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EFL students' readiness to have online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic among undergraduate students

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the readiness levels of EFL students of the even semester of the English Education Study Program of Sultan Agung Islamic University to have online learning. This research was a descriptive study with a quantitative approach. The method used was a survey method. The data were collected through a closed-ended questionnaire. Ninety-seven English Education Study Program students in the academic year 2021/2022 participated in this research. It was found that computer and internet literacy had a mean of 25.53, which was moderate. While self-directed learning was at a low level with a mean of 24.74, and motivation of learning was also at a low level with a mean of 24.41. It means that the students could use computers, laptops, and smartphones to complete course assessment tasks and facilities available on campus. It reported that students could not manage difficulty to present high performance on online learning to work independently. Besides computer and internet literacy and self-directed learning, motivation to learn was another factor that affected students' readiness. It found that during Covid-19, many students did not have high motivation to learn.

Keywords: Covid-19; online learning; pandemic era; students' readiness

INTRODUCTION

For the first time, Covid-19 was discovered in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, as an infectious disease caused by the new coronavirus. The virus was spread by direct contact with an infected individual's respiratory droplets and through interaction with a virus-affected person. World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 as a global pandemic faced by people worldwide on March 11, 2020 (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020). In many areas of the world, the spread of the pandemic was the major cause of morbidity. This was the situation that the world had to face in order to execute various policies, especially in Indonesia. This virus has changed the entire order of life, including the world of

education. This phenomenon affected the education system regarding curriculum, methods, lecturer roles, student positions, and assessment. Many students experienced learning fatigue (Ebner & Greenberg, 2020; Hartono et al., 2023) and low attendance and engagement (Hollister et al., 2022; Ubu et al., 2021).

Online learning is a type of remote learning that combines electronics and internet-based learning technology or ICT (Efriana, 2021). The conceptual definition of online learning is a teaching method in which the students complete their education from anywhere but do not necessarily physically attend the classroom (Allam et al., 2020). In other words, students learn, study, and complete their classes online rather than attending a physical class such as a classroom, library, or any other physical class. Online learning requires an internet connection. The lecturer and students learn simultaneously but in a variety of places. Different platforms and apps, such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Zoom, Google Meet, and Google Classroom, are available. The main computer or smartphone connected to the Internet network is needed to support this online learning.

Online learning in Indonesia has become a new issue in this pandemic era. This online learning system's concerns and challenges include: first, instability of the Internet network was identified as a hurdle for both lecturer and students. It would be challenging for those who live in rural areas to connect to the internet. Second, there is no internet quota. It costs much money, and not all students can buy it. As a result, they cannot join the class on time. Third, lecturers need to gain technological knowledge or skills on technological illiteracy. Fourth, personal attention was a significant challenge in online learning. Students wanted to interact directly, but it took much work to do. Fifth, not all lecturers and students could swiftly operate the online learning system, including creating digital lecture materials. Based on the above, it is clear that online learning is a different approach to the learning process for EFL students during the Covid-19 pandemic. Even though it poses several issues for lecturers and students, all parties must be ready to adopt it.

Online learning influenced undergraduate students in the English Education Study Program to continue learning activities using online learning methods. Students began their learning activities from home without physical and social engagement with the lecturer and classmates to complete course assessments and predicted destruction might influence academic achievement. Some difficulties are likely to occur while using online learning during the pandemic outbreak. By using online learning, students are required to have a good internet connection, functional hardware, and a high level of readiness. To complete online learning and teaching, students need computers and internet literacy, self-directed learning, and motivation to study (Hung et al., 2010).

This study aims to analyze the level of computer and internet literacy, self-directed learning, and learning motivation among undergraduate students to provide a view of student online learning readiness for the English Education Study Program at Sultan Agung Islamic University.

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Learning Readiness in an Online Learning Context

Students' readiness for online learning context is essential for a good learning process and educational achievement (Dangol & Shrestha, 2019). The readiness of online learning is critical in influencing student engagement and the quality of the teaching and learning process. When students are physically, cognitively, and emotionally ready to learn, they will study more effectively and satisfactorily. However, when the students are not ready to study, their efforts will be worthless. As a result, they will not improve. A lack of learning readiness is a significant problem in achieving effective education.

According to Hung et al. (2010), three factors contribute to a student's readiness to learn online: computer and internet literacy, self-directed learning, and motivation to learn. An internet connection and basic computer skills are required for students to engage in online learning. These abilities include utilizing a computer, software, programs, and online learning tools at an equivalent level. The computer and internet literacy skills align with the student online learning readiness factor. Furthermore, a student who lacks self-discipline, which refers to self-directed learning, affects readiness level because of the environmental interruption and massive home environment, and a lower level of motivation affects academic performance. The students must be strongly motivated to achieve higher academic achievement. The success or failure of online learning is much affected by students' motivation.

Computer and internet literacy

During a pandemic outbreak, online learning has become helpful in the educational sector. Online learning readiness is vital for the success of online learning as a platform for learning. Computer and Internet Literacy (CIL) has played a critical role in increasing educational quality since the dawn of the information era. Understanding student online learning readiness, such as computer and internet access, can help students succeed in online learning (Rasouli et al., 2016). Computer and internet literacy assessment is required for successful implementation in online learning.

The level of computer and internet literacy includes that students can upload and download documents, use a computer, laptop, or smartphone for searching materials through an internet browser, and possess the capability to use applications and software for online learning. High-level CIL must complement students' readiness to use online learning technology. Although most students recognize online learning as a cutting-edge learning platform, they need more basic computer skills to utilize the e-learning platform effectively.

Self-directed learning

Self-directed learning promotes student engagement in goal setting, decision making, online learning reading, assignment completion, and learning accomplishment assessment. According to Geng and Law (2019), a self-directed student will also use the internet to find knowledge or other resources. Self-directed learners frequently engage more actively in class.

The self-goal item is measured in this study, which extends to the SDL dimension. Successful students must not only be able to manage their learning activities but also understand how and what to attain their learning goals in

order to achieve success (Allam et al., 2020). To sum up, during the pandemic outbreak, students may have difficulty to adapt with this new regulation. They must work actively and independently, completing the assessment with little or no contact with the lecturer and friends. It will affect the final result of the study.

Motivation of learning

According to Widjaja and Chen (2017), motives and incentives for students to attend learning activities and complete tasks are to reach higher academic performance. According to Oqvist and Malmström (2016), guidance, adequate choice, modeling, reinforcement, and interest creation are common ways of increasing students' motivation for learning. Students' motivation determines whether online learning succeeds or fails. The lecturer must explain how to adapt to online learning classes and promote student participation and involvement. As a result, lecturers and students experience fear and panic about adapting to this new regulation. Being lecturers, they have to face multiple issues in conducting online learning, such as less experience in developing applications in online learning and limited assessment methods to measure the online learning outcome. Besides students, they have to face technical issues concerning devices, internet access, and the ability to use computers. Computer and internet literacy, self-directed learning, and learning motivation are all factors that contribute to readiness.

METHOD

Design and participants

A research design is a study's core structure or approach that guides data collection and analysis. This research design used a quantitative descriptive method to identify research questions and formulate hypotheses. Descriptive research includes the following characteristics: it is contemporary and describes only one variable or numerous variables, but each is detailed individually (Arikunto, 2010). The participants of this study were 76 students consisting of fourth- and sixth-semester students of the English Education Study Program of Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang in the Academic Year 2021/2022.

Instrument

A research instrument is a tool for measuring natural and social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2010). The study used a closed-ended questionnaire as the instrument for collecting data. A closed questionnaire in which the answers are already provided, and the respondent only needs to choose (Cohen et al., 2007). The closed questionnaire employed a rating scale questionnaire, in which the researcher utilized a Likert scale to obtain information from respondents in the form of 5-point agreement from strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

The present researchers distributed the questionnaires to students in both English and Indonesian, making it easier for students to complete surveys and avoid misinterpretation of the questions' content. In light of the pandemic crisis, seventy-six students became participants and filled out the questionnaire via Google Form. The questionnaires were about computer and internet literacy, self-directed learning, and motivation for learning.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**Instrument validity and reliability test**

Before the data collection, the adapted instruments were tested using a product-moment correlation coefficient to ensure the instrument's reliability and validity. The result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Item Total Validity

Code	R_value	R_table	Criteria
CIL1	0.482	0.433	Valid
CIL2	0.625	0.433	Valid
CIL3	0.611	0.433	Valid
CIL4	0.594	0.433	Valid
CIL5	0.528	0.433	Valid
CIL6	0.477	0.433	Valid
CIL7	0.561	0.433	Valid
SDL1	0.684	0.433	Valid
SDL2	0.600	0.433	Valid
SDL3	0.522	0.433	Valid
SDL4	0.471	0.433	Valid
SDL5	0.448	0.433	Valid
SDL6	0.623	0.433	Valid
SDL7	0.455	0.433	Valid
MOL1	0.708	0.433	Valid
MOL2	0.673	0.433	Valid
MOL3	0.684	0.433	Valid
MOL4	0.526	0.433	Valid
MOL5	0.521	0.433	Valid
MOL6	0.787	0.433	Valid
MOL7	0.621	0.433	Valid

Twenty-one students filled out twenty-one questionnaires. This validity test was done by calculating the correlation between the r value from the respondent's answer and the r table. The r table for $n = 21$ is 0.433 at the level significance of 5%. An item is valid if the r value is higher than the r specified in the r table at the level significance of 5%.

Table 1 shows that the r-value is higher than the r-table at the level of significance 5%. Therefore, the questionnaire to measure students' readiness in this study is valid.

Table 2. Reliability of the Questionnaire

N of items	Cronbach Alpha	Criteria
21	0.899	Reliable

The result shows that the coefficient reliability of the instrument is 0.899. It signifies that the Alpha Cronbach for the instrument is higher than 0.70.

Cronbach Alpha's reliability coefficient for all three factors is more than 0.70, indicating that the instruments have good consistency (Hair et al., 2010).

Computer and internet literacy

This part discusses computer internet literacy and whether students could use applications and software for online learning. Computer internet literacy influences the quality of how they learn and the result of their study during online learning. The results of descriptive statistics on EFL students' readiness toward Computer Internet Literacy are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. EFL Students' Readiness for Computer Internet Literacy

Aspect	N	SUM	SD	Mean	Category
Computer Internet Literacy	76	1940	3.276	25.53	Moderate
Valid N (List Wise)	76				

From the data above, the students' computer internet literacy level was moderate, with a mean of 25.53. Most students can use computers, search for information from the internet, and use any applications or software for online learning using the most advanced technology. It implies that mastery of technology was not the primary issue in online learning. According to the mean score in the table above, it can be determined that students' computer internet literacy was moderate.

Not surprisingly, the students could use computers or laptops and use applications or software that support their learning process, such as Google, Google Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, Kahoot, and SIM Unissula (the university information system for online learning). Students' ability to use technology is essential in today's Industrial Revolution era to fulfill the challenges. 4.0. Students were required to adapt fast to the new literacy toward digitalization. The talents of the twenty-first century were also seen as their reaction to their future selves to compete in the real universe (Keis et al., 2017). As a result, students must have strong computer and internet literacy skills to complete course assessment tasks and use campus services while studying.

EFL students' readiness for Self-Directed Learning (SDL)

This part discusses how self-directed learning influences readiness. Self-directed learning affects academic performance. The results of descriptive statistics on EFL students' readiness toward self-directed learning are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. EFL Students' Readiness for Self-Directed Learning

Aspect	N	Sum	SD	Mean	Category
Self-Directed Learning	76	1804	3.508	23.74	low
Valid N (List Wise)	76				

From the data above, the level of students' self-directed learning was low, with a mean of 23.74. It means that students did not have good responsibility for their education. As a result, not all students chose what they wanted to learn, established objectives, identified a strategy for achieving their goals, and assessed their accomplishments. According to the mean score in the table

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mentioned, it can be stated that students' self-directed learning is at a low level. The aspect of self-directed learning to measure students' readiness was to test the level of motivational learning, external learning, and internal learning. It was found that the readiness for computer and internet literacy is low, with a mean score of 23.74. Online learning allows students and the lecturer to interact through online platforms. According to Adams et al. (2018), a high level of self-directed learning can make students carry out their study plans, manage time well, and have high expectations to achieve high academic performance.

EFL students' readiness for Motivation of Learning (MOL)

This part examines learning motivation. Motivation is important in teaching and learning. Students' motivation determines the success of learning. Motivation drives students to achieve their learning goals. For teachers and lecturers, encouraging students to study is a critical component of good teaching. The results of descriptive statistics on EFL students' readiness toward Computer Internet Literacy are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5. EFL Students' Readiness for Motivation of Learning

Aspect	N	Sum	SD	Mean	category
Motivation of Learning	76	1855	3.848	24.41	ow
Valid N (List Wise)	76				

According to the data shown above, the level of motivation for learning was also low, with a mean of 24.41. It was discovered that not all students were motivated to learn during the Covid-19 outbreak due to several reasons, such as family lives, environment, or technological facilities. Learning motivation is a major factor for students to keep attention and fulfill their goals in learning. Students who lack the enthusiasm to learn will not have a high level of readiness for online learning. According to the mean score in the table mentioned, it can be stated that students' motivation for learning was moderate.

Many online learning studies have shown that learning motivation is vital for students to keep attention to achieve strong academic performance due to many hurdles such as family, environmental, and technology damage, especially during online learning. Motivation can influence students' attitudes and perceptions of their ability to study (Allam et al., 2020). Online learning presents a new mode of interactive learning while exposing students to possible challenges linked with low levels of learning motivation that impair online learning readiness. High motivation levels will boost tenacity, cognitive processes, and overall performance.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of readiness of EFL students. Data were collected by a twenty-one-item questionnaire that measured three factors of readiness: computer and internet literacy, self-directed learning, and learning motivation. Based on the data analysis and discussion in the preceding chapter, it is concluded that students' readiness for online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic for computer and internet literacy was at a moderate level, with a mean score of 25.53. Self-directed learning and motivation of learning were also at a low level, with a mean of 23.74 and 24.41,

respectively. They suggest that the students could complete course assessment assignments and access campus resources using a computer, laptop, and smartphone. However, they were unable to deal with adversity. It was reported that students were unable to manage the difficulties in working autonomously. Aside from computer and internet literacy and self-directed learning, another factor influencing students' readiness was learning motivation. During Covid-19, it was discovered that students lacked enthusiasm to learn. Online learning introduces a new way of interactive learning while also exposing students to possible concerns, such as poor learning motivation, that impair online learning readiness.

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