. At first, they were asked to introduce themselves and give more information related to their jobs, age, working place, working responsibilities and social status. Mr. Vu gave information that he was currently working as a general director of a technological company. He felt satisfied with his job because the technology was his interesting profession. In his position, he was normally responsible for controlling all activities of the company, he also observed and received the feedbacks or reports from middle managers and he was really excited about his present job which gave him more opportunities to communicate with a variety of people including his staffs and business partners. Mr. Duc also shared some similarities in managing position and responsibilities taken over and pleasant feelings of current work. Two of them are at the age of middle age though Mr. Duc was older than Mr. Vu 7 years. Secondly, they were asked to share the reasons why participating in this online course. Mr. Vu slightly smiled and slowly answered the question that he was actually not good at English skills but because of characteristics of work that he took over some responsibilities of working with foreign partners to negotiate and sign the contract, so he made the decision to join in this online English course for further improvement. A bit different from Mr. Vu, Mr. Duc had better English background of fluency and pronunciation due to wider range of communicative environment. But in general, both have clear and strong motivations of English learning for working with international investors and they have a willingness to emerging themselves in OETS. Two of them ever admitted that English using in their work was extremely vital in the situation of contacting or introducing new products or company potential to new partners. They added that without better English skills, they were not able to attain great achievements in their business. After revealing some key points of English learning motivations, they stopped and... then intended to express something more... But I-the direct interviewer- immediately asked them another question related to their perceptions of this OETS as “Did you find something interesting in online English class or not? Mr. Vu seemed to be eager in giving a response. Indeed, he answered that question in a stronger and louder manner: “Yes, Yes, I really loved it because when I participate in this activity... I think... I had far improvement in English skill”. Despite the fact that he had a bit of hesitation, but when asking and keeping eye contact with him, his eager and smiling face let me know that this English course was extremely helpful for him. Turn to Mr. Duc, he carefully considered the question and expressed his opinion in a deep voice (due to his older age - 48 and silent characteristics), but meaningful and fulfilled response: “I believe I have great development in English skills and have more confidence in English communication in learning and working environment. Actually, with this online course we – learners are provided with diverse design materials helpful for our critical thinking in both academic learning and social experience”. Continuously, the interviewer wanted to know more autonomous learning of each learner such as “How many minutes per day do you spend on practice four skills of English. They seemed to hesitate to answer the question then replied with the soft voices that they had to spend daily time for work and whenever coming back home they normally felt tired, instead of wining themselves for getting involving extensive listening, or reading with materials provided in the course to get more advance in learning process but they have not conducted yet though they visually recognized extra learning benefits. They continue to add more information that “Honestly, we

did not have enough strong determination and willpower so our learning results were not as good as expected". When being asked for their weaknesses or good points in their learning process, both of them indicated that they ever made effort to complete all already designed exercises but due to limited deadlines, they work in hurry with less investment and effort in that. Moreover, they also express their internal motivations such as the ability of English qualification, inaccurate learning goals, passive learning methods, ineffective time management, and inactive interaction with their instructor and their peers. These lead to definite barriers limiting learning outcomes.

Similarly, a group of 3 female learners who belong to the group of 8X generation, have got married and had one to two children and work full time. Although three of them have strong determination for English learning to support their work, teaching their children or even changing jobs in the future. In spite of obvious learning motivations, and positive perceptions of online training course, but their learning results or performances have not evaluated in a better way and they revealed themselves had awareness of time shortage, workload, due date pressure and their learning habits of listening to instructor or peers' expression but without active reflection causing serious problems of learning progress.

Based on the information getting from interviewing 5 hardworking males and females in online English majors and relying on the perspectives of educational professionals who presented their opinions in the aspect of learning limitation, learning habits, willpower and learning perception mentioned above, it is concluded that online learners whether they have differences gender, age, social status, or learning background or not, these are not the core values influencing on the result or learning achievement. Honestly, online learners are almost having stable life and work, so they set the learning goals for better improvement and they seem to have fulfilled feeling when they recognize how much investment they put into learning course, they will be paid back with of how much worthy success they can obtain. Thus, the quality of OELT may not be able to measure in an accurate way. The most concerns are the way learners control their time distributions, their learning activeness, their performance confidence, their investment, enthusiasm and willingness when involving in online English training. These are included in learning habits, willpower, and learning perception.

With the grounded theory method, a designed questionnaire was raised by research participants.

The questions are distributed into three parts:

Table1

Questions of independent variables as age, gender, location

Gender	Location	Social status	Employment
Males: 10 (33.33%)	HCM City: 9 persons (30%)	Employers: 9 persons (30%)	Fulltime job: 24 Persons (80%)
Females:20 (66.67%)	Provinces: 21 persons (70%)	Employees: 21 persons (70%)	Part time job:6 persons (20%)

Gender	Location	Social status	Employment
			Unemployment (0)

Source: The researcher's data analysis

The table indicates the numbers of females who participate in responding research questionnaire (20 persons) are as double as male participants (10 persons). It also presents the rate of participants who are from provinces (21 persons) much more than those from HCM City (9 persons). Similarly, the social status and job conditions of these research participants are also presented. Most of the participants are white-collar workers (21 persons over 30) and 9 out of 30 of keeping important roles of general executives or department managers. Besides, 24 out of 30 participants having full time jobs while others prefer part-time jobs for various reasons.

Through the statistics displayed in this table, it can be clear that most of the learners in online courses are adults, who live in diffident provinces far away from HCM city, have stable fulltime or part-time jobs and have definite social positions. This personal background implies that learners have both advantages and disadvantages of online learning. Actually, Once making the decision to participate in online courses, adult learners certainly set up the achievable goals and carefully think over the difficulties that they may cope with. Moreover, adult learners have adequate maturity to take responsibility for getting involving lessons and have good preparation to meet all the requirements of the online courses. In addition, adult learners are assumed to be masters in critical thinking, and have good problem-solving, or be active enough interaction or cooperation with their instructors and peers to obtain learning objectives. However, due to having stable jobs and social positions, adults also have unavoidable limitations such as facing time management, stress and workload or family burden etc. Normally, adult learners put priority on their working profession more than learning investment. In fact, adults after finishing a long day of working, they are too exhausted and rarely have enough strong determination or will power to complete their learning goals (1).

Table 2

Perspectives of learners in online English training course

Online Exercises	Online course interests	English ability
Compulsory: 21 persons (70%)	Yes: 18 persons (60%)	Good communication: 9 persons (30%)
Optional (5 persons) 16.66%	Neutral: 7persons (23.33%)	Quite good: 9 persons (30%)
No Information: 4 persons (13, 33%) (0%)	Not influenced: 5 persons (16.6%)	Average: 5 persons (16.6%)

Online Exercises	Online course interests	English ability
		Less able: 5 persons (16.6%)
		Limited: 2 persons (6.6%)

Source: The researcher's data analysis

Observing the learners' perception in online English training course which is presented in table 2, the participants' responses were varied. 70% of participants believed that "online exercises are compulsory" while others expressed their ideas in an opposite way "online exercises are optional" (16.66%). The rest had no information of online exercises, occupied (13, 33%). Likewise, all participants were asked for sharing their interest in online course, 60% of them indicated that they were keen on English online course, but more than one – fifth (23.33%) of them revealed their neutral feeling (not very interested in or bored with that online course). Fewer of them exposed that online course had no any influence on them (16.6%). Besides, the participants were asked to share their own viewpoint of their English abilities. 30% of them believed that they have good communication. Other 30% were supposed to be pretty good and more than 16% of participants had self-evaluation might be at an average rate. However, more than 22% of participants were less able and limited in English ability.

Regarding the figures in table 2, it is easy to lead to various thinking and opinions. Honestly, the same requirements are set up in an online English training course and require learners to complete all, but the learners have different perceptions of those. Group of learners who believed "online exercises are compulsory" tend to have close research or pay much attention to that online course, and even have a good preparation for taking that course. In contrast, a group of participants with the thoughts of "just an optional online course"- normally have tendency to have their own choice if they complete all online exercises or not. Actually, it is not necessary to complete all online assignments if they complete 50%, they can meet the requirements of the course and can attend the final test on campus. If the learners are really good at English skills, they are easy to pass the exam and get into the next stage without caring about completing all online exercises, while the less able learners always making effort to complete online to earn more marks. In addition, most online learners are adults, they seem to be afraid of spending a lot of time on completing all exercises to get high or highest marks because their learning purposes are different from purely teenage-students. In reality, most adults just prefer getting enough marks to pass the courses. They are dedicated to spending more time on other goals of working or earning or studying necessary things that really helpful for their present lives. Due to learning is not so important as working, adult learners seem to be less interested in online English course - just more than half of the learners revealed their interest in this field. Another group gave feedback "online exercises are not influenced" if learners completed online exercises or not. This means that learners didn't show their interest in this online learning, or they did not pay much attention to regulations or marks. Furthermore, learners are put in the mixed classes of different English levels of excellent, pretty good, average, less able or limited. This leads to demotivate learners if training course quite complex,

the average and less able learners are under pressure and easily quit the course, and vice-verse with the simpler lessons, the excellent and pretty good learners cannot take in more knowledge or improvement after a long run of learning. Overall, learners have different perspectives in online learning courses and due to different personal backgrounds of knowledge and awareness, as well as ability, thinking, and perception. These lead to great barriers in online English learning (2).

Table 3

Internal & external factors of learners

Questions	Answers
1 What specific factor influences your online exercise doing process? <i>(selecting more than one option and total responses of 30 participants are equally compare with 100% for each choice)</i>	Short deadline: 5 persons (16.66%) Many exercises: 4 persons (13.3%) Full working schedule - workload: 18 persons (60%) Family housework: 4 persons (13.3%)
2 What activities are performed when the instructor and learner meet each other? <i>(selecting more than one option)</i>	Instructor gives an explanation of something difficult: 12 persons (40%) Learners just listen to the instructor's sharing 10 persons (33.3%) Learners ask for some techniques of doing online exercise: 8 persons (26.6%) Learners raising questions to the teacher 7 persons (23.33%)
3 What motivation makes you feel interested in doing online English exercises? <i>(selecting more than one option)</i>	Awareness of English necessity: 26person (86.6%) Carrier support: 12 persons (40%) Strong passion: 7 persons (23.33%) Competitive spirit: 5 persons (16.66%) Other: 3%

Questions	Answers
4 What learning methods help you to improve your English skills? (<i>selecting more than one option</i>)	Reading books & check dictionary: 17 persons (56.66%) Participating in class room activities: 6 persons (20 %) Study from teacher: 13 persons (43.3%) Online Autonomy: 15 persons (50 %) Contact with native speakers: 6 persons (20%)
5 What is your perception of online English learning? (<i>only one option</i>)	Interested in Online Exercises (getting knowledge) 5 persons (16.66.%) Less interested but necessary for academic learning and other purposes: 18 persons (60%) Not interested much but useful for work: 7 persons (23.33%)
6 What kinds of activities do you prefer in OETS? (<i>selecting more than one option</i>)	Doing plenty of designed exercises: 14 persons (46.6 %) Face to face on screen with teacher and other learners (video conferences): 18 persons (60%) Discussion board: 21 persons (70%)

Notes: Participants can select more than one options that fit with their learning conditions. The percentage of each choice - is equal 100% if 30 participants had the same choice

Source: The researcher's data analysis

The table presents the data on internal and external factors of learners. This helps to explore some limitation as negative habits, willpower shortage and neglected learning perceptions. To clearly understand, the following analysis is conducted:

Firstly, learners have a traditional learning style because their learning process almost depends on the teacher -“Teacher Center”. This means that teacher plays an important role in numerous activities such as giving explanations of difficult things, raising questions to learners for further checking their understanding, responding to learners’ questionable issues and giving technological instructions. Moreover, learners consider instructors’ presence is significantly necessary. Especially in Video conferences, teachers’ presence is highly appreciated. Learners express their interests when face to face on screen with the instructor (60%). This illustrates that learners rely on teacher much. Additionally, learners have passive learning (“passive

learners and active learners” (Lee & Lehman, 1993) due to they are not active enough in raising questions or sharing opinion. Furthermore, learners just wait for teachers’ explanations or listen to what teacher delivered - a passive perception of lectures.

Secondly, participants are believed to have willpower shortage because learners themselves have not overcome all difficulties when they give complaint of having full learning schedule and they also have neglect attitude in learning such as waiting for teachers’ explanation. Learners are evaluated that they do not have strong passion for English learning because of lacking competitive spirit. Some learners have no self-motivations when their online learning mainly supports satisfying their work or meeting requirements of academic learning instead of enjoying online English courses for obtaining knowledge and getting improvement.

Thirdly, referring to learning methods, most learners have a passive learning way. It means that they are not active in their learning just waiting for teacher’s instructions (“passive learners and active learners” (Lee & Lehman, 1993). They also expressed their traditional learning methods with reading books and looking up in dictionary instead of surfing websites for other learning resources. Especially, most learners enjoy studying from teachers. However, some of them are quite active in their learning when enjoying taking part in classroom activities and more than half of learners have skill of online autonomy.

Indeed, with a variety of learning methods and motivations listed in the tables above, it is easily concluded that learners certainly have different perceptions of online English learning. Whenever learners express their different perceptions in one learning system, this leads to different barriers in online English learning. These barriers are not only on the abilities of deeply taking in knowledge, actively participating in classroom activities, earlier complete all online tasks or exercises, accurately applied the language taught in online course, easily attain the achievable goals as planned. Evidence shows that learners who are active, easy to get in touch with lessons in an autonomous way, need not waiting for teachers’ instructions, naturally raising questions for further information, and so on. Similarly, learners having good learning methods, easily memorize what has been taught, and have good skills in autonomy and getting development.

Moreover, learners also reveal their learning perspectives of online English learning in three different scales as some learners feel interested in online learning while others said that it is just neutral, or even some learners have no interest in it. This leads to barriers of learning motivations such as having no willpower or strong determination to overcome all difficulties whenever encountered in learning course.

In overall, learning habits are easily recognized through learning autonomy - the free, unforced, self-reflective exercise of thought, similar behaviors, saying without thinking, repetitive acts or actions, activity or passivity, thoughtfulness or thoughtlessness (Crome, 2010). Based on these expressions, it obviously indicates that learning habits taking place in different situations and individuals may have efficiency or not. Honestly, poor study habits or negative habits are known as the downfall of many learners in numerous approaches to effective learning. Normally, some negative study habits may be included as less caring for eyes (-experiencing symptoms of computer vision syndrome (CVS), multi-tasking (the most serious

temptations of using social media and having learning distraction), poor posture (prolonged periods of time for learning influencing on the concentration ability, cramming (for a test or working through a pile of homework and have more academic problems on the following day) and by line - a means to share the lessons learned throughout the degree and to guide current students to achieve personal and educational fulfillment during college life. Hence, positive study habits are really important for all learners who attend online training courses because learners need to make the best use of investment of time and money to achieve online educational goals. If learners have proper habits, they certainly have good preparation when starting their own online course. The main priorities for learners participating in an online course are time management and great self - study habits to attain academic success. Conversely, negative habits of study not only retard school progress but develop frustration, destroy initiative and have a different level of academic achievement. Evidence shows that almost all the educational crises such as underachievement, absenteeism, stagnation, and academic drop outs are normally related to the improper utilization of learning programs with respect to study period (Raj & Sreethi, 2000). Academic achievement of learners is determined by their learning habits and learning styles. Thus, the learning habits and learning styles motivate learners in obtaining meaningful and desirable knowledge and these become a strong weapon for the learners to excel in life through obtaining excellence in their respective educational fields. In general, good learning habits play an important role in learners' success. This means that learners with learning problems, however, may have generally negative learning habits and skills. Similarly, willpower shows strong interests and determination which helps learners overcome the strict situation to complete their learning goal. Apparently, in the process of carrying out online learning, learners' perceptions play important roles in OETS success as well.

5. Conclusion

Although many previous findings illustrate that online training system comes with numerous challenges as addressed. But when making comparison between the benefits and barriers of online learning system, Tarus, Gichoya, and Muumbo (2015) at Kenyan public university admitted that "the benefits and opportunities presented by e-learning far outweigh the challenges" (Tarus et al., 2015). Moreover, the learning style for the web-based learning class (Zemsky & Massy, 2004) was obviously evaluated better than the learning style of traditional learning class with laboratories, field work and observations and so on (Manochehr, 2006). These expressions completely appreciate and contribute to the establishment and development of the online training system.

To be successful in online training system, numerous factors must be taken into account including individual difference variables, pedagogical values, learning styles, learning adaptive abilities (Akbulut & Cardak, 2012). In addition, learners' impression, nature, preparation level, and the motivation of degree recognition need to be recognized. Besides, cognitive challenge, active learning, learning materials, instructional problem, language barrier, time management, assignments pressure, and culture difference (Fook & Sidhu, 2015).

Nevertheless, in HCMCOU, the author believes that online English training system (OETS) easily attains great success if learners have no negative learning habits. This means that learners need to change their feelings and thinking in learning motivations, learning content enrichment, and tutor - learner interaction. Learners should be active in involving in lectures instead of looking forward to supporting from the instructors. Also, learners are required to change old fashioned or inactive learning styles - it means that learners need to actively participate in various activities, have more extra learning or autonomy through accessing more valuable resources on the Internet. In addition, learners must have strong determinations to overcome the difficulties whenever encountered and be willing to make efforts in order to achieve the goals as expected. Once learners know how to motivate themselves and never give up chasing goals - it means that they have no willpower shortage. Finally, learners are required to quit their neglected learning perception. It means that learners need to have more attention to what they are carrying out. In short, learners themselves should have great awareness of escaping from the negative learning habits, avoiding willpower shortage and overcoming the neglected perceptions make themselves improved and have good ability to integrate in the modern learning society. However, helping learners to overcome or limit their limitations in OETS is not only the responsibilities of any individual but instructors and institutions need to be in charge of these duties also.

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