

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS THAT KEEP ONLINE ENGLISH LEARNERS FROM GREATER SUCCESS: THE CASE OF HCMC OPEN UNIVERSITY

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(Received: November 02, 2018; Revised: December 06, 2018; Accepted: December 6, 2018)

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, the 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 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 bioghrapy and grounded theory method was applied. The qualitative data is to be collected from the responses on open-ended questionnaire 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 of online English training.

Keywords: E-Learning; Learning perception; Negative learning habits; Online English Training; Willpower shortage.

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 the 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 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 the flexible time and space for accessing learning content and administrative management (Black, Beck, Dawson, Jinks, & DiPietro, 2007). This online training model occurs in condition of face to face learning on screen through the activities of

video conferences which makes learners have 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 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 to 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 than 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 interdisciplinary 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 the Southeast Asia by 2023” (Vber, 2018), HCMCOU- this institution never stops 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 have more experience in getting used to training for various learners and have applied 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 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, L.V. (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 on 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 on 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 Van Long 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 learning process helped to inspire the willingness in recommending this technology-embedded course to the next learning generations. These investigations strongly support for 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 qualitative 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 interview 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 of online English learning at HCMCOU?
3. How can these limitations of learners cause greater barriers in online English training system (OETS)?

The outcomes clarified that most of learners are mainly limited to negative learning habits, willpower shortage and neglected learning perceptions. These limitations strongly influence on 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 on the learning outcome effectiveness are learning motivations, traditions, learning and family background.

Anderson (2008) observed the context of

e-learning in Sri Lanka and stated eight general types of barriers which directly influence on 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), localizations, 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, & Renzi (2014) when they emphasized five basic issues of institution, developer, instructor, student and technology (McGill, Klobas, & Renzi, 2014).

However, other researchers believed that teachers, institution, support, courses, technologies and cost are not the most influential issues. The most impactful factors 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 Van Long expressed his disagreement that ICT was not the crucial challenge by demonstrating the evidence that learners almost had 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 skill, communicative skills, collaborative experience, and the confidence in learning courses.

Ehlers (2009) gave explanation that the troubles might occur in OETS whenever quality development in organizations was limited. It is completely reasonable because most of 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 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 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 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, 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, 2009). 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, 2009).

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 routines 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 through out learning performance (Shazia, 2014).

Likewise, Shazia (2014) emphasized that whether learners are able to study in an efficient and effective way or not, depend 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 discovered and 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 on playing and taking part in leisure activities. Nevertheless, majority of the learners have no good awareness of the 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 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 completion of 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 situation of resource dependence theory and non-limited resource theory. With the dependent resource, it is easily to be out of mental exertion and tend to show the worse response inhibition and performance following a task with strong self-control demands. In contrast, the 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 significant 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 released for more than one year but 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, but for the new-born tertiary OETS, this enrolment rate in online English training courses is considerably 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 discussion board, or debating in 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 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 to observe and explore her learner conditions and barriers.

Research Objectives

This research is aimed to explore key limitations that make greater barriers of online English learning at HCMCOU through understanding background of learners based on some independent variables, learning external and learning internal factors. The learners' back ground 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, cognivity, collaborative ability, and connective ability of learners. And this exploration is obviously helpful 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 region and all over the world through its investments in state of the art facilities, professional instructores, and administrative management in spite of short time making effort in new area of OETS.

Research Methods

In this paper, a qualitative research working with the traditions of bioghrphy and grounded theory method was applied. Beginning with the traditional method of bioghrphy, the lives of 5 learners participating

in 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 bioghrphy 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 similarities in learning motivations and conditions were directly interviewed for accessing more vital information. Besides, due to the characteristics of 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, different individual information of five learners who participated in online learning course has been explored at 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 the certain goals for learning process, so they easily have positive feedback or more contribution to lessons. Furthermore, they lives 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 this 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 seems to be centered of most of learning activities.

Take an example of narrative method of biography approach, two particular learners (Mr. Duc and Mr. Vu) were invite 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 technology was his interesting profession. In his position, he was normally responsible for controlling all activities of 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 of 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 was 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 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 investor and they have willingness to emerging themselves in OETS. Two of them ever admitted that English using in their working was extremely vital in situation of contacting or introducing new products or company potential to new partners. They added that without better English skill, 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 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 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 divers 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 deadline, 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 of learning outcomes.

Similarly, a group of 3 female learners who belong to 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 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 of 5 hard working males and females in online English majors and relying on the perspectives of educational professionals who presented their opinions in 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 have stable life and work, so they set the learning goals for better improvement and they seems 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 grounded theory method, a designed questionnaire was raised research participants

The questions are distributed into three parts:

Table 1

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%) |
| | | | Unemployment (0) |

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 participants are white-collar workers (21 persons over 30) and 9 out of 30 of keep important roles of general executives or department managers. Besides, 24 out of 30 participants having full time jobs while other prefer parttime job for various reasons.

Through the statistics displayed in this table, it can be clear that most of learners in online course are adults, who live in different 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 in online learning. Actually,

Once making 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 responsibilities 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 master in critical thinking, and have good problem-solving, or be active enough in interaction or cooperation with their instructors and peers to obtain learning objectives. However, due to having stable jobs and social position, adults also have unavoidable limitations such as facing with time management, stress and workload or family burden etc. Normally, adult learners put priority in 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: 7 persons (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%) |
| | | Less able: 5 persons (16.6%) |
| | | Limited: 2 persons (6.6%) |

Observing the learners' perception in online English training course which is presented in table 2, the participants' responses were varied. 70% participants believed that "online exercises are compulsory" while other expressed their ideas in an opposite way "online exercises are optional" (16.66%). The rest ones 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 onlinecourse had no any influence 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% participants had self- evaluation might be at an average rate. However, more than 22% 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 which are set up in online English training course and require learners to complete all, but the learners have different perceptions of those. Group of leaners who believed "online exercises are compulsory" tend to have close research or pay much attention to that online course, and even have good preparation for taking that course. In contrast, 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 easily to pass the exam and get into the next stage without caring 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 for other goals of working or earnings 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 a half of 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 interests in this online learning, or they did not pay much attention to regulations or marks. Furthermore, learners are put in the mixed classess of diffrent English levels of excellent, pretty good, average, less able or limited. This lead 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 course and due to different personal background 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

(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)

| <u>Questions</u> | <u>Answers</u> |
|---|--|
| 1 What specific factor influences your online exercise doing process? <i>(selecting more than one option and total responses of 30 participants is 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 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: 26 person (86.6%) Carrer support: 12 persons (40%) Strong passion: 7 persons (23.33%) Competitive spirit: 5 persons (16.66%) Other: 3% |
| 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 in online English learning? <i>(only one option)</i> | Interested in Online Exercises (getting knowlege): 5 persons (16.66.%) Less interested but necessary for acadamic learing 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 confernces): 18 persons (60%) Discussion board: 21 persons (70%) |

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 traditional learning style because their learning process almost depends on the teacher -“Teacher Center”. This means that teacher plays an important roles in numerous activities such as giving explanations of difficult things, raising questions to learners for further checking their understading, respoding learners’s 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.

Secondy, participants are believed to have willpower shortage because learners themself 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 techers’ explanation. Learners are evaluated that they do not have strong passion of English learning because of lacking competitive spirit. Some of learners have no self -motivations when their online learning mainly supports for satisfying their work or meeting requirements of academic learning instead of enjoying online English coure for obtaining knowledge and getting improvement.

Thirdly, refering to learning methods, most learners have 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 of learners enjoy studying from the teachers. However, some of them are quite active in their learning when enjoying to take part in classroom activities and more than a 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 in online English learning. Whenever learners express their different perceptions in one learning systems, this leads to different barriers in online English learning. These barriers are not beyon the abilities of deeply taking in knowledge, actively participating in class room 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, easily to get in touch with lessons in an autonomous way, need not waiting for teachers’ insructions, naturally raising questions for further information, and so on. Similarly, learners having good learning mehods, easily memorize what have 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 learnt 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 in 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 the academic success. Conversely, negative habits of study not only retard school progress but develop frustration, destroy initiative and have 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 the a strong weapon for the learners to excel in life through obtaining the 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, Taros et.al (2015) at Kenyan public university admitted that “the benefits and opportunities presented by e-learning far outweigh the challenges” (Taros, Gichoya, & Muumbo, 2015). Moreover, the learning style for the web-based learning class (Zemsky, Massy, & why) 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 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 the 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 lecture 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 in 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 institution need to be in charge of these duties also■

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