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Perception of vocational school students towards online learning and their TOEIC scores

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A B S T R A C T

This study aimed to know whether there was a correlation between students' perception of online learning and their English achievement in the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). To achieve this objective, the study applied the quantitative method. There were 30 students from the third grade, at a vocational school in the district of Ajibarang, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, Indonesia, who became the sample of the research. To collect the data, this study used survey questionnaires and the student TOEIC scores, which were documented to assess the English proficiency progress over time during their study. Furthermore, the data analysis was conducted by multiple regressions using SPSS version 2. The result showed that 69% of students' responses had a positive view of the online class. However, there was no significant correlation between the students' perception of online learning they attended and their TOEIC score achievement.

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic of COVID-19 has impacts on many sectors, particularly the education field. The phenomena call the Indonesian ministry of education and culture for changing temporarily the education policies which are conventional to modern (online) learning. Online learning gives benefits to both students and teachers. O'Donoghue and Worton (2005) showed that the online learning method offers students not having to attend class and help them to develop self-reliance while the teachers will indirectly affect the teaching style and give opportunities to assess and evaluate the learning progress of each student more efficiently. The use of social networking tools accommodates feedback between instructors and students, and it makes them communicate more efficiently and effectively (Cakrawati, 2017). Moreover, online learning has required both teacher and student to utilize various technologies, such as WhatsApp, Google Classroom, YouTube, Zoom, and other social media. By using those platforms, the teacher is expected to possibly optimize the learning materials delivery and the students capacity as well. According to Milman (2015), the development of infor

mation technology can enhance performance and allow various activities to be executed quickly, precisely, and accurately, and thus will increase productivity. In addition, the use of available technologies around us when offset by discussion and guidance will become a platform for developing high-level thinking skills (Garraway Lashley, 2014). However, the problem is that the internet connection becomes the main issue of online learning.

Indeed, Dockstader (2008) stated that technological innovation has been going well with the growth of English and changing the way students communicate. Anggraini (2021) also claimed that using technology has significantly altered English teaching techniques. Whereas English learning is a difficult second language teaching process, various factors contributed and combine together to achieve the success of the undertaking (Gilakjani: 2014) Thus, the teacher should provide enjoyable learning and classroom atmosphere for the students. Moreover, it creates association and collaboration among course participants (Kris, 2008). Furthermore, these actions will accomplish education, particularly students' growth in

understanding the material during the online learning process. Hartley (2001) argued that E-Learning is a type of teaching and learning that allow teaching materials to be delivered to students using the internet, internet, or other computer network media. E-learning is an asynchronous learning activity through computer electronic devices to obtain learning materials that suit their needs, meaning learning activities that can be done anytime and anywhere. Suherdi (2012) added that the relevant knowledge is expected to establish students' skills for a competitive career and good life, skills for lifelong learning and creative innovation, and skills for literacy, information, media, and technology. According to Mu'in & Amelia (2018), as cited in Antonius (2020), the students' perception of using e-learning gives positive responses to the assessment, learning outcomes, and evaluation.

English tests are currently one of the benchmarking considerations among academics and workers in the world (Zahruni et al., 2020). Therefore, the implementation of English tests at schools or institutions is an effective strategy to improve the quality of students' English mastery. One type of English tests used in Indonesian vocational schools is the Test of English for International Communication (henceforth abbreviated as TOEIC). TOEIC is a form of English language assessment used to measure the students' English proficiency. Besides, the TOEIC focuses on the field of business where the content of the materials is related to language use (Lougheed, 2000). Thus, the test is appropriate with the aim of vocational school that prepares students to work. Asnawi (2015) described the concept of vocational education that is special education which is organized for students to be ready to work productively and professionally, also able to plan to develop a career in a particular area of expertise. Vocational educations prepare students to enter certain mid-level jobs that match the demands required by the world of work and provide skills to students to develop themselves. Hence, vocational school students have fluctuating scores in the TOEIC test. The TOEIC test is a benchmark for English language skills at vocational schools. The TOEIC test does not only talk about work achievement but also about important abilities in the language (Nurul et al., 2020). Tokunaga (2008) found that most test-takers did not have experience in doing TOEIC before the actual test. Similarly, Tian, as cited in Cohen (2009), reported that most test-takers did not understand the format of the test, and lacked reading and listening skills. In this case, one of vocational schools in the district of Ajibarang, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, Indonesia held the TOEIC test during the pandemic. The program was organized in collaboration with ETS (Educational Testing Service). It aimed to measure the vocational school students' English proficiency. Besides, it was also carried out to assess the students' mastery of English course during online learning.

As mentioned in the work of Wibowo (2013), there was a correlation between students' motivation and learning style and their English achievement. Therefore, this research focused on the correlation between the students' perception of online class they attended and their TOEIC score achievement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Students' Perception

Perception, according to Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary (2008), is (1) an ability to perceive something; (2) a way of seeing or understanding something. Besides, perception is a process of receiving a stimulus to achieve awareness or understanding in describing the surrounding environment (Konent, 2011; Qiong, 2017; and Walgito, 2010, as cited in Anggraini, 2021). In addition, Lamatokan (2018) stated that perception is a person's opinion, sense, or view towards a particular object. Thus, in other words, students' perception is students' ability to view something after receiving a stimulus to achieve awareness or understanding of a particular object. Azwar (2013) stated that a person's response can be positive or negative form. Positive response, action, or attitude shows or maintains, accepts, acknowledges, agrees, and implements the norms that apply where the individual is located. Meanwhile, negative response is a form of response, action, attitude, that show rejection or disapproval of the prevailing norms where the individual is located (Ahmadi, 2010, as cited in Anggraini, 2021). In this case, understanding students' perception is crucial because it can help teachers evaluate the teaching and learning activities. Besides, it is useful for the teaching development goal. This is in line with the work of Jannah et al. (2020). Thus, by recognizing the importance of understanding of students' perception, this study aimed to determine the vocational school students' perception of online learning and its correlation with the TOEIC score achievement.

Online Learning

The COVID-19 phenomenon has changed the model of teaching and learning process to online learning. Experts have various views on the definition of online learning. First, Gomez-Rey (2016) stated that online learning platforms are a way to structure instruction, which encourages optimal content organization. According to Waryanto (2006), online learning is one of learning using electronic media. While Wotto et al. (2018) said that e-learning can be said as learning by using electronic devices, for example, laptop, computers, smartphones, CD/DVD players, etc. Furthermore, Kusuma & Suwartono (2021) stated that online learning or e-learning is a teaching and learning process that is carried out online, in which teachers and students need the advanced technology and

the internet. Besides, the use of social networking tools accommodates feedback between instructors and students, and it makes them communicate more efficiently and effectively (Archambault et al., 2016).

As Krish (2008), as cited in Sutrisna (2021), stated, the online learning environment is not only useful for students to access knowledge and materials but also to associate and make collaboration among course participants. In addition, online language learning in the EFL context in secondary school settings during the COVID-19 pandemic takes place in fully online language learning because students and teachers are not possible to gather in a face-to-face context (Blake, 2011). Mabrur et al. (2021, p.2), said that in practice, online language learners were generally required to interact with their instructor and with their peers in the target language using video and audio tools that might lead to learners developing anxiety related to the use of the instructional technologies, which were used to communicate in the target language as well as to the language itself. Therefore, the online learning environment is not only useful for students to access knowledge and materials but also to associate and collaborate among course participants (Krish, 2008 as cited in Sutrisna, 2021). In addition, Mabrur et al., 2021) argued that online education requires plenty of resources and careful planning. Anggraini (2021), explained that there are several things that can be done during learning online to communicate and discuss online. In the case of teacher and student relationships, online learning does not limit the interaction between teacher and student, so student can ask and answer a question if there are difficulties in understanding the material.

Thus, it can be concluded that online learning is a teaching and learning activity conducted by the teacher and students using electronic devices and utilizing the internet so that the learning process can be done anytime and anywhere. This online learning is appropriate to do in this pandemic situation because students are learning more from home than at school. However, in online learning, students still need guidance and direction from the teacher so that teaching and learning activities can run smoothly. In addition, support from schools and the government is needed to provide the facilities and infrastructure. For example, the government provides quota assistance, while the school helps manage the students' data to the government.

TOEIC

The implementation of English tests in schools or institutions is currently an effective strategy to improve the quality of students' English mastery because English test is one of the benchmarking considerations among academics and workers in the world (Zahruni et al., 2020), and the

Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) is one of the types of English tests used in Indonesian vocational schools. The TOEIC becomes one of the assessments in determining English proficiency. According to Fauziati (2016), TOEIC is specifically designed to measure English language skills for daily communication in the context of work in an international environment. Besides, Fauzi (2020) added that students' ability to master English, especially for vocational school students, can be seen from the results of an English proficiency test called TOEIC. Therefore, it is one of the language proficiencies tests that most EFL students need to study and master. Moreover, the purpose of TOEIC is more varied than other tests.

TOEIC is used for multi-purposes, namely: (1) to measure employees' English proficiency, promotion, and recruitment requirements, (2) to measure students' English language standards so that teachers can provide appropriate lessons, and (3) to design employee training programs, employee recruitment and promotion (Damayanti and Gafur, 2020). Besides, the TOEIC consists of Listening and Reading comprehensions which are the most means taken to decide on a high-stakes subject (Choi, 2008). Listening and reading, which are the receptive skills, are more tightly connected to each other than the speaking and writing skills, which are the productive skills (Park et al, 2020). Further, the Listening test consists of four parts with 100 questions covering 10 items that deal with photographs, 30 items of question–response, 30 items of short conversations, and 30 items of short talks. Next, the Reading test is the second on the TOEIC. The total number of Reading tests is 100 questions. Furthermore, ETS described that the TOEIC score ranges as follows: 1) Level Novice (scores 0 to 250); 2) Level Elementary (scores 255 to 400); 3) Level Intermediate (scores 405 to 600); 4) Level Basic Working Proficiency (scores 605 to 780); 5) Level Advance Working Proficiency (scores 785 to 990).

Fauzi (2020) in his research findings highlighted thatstudents have positive views about the use of the TOEIC test scores for graduation and believe that preparing to take the test has a positive impact on their language proficiency and future employment prospects. In addition, Bozorgian (2012) also discussed the significance of the listening skills in learning a language and revealed that the correlation between listening and reading was stronger than the listening and speaking skill performance. Besides, Fauzi (2020) in his research about the use of TOEIC related to the students' communicative competency and test-taking, it showed that TOEIC material was able to increase the students' communicative competency and test-taking significantly. In addition, Park (2020) conducted a study that analyzed the relationships between students' English language ability, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension. Its findings showed that there was

relationship among English language ability, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension.

METHODS

In this study, the researchers used the quantitative method. According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2002), quantitative research is to describe phenomena by collecting the numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics). In addition, Suwartono (2014) explained briefly and concisely that quantitative research is a study whose data type is in the form of numbers. Thus, this is in line with the researchers' aim that is to find out whether there is a significant correlation between students' perception of online learning

they followed and their English achievement through TOEIC, and the correlation design was then used in this study.

As Yasmin (2009) stated, correlation design is a research design that investigates the parallelism between two variables or more – independent variable and dependent variable – using the statistical procedure of correlation analysis. Hence, three assumptions should be fulfilled in this study. First, the measurement scale for the independent variable X and the dependent variable Y is the interval or ratio. Besides, the interval scale that has a freely defined zero-point distribution of variable Y data is normal. Lastly, there is a linear correlation between variable X and variable Y.

Table 1. Test of normality of Kolmogorov-Smirnov

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Questionnaire-results	.176	30	.018	.924	30	.033

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on the (**Table 1**), it can be seen that the result of normality for the questionnaire variable is normally distributed because of the sign value was 0.018. It means that the p value of 0.18 > 0.05. Then it could be seen that the variable data of the questionnaire in this research was normal. This study was conducted at a vocational school in the district of Ajibarang, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The subjects of this research were 30 students, taken randomly from the third grade at the school. In his book, Suwartono (2014) stated that random sampling technique is done if each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected as the sample, and this technique aims to generalize the conclusions drawn from the sample data. Furthermore, for the sample size, Suwartono (2014), stated that thirty subjects are the minimum sample for a correlational study. Therefore, the sample size taken in this study was considered acceptable or in accordance with the minimum sample size guidelines.

With regard to the data, two types of data were gathered for this study, namely primary data and secondary data. The primary data was collected by administering the questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to find out students' views of online learning. Suwartono (2014) explained that the function of the questionnaire is for description and measurement. Further, the questionnaire guide was adopted from Sari et al. (2020). There were 17 statements that the researchers used to obtain the students' view of online learning in the questionnaire. Furthermore, the researchers created online questionnaire on Google Form due to the pandemic and the government policy. Meanwhile, the secondary data was taken by utilizing the TOEIC score of each respondent. The

TOEIC achievement was used to assess the English proficiency of the students.

Based on the two variables, the researchers analyzed the data by using the Pearson Product Moment. According to Chee (2015), the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient or Pearson's r is a measure of the linear relationship between two interval or ratio variables and can have a value between -1 and 1. It means that it can be used to measure the strength, direction, and probability of the linear association between two interval or ratio variables. In this study, this calculation using the Pearson Product Moment was used to determine whether there was a correlation between students' perception of the online learning they followed and their TOEIC score achievement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this study, the questionnaire was utilized to obtain data on students' perception of online learning. The data, then, was processed using the Microsoft Excel. From the questionnaire it showed that 69 % of students has positive response toward the implementation of online learning in which students can learn from home without going to school and they have chance to access various learning resources related to English material. It means that the students had a high willingness in joining online learning. In other words, the students had a positive response toward the online learning. Yusuf et al., (2021, p.4), described that online learning can improve students' interest so that the students can have many vocabularies. However, students still lack mastery of the use of English, especially in the application of conversational forms.

Considered with TOEIC is in the form of implementation daily conversation. According to Ichige (2020), students who study abroad can get high TOEIC scores because of experience rather than students who only learn the use of English in formal school even though they get high English test scores. In line with the questionnaire result showed that 50% of students difficult in practicing English speaking skill. Then students presented themselves if they were difficulties to make conversation using English. Furthermore, the relation of students' opinion toward online learning with TOEIC result reflected through the calculation chart of Product Moment Correlation can see in (**Table 2**).

Table 2. Correlation between students' view of online learning and the TOEIC scores

Correlations

		Score	Questionnaire-results
Score	Pearson Correlation	1	-.132
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.488
	N	30	30
Questionnaire-results	Pearson Correlation	-.132	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.488	
	N	30	30

Based on the table above, it can be seen that there was no correlation between students' view of online learning and TOEIC achievement. As stated earlier, the data analysis was conducted using the Product Moment Correlation. Zakarian (2017) stated that Correlation Coefficient Value ranges from -1 up to 1 or 0 up to 1. If the CCV approaches 1 or -1, the correlation between the two variables will be more apparent. However, when the CCV is close to 0, the correlation gets weaker. The result of Pearson Correlation showed the r-value of -0.132 with a significance value (p-value) of 0.488 (Value significance or p-value of 0.488 > 0.005). It means that Ho was accepted and Ha was rejected, so there was no correlation between students' views of English online learning they attended and their TOEIC achievement. Similarly, in the study of Zakaria (2017), it was described that there was no significant correlation between students' learning habits and their TOEIC scores, in which the data of the research showed the students' habits of learning were not bad.

CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to obtain the relation of students' perception of online learning they attended towards the TOEIC achievement at a vocational school in the district of Ajibarang, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The result of the study showed that the students had positive responses towards online learning. It was proved by the result of the questionnaire, which showed the percentage of 69% of the students' perception. Therefore, it means that the students enjoyed the online learning process. Besides, the result of this study also revealed that the students' perception of online learning did not have any relations to the TOEIC result. This result was found from the calculation using the Product Moment Correlation, which showed the r-value of -0.132 with a significance value (p-value) of 0.488 (Value significance or p-value of 0.488 > 0.005), so it means that Ho is accepted and Ha is rejected. In other words, the result showed that there is no correlation between students' perception of online learning and the TOEIC result. Whereas TOEIC is definitely not same with the ordinary final examination as the students of vocational school have. Moreover, it was first time to the vocational school conducted the event accompanied by new era and new education policy. Hence the students need more preparation to this event. The current study contributes to the existing literature. In addition, this research also contributes to the current understanding of the relationship among students' perception, online learning, and the TOEIC result. However, there was a limitation of this study, in which the primary data collection only in questionnaire form and TOEIC score of the students. Therefore, for further research, it is expected that the instruments are not only questionnaires but also interviews and or other instruments as the strengthening of the instruments in order to get better research result and quality.

Authors' Contributions

The main author conducted the project under the first co-author's supervision. The main author prepared the manuscript and the co-authors peer-reviewed and edited it as well as adjusted it to this journal's template. The first co-author made correspondence with the Editor and submitted the manuscript. All the authors made revisions and necessary changes.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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