

# ONLINE ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: LESSONS FROM CHINESE COLLEGE STUDENTS

**Wei Han**

Department of Early Childhood Education, International College, Krirk University  
3 Ram Inthra, Anusawari, Bang Khen, Bangkok 10220, Thailand

**E-mail address: [dodohan.cu@gmail.com](mailto:dodohan.cu@gmail.com)**

**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-1089-5194>**

**Aisah Apridayani**

English Department, School of Education and Liberal Arts, Walailak University,  
222 Thasala, Nakhon Si Thammarat 80160, Thailand

**E-mail address: [apridayani.edu@gmail.com](mailto:apridayani.edu@gmail.com)**

**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6794-9590>**

**Yuling Tang**

Department of Arts, International College, Krirk University  
3 Ram Inthra, Anusawari, Bang Khen, Bangkok 10220, Thailand

**E-mail address: [yuling.t61@gmail.com](mailto:yuling.t61@gmail.com)**

**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-6346-9796>**

**Mukrim Mukrim**

Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tadulako University  
KM 9 Sukarno Hatta, Palu, Sulawesi Tengah 94148, Indonesia

**E-mail address: [mukrim.tamrin@gmail.com](mailto:mukrim.tamrin@gmail.com)**

**ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7763-0201>**

## ABSTRACT

**Aim.** The current study aims to investigate Chinese students' perceptions and experiences with online English learning, as well as their recommendations for future online English courses.

**Methods.** This study included 383 Chinese college students and was conducted using a mixed-methods, sequential explanatory research design. A survey questionnaire

and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from the students. The collected data was analyzed both statistically and thematically.

**Results.** The findings provided useful insights into the strengths and areas for improvement in current online English learning practices. Despite widespread comfort and satisfaction with online learning platforms, concerns about the digital divide, engagement, interactivity, and assessment integrity call for a more nuanced approach to online course design and delivery.

**Conclusion.** Students highlighted several recommendations for future online English learning, including a desire for more interactive sessions, better management of student needs, diversification of learning activities, emotional support and motivation, and enhancing online exam integrity.

**Cognitive value.** This study offers some pedagogical implications for infrastructure, the learning environment, teaching methods, and approaches to online assessments. It also advocates for a rethinking of how online courses are designed and taught to meet the changing needs of students in the digital age.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Chinese students, English course, online learning, recommendations

## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has had many different effects on our communities. One of these consequences is the closure of educational facilities. Language teachers and students were required to participate in online classes. While technology had steadily advanced in language education, it was primarily used in highly resourced settings. However, the pandemic forced thousands of language teachers and students to rely on the internet as their primary instructional platform, often without adequate preparation. Many individuals faced significant obstacles due to a lack of local infrastructure and resources, such as limited internet access (Tao & Gao, 2022).

Given the unforeseen consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the anticipated increase in demand for online learning is likely to continue its upward trajectory in the coming years. This shift has the potential to fundamentally alter the educational landscape, moving away from traditional classroom settings towards a more digital-centric approach to learning (Mhlanga et al., 2022). In light of online learning's burgeoning potential, it becomes increasingly important to delve deeply into understanding students' perspectives, their firsthand experiences, and their valuable suggestions for the enhancement and future development of online education. While several research initiatives have investigated various issues in online learning environments during the pandemic (Belamghari, 2022; Mok et al., 2021; Selvanathan, 2023), students' specific experiences with teaching and learning online, as well as their expectations, vary across contexts (Sum & Oancea, 2022).

Regarding language learning, limitations can hinder the availability of genuine opportunities for authentic communication (Harsch et al., 2021). Moreover, employing a universal approach to learning can lead to issues that may impede participation and classroom engagement (Hollister et al., 2022; Salas-Pilco et al., 2022). Course design and planning can pose significant challenges, especially for instructors who lack expertise in delivering online classes. Additional challenges may arise in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' language acquisition due to their limited exposure to English usage and practice beyond the classroom setting (Apridayani et al., 2023). Hence, the present study aims to examine the perceptions and experiences of Chinese students regarding online English learning, along with their recommendations for future online English courses. The findings could be essential to evaluating and improving online learning systems, ensuring that they are adaptable and responsive to the diverse needs and aspirations of students around the world. The research questions that guided this study are:

- How do Chinese college students perceive and experience online English learning?
- What recommendations do Chinese college students have for forthcoming online English courses?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Online Teaching and Learning

In response to the challenges posed by the pandemic and the consequent shutdown of physical classrooms, the pivot to online education has emerged as a viable and dynamic alternative. Leveraging a variety of digital platforms—ranging from computers and laptops to tablets and smartphones—all equipped with internet connectivity has facilitated both synchronous and asynchronous learning paradigms. This digital shift offers students unparalleled flexibility to engage with their coursework and instructors from virtually anywhere, fostering an environment of continuous learning beyond traditional classroom boundaries (Singh & Thurman, 2019). Online learning can be categorized into two distinct formats: synchronous and asynchronous, which differ primarily in the timing of interactions between teachers and students (Fabrizz et al., 2021; Hamilton & Cherniavsky, 2013). Synchronous learning allows for real-time communication during classes via videoconferences or chatrooms, enabling immediate feedback and interaction. Conversely, asynchronous learning extends the flexibility for interactions through forums, thread discussions, and emails, accommodating schedules by allowing participation at any convenient time before or after the designated class sessions.

The swift transition from traditional classroom settings to online education posed significant challenges for both teachers and students, leaving many struggling to adapt.

The efficacy of teachers in leveraging digital technology to enrich students' learning experiences is heavily influenced by their proficiency, familiarity, and attitude towards these digital tools (Kaqinari, 2023). Despite the potential of digital technology to enhance educational offerings, research consistently shows that many university teachers have yet to fully embrace these tools, often defaulting to basic digital presentations and demonstrating a lack of essential digital competencies (Englund et al., 2017; Schneckenberg, 2009). Furthermore, it is crucial to recognize that successful online learning is not solely the responsibility of teachers. Students, too, must possess foundational digital skills. These include the abilities to efficiently navigate, analyze, and produce digital content, along with mastering online communication and collaboration (Carretero et al., 2017). This dual need emphasizes the importance of comprehensive digital literacy as a cornerstone for maximizing the opportunities that online learning environments offer.

## Online English Classes

The COVID-19 pandemic has catapulted online learning into the spotlight, sparking an unprecedented wave of research exploring its multifaceted impacts and potential. Studies have delved into perspectives ranging from students (Chakraborty et al., 2021; Maqableh & Alia, 2021; Stevanović et al., 2021) to both teachers and learners (Lei & So, 2021), analyzing challenges and opportunities (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2023; Ferri et al., 2020), and investigating factors such as motivation, self-efficacy (Aguilera-Hermida, 2020; Aguilera-Hermida et al., 2021; Jan, 2015), readiness for online learning, course satisfaction, and perceptions (Hung et al., 2010; Wei & Chou, 2020). Additionally, some studies examined the effectiveness of various online platforms like Zoom and Google Meet (Wiyono et al., 2021), along with online learning across different educational levels (Shin & Hickey, 2021; Sofianidis et al., 2021; Putri et al., 2020; Yates et al., 2020).

Despite the pandemic sparking a wealth of research into online learning, there is a significant void regarding the nuanced experiences of language learners, particularly among EFL students' English learning. For instance, Maria-Anca Maican and Elena Cocorada's (2021) investigation into Romanian university students' attitudes towards online foreign language learning revealed mixed feelings. Students reported a range of emotions, from enthusiasm to apprehension, with particular emphasis on issues such as reduced interactions and concerns about stalled language proficiency. The physical and psychological toll, such as stress, concentration problems, and headaches, exacerbated the learners' difficulties, highlighting the complex emotional landscape of online language learning.

Parallel findings emerged from Xiuyuan Zhang and Gang Cui's (2010) exploration of the attitudes of Chinese undergraduates towards online English learning, which underscored the difficulties posed by ineffective instruction and inadequate feedback.

The study illuminated the heightened anxiety and challenges faced by first-year students, contrasting them with those more accustomed to online learning environments. Similarly, Antonius Setyawan Nur Agung et al.'s (2020) study with English Language Education students in Indonesia highlighted infrastructural hurdles impacting internet connectivity and affecting engagement, despite satisfaction with lecturer feedback.

Additionally, Esra Mese and Çiğdem Sevilen (2021) conducted a study on Turkish university students' perceptions of online English learning, which revealed a general dissatisfaction stemming from the lack of socialization and the struggle for self-discipline. This study further identified environmental factors and course organization as detrimental to student motivation. In contrast, Iman Oraif and Tariq Elyas (2021) indicated Saudi Arabian students' engagement with online English classes in terms of classroom participation, interaction with instructors and peers, skill practice, emotional involvement with the class material, and performance in class. Furthermore, the study discovered a positive relationship between student satisfaction and engagement. Hatice Okyar's (2023) recent study revealed that Turkish students exhibited predominantly unfavourable attitudes towards online English education due to various challenges they encountered. These challenges encompassed technical difficulties, health and concentration issues, limited opportunities for interaction and speaking practice in the target language, feelings of anxiety and isolation, diminished motivation, and inadequate catering to diverse learning styles.

These diverse investigations converge on a crucial point: language learning, inherently reliant on interaction and practice, demands a tailored approach in online settings. Understanding and addressing the specific experiences, insights, and needs of language learners are paramount. Such dedicated focus not only promises to elevate the quality of online language education but also ensures its alignment with the practical realities and expectations of learners navigating a world reshaped by the pandemic. This comprehensive and empathetic approach is not just beneficial but essential for fostering engaging, effective, and enriching online language learning experiences.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods, sequential explanatory research design. According to John W. Creswell and Vicky L. Plano Clark (2007), a sequential explanatory design is a rigorous research methodology that combines quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis in a single research cycle. The strength of this approach is its ability to increase the interpretive depth of quantitative findings by incorporating qualitative insights, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis of the subject (Ivanova et al., 2006).

## Participants

The participants in this study were 383 Chinese students at Hefei Technical College, consisting of first-year students (84%) and third-year students (4.9%). Most students have attended online English classes for eight months by using their cell phones (79%), tablets (4.18%), and laptops (16.82%).

## Research Instruments

### *A Survey Questionnaire*

The researchers designed a survey questionnaire to investigate Chinese students' perceptions and experiences with online English teaching and learning. It included 16 items ranked on a five-point Likert scale: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). Students were questioned about their perceptions toward the learning environment, online assessment, online course design, satisfaction, and engagement. In addition, one open-ended question asked students to make suggestions for future online English classes. To ensure the questionnaire's validity, an IOC (Item Objective Congruence) was tested, and the result was 1.0, indicating that no items needed to be revised. The questionnaire was then piloted, and the reliability of the questionnaire items was evaluated. The results showed high Cronbach's alpha coefficients for specific and overall components, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Cronbach's alpha coefficients*

Components	<i>N</i> of items	Cronbach's alpha ( <i>a</i> )
Learning environment	4	.96
Online assessment	3	.97
Online course design	4	.99
Satisfaction	3	.98
Engagement	2	.99
Overall	16	.99

Source. Own research.

### *Semi-Structured Interviews*

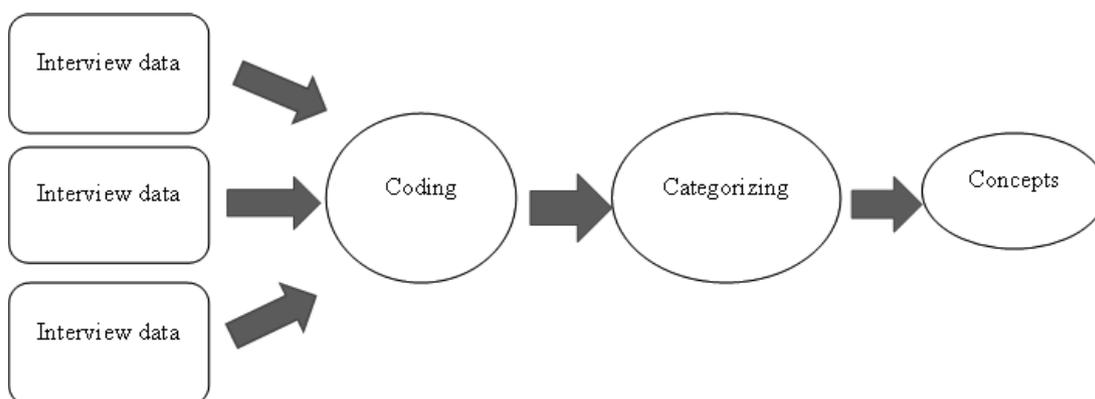
Semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data. Four of the total number of participants agreed to participate in the online interviews. Students were asked to share their experiences and challenges in online English classes. It took 30 minutes to interview each participant. They agreed that their responses during interviews would be noted and recorded.

## Data Analysis

The analysis of the students' responses to the Likert-scale questionnaire was conducted using descriptive statistics, specifically mean and standard deviation, through the SPSS software. Given that the scope of the study was confined to descriptive analysis, the survey data, encompassing various sub-scales, was treated uniformly without distinguishing between independent and dependent variables. Moreover, the information obtained from an open-ended question and subsequent interviews was examined using Marilyn Lichtman's (2010) thematic concept of the three Cs, as illustrated in Figure 1. This approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the themes emerging from qualitative data, aligning them with the quantitative findings to enrich the overall analysis.

**Figure 1**

*Three Cs of Data Analysis*



Source. Own research, adapted from Lichtman (2010).

## RESULTS

### Chinese Students' Perceptions and Experiences with Online English Learning

#### *Learning Environment*

The descriptive statistics analyses, as shown in Table 2, indicated that most students expressed a high level of comfort ( $M=3.64$ ,  $SD=.72$ ) and happiness ( $M=3.86$ ,  $SD=.83$ ) with the online learning environment. Nevertheless, they opted to remain neutral in their stance on internet access ( $M=3.21$ ,  $SD=.98$ ) and the efficacy of online learning ( $M=3.15$ ,  $SD=.97$ ).

**Table 2***Students' Perceptions on Learning Environment*

*The scale range: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5)*

<b>Learning Environment Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I feel comfortable learning English on a computer in an online learning environment.	3.64	0.72
I can easily access the internet as needed for your studies.	3.21	0.98
The online learning environment is good.	3.15	0.97
I feel happy when I attend an online English class.	3.56	0.83
Overall	3.39	0.87

*Source.* Own research.

**Online Assessment**

As presented in Table 3, students preferred to be neutral to all questions related to online assessment regarding the methods ( $M=3.45$ ,  $SD=.72$ ), fairness ( $M=3.15$ ,  $SD=.89$ ), and test variations ( $M=3.33$ ,  $SD=1.27$ ).

**Table 3***Students' Perceptions on Online Assessment*

*The scale range: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5)*

<b>Online Assessment Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
This online course uses reasonable and useful assessment methods.	3.45	0.72
The online assessment is fair to me.	3.15	0.89
The online course uses a variety of assessments to evaluate my English learning.	3.33	1.27
Overall	3.31	0.94

*Source.* Own research.

**Online Class Design**

In terms of class design, as described in Table 4, students agreed that online lessons were well-prepared and organized ( $M=4.54$ ,  $SD=.64$ ). Nevertheless, they selected a neutral stance regarding other elements, such as the online course's approachability ( $M=3.01$ ,  $SD=.92$ ), discussion activities ( $M=2.89$ ,  $SD=.87$ ), and diverse instructional materials and methods designed to facilitate student learning ( $M=2.40$ ,  $SD=.53$ ).

**Table 4***Students' Perceptions on Online Class Design*

*The scale range: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5)*

<b>Online class design items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
This online course is well-prepared and organized.	4.54	0.64
This online course opens to questions and discussion.	2.89	0.87
This online course is approachable and willing to help me.	3.01	0.92
The online course uses a variety of methods and instructional materials to enhance student learning.	2.40	0.53
Overall	3.25	0.74

*Source.* Own research.

**Satisfaction**

As presented in Table 5, students also preferred to remain neutral regarding their satisfaction with online English learning ( $M=3.01$ ,  $SD=.77$ ), its interest and meaningfulness ( $M=3.23$ ,  $SD=.74$ ), and their knowledge development ( $M=3.21$ ,  $SD=.32$ ).

**Table 5***Students' Satisfaction*

*The scale range: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5)*

<b>Students' Satisfaction Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I find online learning is interesting and meaningful.	3.23	0.74
I am satisfied with using online English learning.	3.01	0.77
Online learning helps me to develop knowledge of computers and the internet.	3.21	0.32
Overall	3.17	0.64

*Source.* Own research.

**Student Engagement.** Moreover, as illustrated in Table 6, students chose neutral in terms of their engagement and learning management during online learning.

**Table 6***Students' Engagement*

*The scale range: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5)*

<b>Students' Engagement Items</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I am fully engaged in online English class.	3.17	0.76
I can manage my study time effectively and easily complete assignments on time.	3.13	1.21
Overall	3.15	0.98

*Source.* Own research.

Furthermore, students' responses to the interviews were analyzed thematically. Students were designated with the letter S, followed by a numerical sequence, such as S1, S2, and so forth. Thematic analysis of the student responses about their experiences with online English learning revealed several core themes.

### ***Initial Adaptation and Comfort Levels***

Students expressed varied initial reactions to the shift towards online learning. While one student felt worried and puzzled due to the lack of previous online learning experience, another started with excitement. The novelty and unfamiliarity of the online learning environment posed initial challenges for some, impacting their ability to follow along with the curriculum and participate fully in the learning process. "At first, I was concerned about online English teaching and learning. I've never had that kind of learning experience. At the time, I was totally confused and couldn't follow the teacher" (S1). "Initially, I was enthusiastic about taking part in the English class" (S2).

### ***Technical Challenges and Access Issues***

One prominent theme that arose was the challenge of dealing with technical difficulties and ensuring consistent access to secure internet connectivity. These challenges hindered students' capacity to participate effectively in classroom activities. "I couldn't hear my teacher's voice well because I lived in a remote village far from the city centre. So, I was easily distracted" (S2).

### ***Engagement and Motivation***

Students' engagement and motivation levels fluctuated, influenced by the format of the online classes and personal discipline. The ease of being absent or late due to poor time management was noted, as well as a desire for more meaningful activities to boost motivation and engagement.

When I first started online learning, I could not prevent myself from being late for class; sometimes I even chose to be absent. I know it's not good for me, but I have terrible time management. Subsequently, the teacher made appropriate adjustments to the course's difficulty level and speed. Our interest in learning English online grew steadily. (S3)

### ***Assessment and Integrity***

The theme of assessment integrity and the pressure of online exams emerged. Concerns about the fairness and effectiveness of online exams were discussed, including issues with time constraints and the potential for dishonesty. "Online exams, in my opinion, put a lot of pressure on students' minds due to time constraints. Furthermore, the teacher was unable to fully monitor students' use of the internet during exams" (S4).

### ***Learning Outcomes***

The students were concerned about the quality and quantity of knowledge gained compared to traditional face-to-face classes. "In an online class, I am not sure I can get a similar quantity of knowledge as in a usual face-to-face class" (S2, S4).

Notwithstanding the challenges, students expressed gratitude and acknowledged the advantages of online learning.

### ***Teacher Support***

The support and adaptability of teachers played a crucial role in students' online learning experiences. Personalized feedback and innovative teaching methods, including the use of recorded videos, were appreciated and seen as beneficial to the learning process. "I sent an email to my English teacher to express my thoughts. Fortunately, she provided me with many tips and directions for online learning" (S1). "The teacher would record a video explaining our online assignment and send it to us" (S3).

### ***Development of 21st-Century Skills***

Students acknowledged the acquisition of twenty-first-century skills, particularly in IT, as a significant benefit of online English learning. "Throughout the period of online learning, I not only acquired proficiency in the English language but also developed my IT skills, which are essential in the modern era. Now I can effectively utilize my laptop" (S1, S4).

### ***Improved Access to Resources and Flexibility***

The flexibility of online learning and access to a wide range of resources were seen as significant advantages. “The abundant resources available on the internet enhance the learning experience by providing vivid and colourful content” (S3).

## **Chinese Students’ Recommendations**

The second research inquiry centred on students’ recommendations for forthcoming online English courses. The analysis focused on the suggestions provided by students in response to a single open-ended question on the questionnaire and during interviews. A thematic analysis reveals several significant themes.

### ***Enhanced Interaction and Participation***

Many students expressed a desire for more interactive sessions that go beyond the traditional lecture format. They are looking for opportunities to engage more actively with both their peers and the teacher. For example, student 21 wishes for more discussions and meaningful learning games, indicating a need for interactive and participatory learning activities. In addition, students 3 and 46 both highlight the issue of the teacher dominating the conversation, leaving little room for student participation. Moreover, student 34’s feedback points to a broader issue of insufficient interaction, not only with the teacher but also with peers, suggesting the importance of fostering a community within the online classroom.

### ***Better Management of Student Needs***

Students feel that the management of online classes, particularly regarding attention to individual needs and fostering autonomy, requires improvement. Student 6 mentions the teacher’s lack of focus on all students, indicating a need for more personalized attention. Additionally, students 18, 23, and 78 believe that improved management could help support their autonomy, suggesting that the current approach may be too directive.

### ***Diversification of Learning Activities***

Students are seeking a more diverse and multifaceted learning experience that surpasses conventional teaching methods. This includes a broader range of activities, especially those that can enhance their practical language skills. For instance, Students 91 and 106 both express a need for more exercises focused on listening and speaking skills, rather than just writing and reading. Student 74’s suggestion to include lessons on making presentations in English reflects a desire for skills that are applicable in re-

al-world settings. Furthermore, Student 69's request for more questions to analyze suggests a preference for critical thinking and analytical skills development within the language learning process.

### ***Emotional Support and Motivation***

Students also emphasized the significance of emotional involvement and motivation, which they presently perceive as deficient. Student 88's desire for increased emotional interactions highlights the necessity for teaching approaches that establish personal connections, promote motivation, and foster a sense of belonging within the community.

### ***Enhancing Online Exam Integrity***

The difficulty of monitoring students' activities during online exams is identified as a significant challenge. Student 4 suggests that teachers implement additional guidelines and techniques to better monitor exams.

## **DISCUSSION**

The current study provides valuable insights into Chinese college students' perceptions and experiences with online English learning, combining quantitative and qualitative findings to create a comprehensive picture of the contemporary online learning landscape. Furthermore, it explored students' recommendations for improving future online English courses.

Quantitative data revealed a high level of comfort and happiness among students in the online learning environment, implying that the transition to online platforms may not have been as abrupt as anticipated. This finding contradicts Okyar's (2023) recent study in Turkey, which revealed that students exhibited predominantly unfavourable attitudes towards online English learning and felt anxious during online learning (Zhang & Cui, 2010). However, neutrality toward internet access and the efficacy of online learning showed underlying concerns about the digital divide and the ability of online education to facilitate learning as effectively as traditional methods. During the interview, the students also confirmed their initial adaptation and the technical challenges they faced, including inconsistent internet access and unfamiliarity with online learning platforms. These results support existing research (Agung et al., 2020; Tao & Gao, 2022), highlighting the critical role of technical readiness and support in the success of online learning environments.

Students' concern extends to their perspectives on assessment methods and integrity, indicating an area ripe for further investigation and improvement. In addition, the positive reception of the class design, characterized by well-prepared and organized

online lessons, contrasts sharply with students' neutrality or dissatisfaction regarding the approachability of courses, discussion activities, and the diversity of instructional materials. This dichotomy suggests that while the structural aspects of online learning may be solid, there is a perceived lack of engagement and interactivity that impedes deeper learning and satisfaction. These findings are not in line with Oraif and Elyas (2021), which indicated Saudi Arabian students' engagement with online English classes in terms of classroom participation, interactions, skill practice, emotional involvement with the class material, and performance in class.

Furthermore, the study emphasized the importance of teacher support in online learning, with students valuing personalized feedback and innovative teaching methods. This is consistent with literature advocating for teacher adaptability and the importance of fostering a supportive online community so that students do not feel socially isolated, as Mese and Sevilen (2021) discovered in a study of Turkish university students. Additionally, while students expressed concerns about the quality and quantity of knowledge gained in comparison to traditional face-to-face classes, they recognized the development of 21st-century skills, particularly IT competencies. It reflects a broader educational goal of preparing students for the digital age.

Moreover, this study addresses students' future recommendations for online English learning. Drawing on student feedback, several key areas for improvement emerge. First, the call for increased interaction and participation implies a need to move beyond traditional lecture formats and create a more dynamic and community-oriented online classroom, as also pointed out by Aisah Apridayani & Budy Waluyo (2022). This includes incorporating more meaningful learning games and discussions to increase student engagement and learning outcomes. The demand for better student need management and learning activity diversification reflects a desire for a more personalized, holistic learning experience. Tailoring online education to diverse learning styles and needs, as well as incorporating a broader range of activities to develop practical language skills, has the potential to significantly enrich the learning experience. Further, the emphasis on emotional support and the integrity of online assessments reflects broader concerns about the impersonal nature of the online learning experience as well as the difficulties of maintaining academic honesty. Addressing these concerns through more emotionally engaging teaching methods and improved exam monitoring techniques may reduce feelings of isolation while increasing the perceived fairness and effectiveness of online assessments.

The current study's findings have important pedagogical implications for the design and delivery of online English learning courses. First and foremost, the digital divide continues to be a major concern. Providing consistent and equitable access to online learning resources is critical. To bridge this gap, institutions must invest in infrastructure and provide technical support, ensuring that all students have the tools they need to succeed in online learning. Second, the study emphasizes the value of interactive and engaging course design. While students appreciated the structured lessons, they

perceived a lack of interactivity and engagement, which hampered deeper learning and satisfaction. Teachers should incorporate more interactive elements, such as discussion forums, group projects, and interactive quizzes, to create a more engaging learning environment. This approach not only improves learning outcomes, but it also addresses students' needs for social interaction and community building in the online learning environment.

Thirdly, the role of the teacher in online environments is paramount. The findings highlight the value students place on personalized feedback (Apridayani et al., 2024; Waluyo & Apridayani, 2024) and innovative teaching methods. Teachers must, therefore, be adaptable, incorporating various teaching strategies and tools to cater to diverse learning styles and needs. Professional development opportunities focusing on online teaching competencies can empower teachers to create more responsive and supportive online learning environments. Lastly, the concerns over assessment methods and academic integrity point to the need for innovative approaches to online evaluation. Teachers should explore and implement diverse assessment strategies that not only test knowledge and skills effectively but also uphold academic honesty, possibly through technology-enhanced monitoring and more engaging, interactive forms of assessment.

## CONCLUSION

This study offers a comprehensive overview of students' perceptions and experiences of online English learning, providing valuable insights into the strengths and areas for improvement of current practices. Despite the general comfort and satisfaction with online learning platforms, concerns regarding the digital divide, engagement, interactivity, and assessment integrity suggest the need for a more nuanced approach to online course design and delivery. To enhance the online learning experience, educational institutions and teachers should focus on creating more dynamic, interactive, and community-oriented online classrooms. Incorporating diverse instructional materials, leveraging technology for interactive learning experiences, and providing strong emotional and technical support are crucial steps toward achieving this goal. Additionally, addressing concerns related to assessment integrity and the impersonal nature of online learning through innovative teaching methods and improved monitoring techniques will be essential to maintaining academic standards and student engagement. Ultimately, this study not only highlights the potential of online learning in providing flexible and accessible education but also calls for a re-evaluation of how online courses are designed and taught to meet the evolving needs of students in the digital age. As online education continues to grow, understanding and addressing these challenges will be key to harnessing its full potential for enhancing language learning and preparing students for the global digital workforce.

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