



EXPLORING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF E-LEARNING IN ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) SPEAKING CLASSES AMIDST COVID-19

Iziana Hani Ismail¹, Nur Anneliza Abd Latip^{2*}, Wardatul Akmam Din³, Suyansah Swanto⁴

¹ Preparatory Centre for Science and Technology, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
Email: iziana.hani@ums.edu.my

² Preparatory Centre for Science and Technology, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
Email: nuranne@ums.edu.my

³ Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
Email: wardadin@ums.edu.my

⁴ Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia
Email: sswantospps1611@gmail.com

* Corresponding Author

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Abstract:

The COVID-19 outbreak quickly demonstrates the importance of adopting online education in teaching and learning. It has forced education systems worldwide to find alternatives to face-to-face interactions. Language instructors have made attempts to explore and utilise e-learning tools to enrich their teaching and assist learners in improving their language learning. This paper, therefore, attempts to shed light on the effectiveness of adopting e-learning tools in ESL speaking class and their perception of it. Fifty-three pre-university students from the Foundation Programme of the Preparatory Centre for Science and Technology were involved in this study. Data analysed in this paper were derived from a threaded online discussion via Dotstorming. The structured interview questions were carefully designed based on the objectives to elicit the students' opinions on the topic of interest. To explore the effectiveness of e-learning in developing the students' speaking skills, scores of Individual Speaking Assessment and Group Speaking Assessment of each student were collected. These assessments were marked based on the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) Speaking Rubric – Task Fulfilment, Language, and Communicative Ability. The findings show that the adoption of technology in ESL speaking classes improves the students' speaking abilities. The thematic analysis also shows that the use of e-learning tools in language learning received positive feedbacks from the students,



suggesting it would be a promising virtual platform to improve the student's confidence, knowledge, and language.

Keywords:

COVID-19, E-learning, ESL, MUET, Speaking

Introduction

Modern society, with its rapid scientific and technological advances, has seen an exponential rise in accessible knowledge with continuously changing and emerging technologies (Goldie, 2016). The learning environment is more dynamic than ever before, and as a result, today's learners are very different from those that our educational system was designed for. The traditional practices are no longer suitable to the Gen Z- those born between 1996 and 2009 – who would prefer a wider and freer sense of expressions and to learn following their learning styles and pace. Specifically, in a time when children handle digital information, communicate with others via mobile technologies, and play more games than the previous generation (Beck & Wade, 2006), online learning might be a more appropriate approach to teaching and engaging children in education in a more successful way than the traditional learning methods (Ünlüsoy et al., 2013). With the advancement in technology, classrooms are being remodelled and redefined in several ways to fit the evolving needs of modern digital learners.

The internet has been long used for educational purposes and many prominent models of Internet-based education has emerged over the past 20 years (Szymkowiak et al., 2021). Even before the global Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), there was already high growth and adoption in education technology, with the YouTube offers access to millions of educational videos produced by educators and learners. Similarly, Apple Computers' collection of educational media – the so-called iTunes U – is designed to allow learners to circumvent traditional educational lectures and classes in favour of in-demand, free mobile learning (Celik et al., 2012). Whether it is language apps, virtual tutoring, video conferencing tools, or online learning software, there has been a significant surge in usage since the pandemic. However, the COVID-19 outbreak quickly demonstrates the importance of adopting online education in teaching and learning. It has forced education systems worldwide to find alternatives to face-to-face interactions. With tens of millions of students across the world forced to stay at home from school, it has opened up to the possibility of integrating technology into the existing curricula. While some believe that the unplanned and rapid movement to online learning – with no training, insufficient bandwidth, and little preparation – will result in a poor user experience, others believe that the new hybrid model of education has emerged with significant benefits. This is further supported by Wang Tao, the Vice President of Tencent Cloud and Vice President of Tencent Education, who “believes that the integration of information technology in education will be further accelerated because of Covid-19 and that online education will eventually become an integral component of school education” (Li & Lalani, 2020).

While many are taunting the benefits of shifting the conventional teaching approaches to e-learning, educational technology has its challenges, particularly when it comes to implementation and use. Although it is deemed to be the best solution to ensure continuity in learning in an era of what has been coined as the “new norm”, poor internet connectivity and limited broadband data are the two biggest challenges faced by Malaysian students, especially those who live in rural areas (Chung et al., 2020). This digital divide means more and more

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students lived in rural areas are being left out from mainstream education and development. The issue of unequal access to the Internet has also obstructed effective learning, especially when it involves activities that require participation from every student. Taking an English lesson as an example, be able to sense students' body language (facial expression and body movements) is important when you speak or discuss with others. These non-verbal communications will somehow influence the candidates' scores in the speaking test. Also, prominently rising from the COVID-19 crisis is the issue of content. Educators need to be able to develop and weigh in on online education content, especially to encourage students to consider a topic from a different perspective. The urgent actions taken during this crisis did not provide sufficient time for this.

Despite the challenges and scepticism over the incorporation of these e-learning tools for classroom practice, language teachers and lecturers, for instance, have made attempts to explore and utilise these tools to enrich their teaching and assist learners in improving their language learning (Lockyer & Patterson, 2008). Online meetings could help expand learning and knowledge acquisition beyond the four walls of traditional classrooms by encouraging learners to interact with their peers and lecturers in the target language. This paper, therefore, attempts to shed light on the effectiveness of adopting e-learning tools in speaking class and their perception of it. The findings could add to the existing literature body and further prove that online learning is effective in developing the students' language skills. It will somehow change the dynamic of teaching strategies and can be adopted post-pandemic.

Literature Review

Malaysian University English Test

Speaking plays a critical role in socialising students into the discourse of subjects and disciplines in universities, especially for the Malaysian pre-university students who need to sit for the MUET, a prerequisite English language skills test for entering undergraduate programs at Public Higher Educational Institutions (IPTA). It is a compulsory test that has been set by the Malaysian Examination Council as a prerequisite for admission to do undergraduate studies. Given that the MUET is a high stakes test and the speaking component contributes 25 per cent of the total score, learning to speak effectively has become a major concern among the learners and educators. Speaking is a complex process and skills which cannot be learned overnight; it requires practices and strategies as students need to explore ideas and thoughts as well as the language. This study offers a potential solution for the educators to help improve the students' language skills at the pre-university level, to make them become more competent English speakers in social and academic contexts in the future.

E-Learning in Malaysian ESL Setting

E-learning has become an integral component of the modern education system. Educators are urged to transform the techniques in conducting language learning by incorporating technological tools because Gen Z students tend to thrive when they are given the opportunity to have a fully immersive educational experience with digital learning tools deeply integrated into their education. Many academic institutions in Malaysia commit themselves to e-learning because they believe in its effectiveness as an alternative approach to conventional teaching strategies of disseminating information (Raja Hussain, 2004). From the analysis conducted on the responses of e-learning administrators and lecturers from Malaysian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the percentage of courses offered through the blended mode by lecturers

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are between 1 to 80 per cent, while the percentage of online courses taken by students is 81 to 100 per cent. Most of the lecturers in Malaysia HEIs (73.5 per cent) also believed that there is an increase in e-learning activities in the past two years (Embi, 2011). Although this data was derived in 2011, it clearly shows that there was already high growth and adoption in education technology in Malaysia from the pre- to early-COVID -19 period.

E-learning has been proven effective to facilitate learning in the classroom. Empirical studies revealed numerous benefits of the adoption of e-learning tools in language classes. These include increased participation among students, improved quality of language outputs (Warschauer, 1995), enriched vocabulary (Perez, 2003), and a collaborative learning environment. It also provides a more equitable platform and a less threatening environment for second language acquisition (Hussin, 2008; Warschauer, 1995). Engaging these learners in a digitally-mediated learning environment could elicit more interest and productive output in the targetted language. It provides different opportunities to make learning more fun and enjoyable in terms of teaching the same things in a new way. Despite the benefits it portrays, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the former Prime Minister in his debate session on the 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP) commented that the modern technologies which can help facilitate effective teaching are still not being thoroughly used in Malaysia. He further added that many new methods introduced were being rejected and saw that dependence on teachers was still high (Mansor, 2021). Perhaps, issues like lack of e-content, inadequate infrastructure coupled with the problem of digital divide, has resulted in a relatively low adoption rate in many Malaysian education institutions (Ali, 2004).

That could have explained why Malaysian students are still weak in English. It has proven to be the weakest core subject in national examinations. To add to this worrying trend, 62 per cent of the MUET Examination candidates only achieved Bands 1 and 2, placing them under the categories of 'limited user' and 'very limited user' of English (Sani, 2015). This concurs well with Ishak (2005, as cited in Singh & Rajalingam, 2012), who claims that Malaysian pre-university students are generally weak in four areas of language skills, i.e. speaking, listening, writing, and reading. Many students can skate through years of language classes without ever achieving a minimal level of fluency. This issue becomes worsened at the tertiary levels because the educators failed to address the language issues in secondary schools. The unresolved language problems may lead to bigger ones, as the students are expected to speak with more maturity and sophistication to match their perceived level of intellect.

It is a popular opinion that the unchanged medium of instruction in the classrooms is one of the factors contributing to the gradual decline in the standard of English in Malaysia. The learning of English through conventional teaching pedagogy does not do much help in improving the proficiency of the majority of Malaysian students (Hiew, 2012). These conventional teaching methods make them uninterested in class, discouraged, bored, stop trying in accomplishing tasks given, and do poorly in tests (Felder & Silverman, 1988; Oxford, 1990; Smith & Renzulli, 1984). Despite the initiatives by the Malaysian HEIs to enforce their roles in shaping future generations by being the testbeds for innovation and technology, application of the frameworks concerning the technology used in the classrooms has not been encouraging (Hedberg, 2003; Raman & Yamat, 2014) because of the persistent execution of conventional approaches. Professor Dr Hairul Nizam Ismail also adds that the Malaysian tertiary institutions still predominantly adopt the "factory line" concept of teaching and learning where many university lecturers prefer the teacher-centred approach that emphasises

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delivering lectures during the duration of the class, while students listen passively in their seats (Sani, 2015). The value of learning in most of the institutions relies merely on securing excellent grades in language assessments and the conventional teaching pedagogy become the primary approach in teaching while students of this age need a newer platform with a different learning strategy (Mokhtar, 2016). Hence, there are demands of variation in the teaching and learning of English to escape the traditional ways often be used in the lessons to suit the need of the younger generations (Yacob & Yunus, 2019).

Thus, this study illuminates the perceptions of the students in adopting e-learning tools and discusses the possibility of adopting a digitally-mediated learning environment to assist the learners in language learning. This could be a stepping stone for educators to start redesigning 21st-century learning to suit the need of Gen-Z.

Methodology

Participants

Fifty-three pre-university students from the Foundation Programme of the Preparatory Centre for Science and Technology were involved in this study. As mixed research tends to employ purposive sampling to meet its goal of inquiry, the selection of the participants was conducted purposively in regards to some reasons including class participation and willingness. In this context, the participants attended more than 80 per cent of total meetings (9 meetings), took part in the speaking assessments, and were willing to participate in a semi-structured virtual interview, which aims to inflate the students' perceptions of the e-learning platforms as appropriate and better means in developing speaking skills.

Data Collection and Analysis

Focusing on the students' learning experiences with e-learning and its effectiveness in developing speaking skills, this study was steered towards adopting a qualitative approach to achieve the research objectives. This study attempted to illustrate how the students' speaking skills can be improved by the new testing situation that they were experiencing amidst Covid-19.

Prior to participating in the virtual semi-conducted interview, the students had enrolled in the *UB0013 Academic Writing and Speaking* and attended nine-week synchronous classes for Speaking. Lectures were delivered using the syllabus outlined for teaching speaking – however, language instructors had to generate more creative ideas by incorporating e-learning platforms to provide them with a flexible and innovative learning experience. Figure 1 briefly explains the procedure of this research:

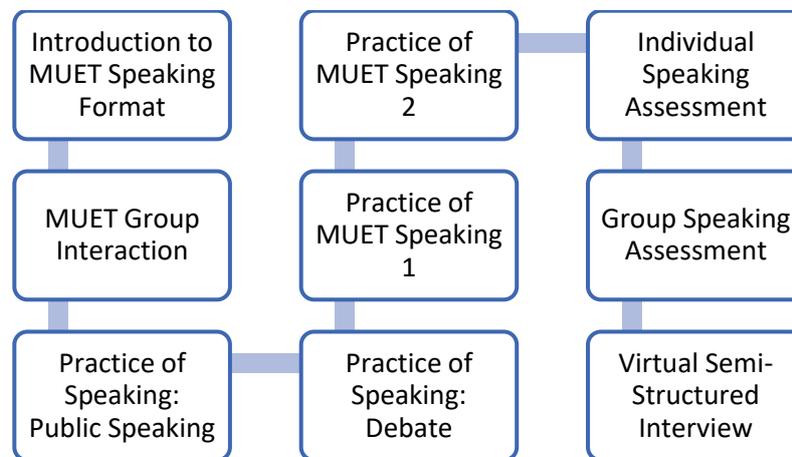


Figure 1: The UB0013 Speaking Class Process

The students attended all the classes, or else they were denied sitting for the examination. The current teaching syllabus was revolutionized by the adaptation of e-learning tools to facilitate learning e.g., *Dotstorming*, *Kumospace*, and *Quizizz* and used in the synchronous online meetings for nine weeks. The structured interview questions were carefully designed based on the objectives to elicit the students' opinions on the topic of interest. It offers the best approach to understand one's perception and experience in e-learning.

To explore the effectiveness of e-learning in developing the students' speaking skills, scores of Individual Speaking Assessment and Group Speaking Assessment of each student were collected. These assessments were marked based on the Malaysian University English Test (MUET) Speaking Rubric – *Task Fulfilment*, *Language*, and *Communicative Ability*, of which each criterion carries a maximum of 18 marks. The summed up score of these criteria is 54.

The students with the scores of 211 and above were identified as proficient speakers. This MUET grading system is widely accepted as the national standard to determine one's language proficiency. Those assessments were evaluated by examiners who have years of experience teaching and invigilating the MUET Speaking Test. The data was collected and analyzed to investigate the effectiveness of e-learning in developing the students' speaking skills.

While the first research objective was achieved by analyzing the students' performance in the speaking assessments, the virtual semi-structured interview was used to explore the perceptions of these students on the application of e-learning tools in speaking classes. The data was collected through the structured interview questions, which the pre-planned set of questions are inclined to four speaking components i.e. *confidence*, *knowledge attainment*, and *grammar and vocabulary*. *Dotstorming*, an e-learning platform was used to collect the data and the student's responses to the close-ended questions. The data was transcribed from the platform to easily identify the themes through thematic analysis. It is a process of identifying patterns or themes within the qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2013 in Rahim & Chandran, 2021). The transcribed data from the *Dotstorming* was encoded, which was then grouped into themes by identifying patterns of useful descriptors of the units, e.g. single words, phrases, extended utterances, etc.

Results and Discussion

The Effectiveness of E-Learning in Developing Speaking Skills

To investigate the effectiveness of e-learning in developing the students' speaking skills, each of the students' speaking performance in Task A (Individual Speaking) was measured using a 20-point system and evaluated by these components – *Task Fulfilment (A)*, *Language (B)*, and *Communicative Ability (C)*, of which each component carries a maximum of 20 marks. Table 1 illustrates the assessment criteria for Task A and B:

Table 1: Speaking Rubric Assessment for UB0013

| MARKS | 19-20 | 16-18 | 13-15 | 10-12 | 7-9 | 0-6 |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| Task Fulfilment (CTPS 1-5) | Very good Understanding of the topic. Analyzing appropriate answers. Presenting relevant ideas. Providing adequate content. Showing a mature treatment of topic | Good understanding of topic given. Relevant to the task with a few slips. | Satisfactory understanding of topic given. Relevant to the task with some gaps. | Fair understanding of topic given. Most part relevant but not adequate. | Limited understanding of topic given. Limited relevance. | Barely understands the topic given. Irrelevance response. |
| Language | Good command of structures with occasional slips. Uses complex structures and varied vocabulary effectively. | Ease of use. Pronunciation problems do not hinder comprehension. | Some errors. Pronunciation is not clear but this only causes occasional misunderstanding. | Many basic errors. Some problems in pronunciation, stress and intonation but these do not causes serious misunderstanding. | Utterances – phrases level. Pronunciation leads to miscomprehension. | Utterances – one word level. Pronunciation heavily influenced by L1 causing incomprehensibility. |
| Communicative Ability (CS1-3, 5) | Speech is smooth. Delivers very confidently . Interacts well, listens to others opinions and able to maintain and wrap up discussion | Generally even. Delivers confidently . | Able to keep communication going. Delivers quite confidently . | Able to keep communication going. Not much confidence in confidently. | Frequently jerky speech. Lacks confidence in delivery. | Extremely uneven speech. No confidence in delivery. |

Source: UB0013 Speaking Rubric Assessment

To get the total marks of the assessment, Task A= A+B+C= x/60. Group Discussion Assessment, or Task B, uses the same breakdown of marks, for which a maximum of 20 marks is allocated for each speaking component - *Task Fulfilment (A)*, *Language (B)*, and *Communicative Ability (C)*. Thus, the accumulation of marks for Task B is also Task B=A+B+C= y/60. To determine the Speaking Band of each student, the total scores of both assessments (x and y) need to be totalled up and divided by 120 marks times 360 marks (The total scores of 360 are the aggregated scores for all the MUET test components – Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) as illustrated in Figure 1:

$$\text{Average Score} = \frac{[(x + y)]}{120} \times 360$$

Figure 1: Formula to Determine MUET-CEFR Speaking Band

The MUET-CEFR Speaking bands could be determined by considering the aggregated scores under the *MUET-CEFR Regulations and Test Specifications of the Malaysian University English Test (MUET)* by the Malaysian Examination Council. Table 2 shows the range of scores of each of the MUET Band:

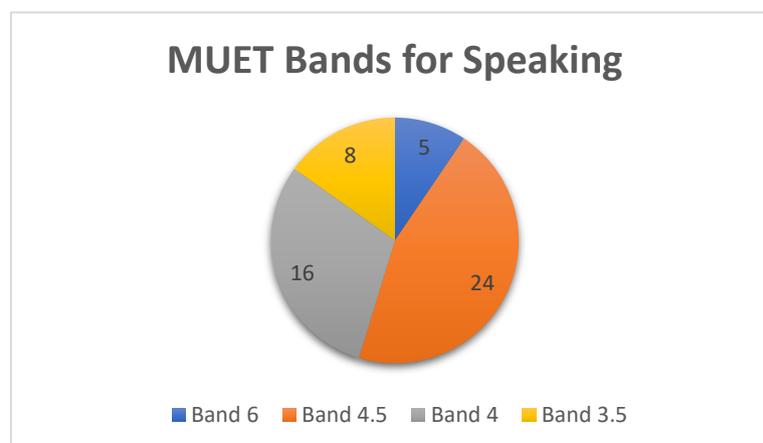
Table 2: The Aggregated Scores of MUET-CEFR Band

| AGGREGATED SCORE | BAND | USER |
|------------------|------|-------------|
| 331 – 360 | 5+ | Proficient |
| 294 – 330 | 5.0 | |
| 258 – 293 | 4.5 | Independent |
| 211 – 257 | 4.0 | |
| 164 – 210 | 3.5 | |
| 123 – 163 | 3.0 | |
| 82 – 122 | 2.5 | Basic |
| 36 – 81 | 2.0 | |
| 1 – 35 | 1.0 | |

Source: Malaysian English University Test Regulations and Test Specifications 2020

The students would be regarded as proficient speakers if they achieved an average mark of 211 and above, or B4 of MUET-CEFR Bands, placing them as proficient speakers according to the national standard set by the *Majlis Peperiksaan Negara* on the MUET scoring system. According to the Band Descriptor, those who belong to Band 4 are deemed to have a degree of fluency and spontaneity and can take an active part in a discussion. They also can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue.

In general, none of the students scored an average mark of 163 or Band 3 and below. Only 8 students placed themselves at Band 3.5 at 15.1 per cent. Almost half of those surveyed (24) scored Band 4.5 for both speaking assessments with 45.3 per cent and two-thirds of those (16) belonged to Band 4 with 30.2 per cent. Only 5 students scored an average mark of 294 and above, or Band 5, which recorded the lowest proportion at 9.4 per cent. This data confirms that e-learning is generally effective in developing speaking skills, as almost 85 per cent of the students scored Band 4, Band 4.5, and Band 5 for both speaking assessments.

**Figure 1: MUET Bands for Speaking**

This figure shows that the students scored well in the Speaking Assessments, as the majority of them managed to get Band 4 and above, placing them as proficient speakers. This further strengthens the claim that the adoption of technology in speaking classes did improve the students' speaking abilities despite the challenges of having them online.

Students' Perceptions of E-Learning for Speaking

All 53 participants (100 per cent) who responded to the questionnaire had a favourable perception of the use of e-learning platforms as a means for information-sharing tasks, with only the hindrance being limitations imposed by Internet connections. Closer scrutiny of their responses on the use of e-learning platforms for the speaking classes revealed three opinions: *Confidence* (w), *Knowledge Attainment* (y), and *Language* (z). The following section discusses and illustrates some of the participants' responses regarding the use of e-learning platforms for their speaking classes.

Confidence

After transitioning to emergency remote instruction in response to the COVID-19, the *UB0013 Academic English for Writing and Speaking* has shifted from face-to-face interactions to synchronous class meetings held via the Cisco WebEx video conferencing programme. Out of the consideration for the students, the language instructors established a policy that video camera use during class was optional but highly encouraged. Although it was observed that the vast majority of students had their video cameras off during the synchronous class meetings, they were actively engaged in most of the language speaking activities. They considered the use of e-learning for their speaking classes a good platform since it provided an avenue for them to communicate more freely and comfortably with their group members, especially those who were shy and lacked confidence for face-to-face interaction. For example, one participant (Q24) aptly noted, "*E-learning platforms have familiarized me with talking with others and discussing random topics on the go without hesitation. I am proud to say I have gained my confidence and no longer have 'too-nervous-to-present syndrome like I had whenever I deliver my speech in front of a group of people.'*" whilst participant Q15 wrote, "*I was quite a shy girl. I would not voice out my opinions unless I was asked to. E-learning has helped me to build my confidence to speak and share opinions with my group members.*"

A large number of students in the language classroom is one of the main reasons why speaking or conversational activities in a group is ineffective due to uncontrolled anxiety when they speak in front of their classmates (Kitano, 2001). Riasati (2011) justifies that the students may feel anxious due to problems related to negative evaluation such as fear of correction and fear of making mistakes. They are also shy about participating in any language activity because they are frightened of making mistakes while speaking in front of others (Rodrigues & Vethamani, 2015). This will eventually lead to low self-confidence conversing in English. Thus, e-learning provides a safe platform for them to freely expressing their opinions. This mainly benefits shy or introvert learners as it allows some privacy in interaction (Omar et al., 2012). They feel they will not be judged or hated personally for speaking on opinion, thus they could overcome shyness in expressing opinions.

Online speaking communication also allows shy students, particularly those who lack self-esteem, to express themselves more freely as there is lesser teacher control (Rodrigues & Vethamani, 2015). This fun learning space also helped these learners to build their self-esteem in speaking in front of others. This is evidenced by the participant's Q7 observation – "*My*

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English instructors have provided a lot of fun activities, utilizing e-learning platforms and I think it helps me a lot in building my self-esteem". Additionally, be able to find resources online *"enhances my general knowledge and it helps me to gain ideas when I speak, thus builds my confidences when I present"* (Q2) and *"to speak up more during the class, since I have noticed I tend to be more active and have been more responding."* (Q1). This finding seems to corroborate that Egbert (2005) explains that online communication provides learners with the opportunity to orally communicate with other people in an environment that is conducive to learning. Online language learning helps to improve linguistic proficiency and subsequently, increases self-confidence among learners (Rodrigues & Vethamani, 2015).

Knowledge Retention

Content and curriculum in online learning has been evolved and digitally structured and customised to meet individual needs, skills, learning outcomes and interests. Speaking activities outlined in this course e.g debate and public speaking demand students to find reliable sources online. These important concepts allow learners to fully participate in an online learning environment to create a self-learning approach. This is evident from the following remarks made by the participants:

"There are plenty of reliable sources online which I can refer to. It has helped me a lot in developing the topics or ideas, thus making it easier for me to communicate my thoughts clearly." (Q5)

"Reading articles in Google Scholar and other reliable sources help me gaining ideas and develop them spontaneously." (Q2)

One participant (Q37) also commented "I notice when I read more, it's easier for me to craft ideas in my head and it helps me a lot during the 2-minute individual assessment, which you need to be quick in developing ideas when you are presented with a topic." This synchronous online meeting could also improve both speaking and reading skills by selectively reads the parts needed to develop speaking skills. The speaking classes also integrate videos in the lessons e.g videos on Youtube or Masterclass provides plenty of speaking tips. These students had to extract the lessons and present them to their friends. This is one way to induce student-learner centred, as the students commented they could "structure my speeches better" and "persuade better" (Q4), which is one of the important techniques in MUET Speaking.

Therefore, in the case of the younger generation, the basic place to acquire knowledge is in school, but the Internet is an important supplement and a source of broadening horizons (Szymkowiak et al., 2021).

Language

Apart from increasing the students' confidence and knowledge, the students were able to comprehend the topic with related words or phrases. Based on the observations made in the first week most of them had difficulty in creating sentences using the key vocabulary. Limited vocabulary makes them hesitant to speak, and sometimes hinder the fluency of the speakers. Through adequate pronunciation drills and vocabulary enrichment, they were able to sustain a long conversation in English despite limited vocabulary and grammar. One of the participants commented *"E-learning tools e.g help to build my vocabulary. I have started using low-*

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frequency words and phrases to express my opinions” (Q43) and “able to talk to people using appropriate words” (Q42).

Part of the speaking classes also incorporate quizzes on grammar, in which e-platforms provide a wide array of grammar quiz online, and it helps the students a lot in structuring the sentences. As the participant Q37 aptly noted that those quizzes online “*help her to become better*” and Q36 was more confident in delivering speeches as he had problems with fluency in speaking as he focusses too much on grammar. But by providing them with grammar lessons in enjoyable ways through e-learning tools, he had “*gained more confidence as those online lessons have improved my grammar*”. More students are afraid of making grammar students, thus hinder them from being fluent in speaking. They “*do not dare to speak in English because I am afraid of making grammatical mistakes when I speak*” (Q34), but just a little encouragement and a few extra hours learning the grammar has made them feel confident in speaking, thus helps them to become more fluent when they speak with others.

Conclusion

Teaching and learning can no longer remain conventional if the Malaysian HEIs want to produce competitive, innovative, and creative graduates. The traditional practices are no longer suitable to the Gen Z are skilled in sharing information through social media and are interested in learning new things. We should be considering switching from conventional classrooms to digitally-assisting classrooms with utilizes e-learning platforms. Learning a language is not an exception. We could gain benefits as these online platforms offer fun learning experiences for the learners. Based on these findings, e-learning platforms enhance students’ speaking skills. They feel more confident, and knowledge seems to be increased with the aid of reliable sources available online. Vocabulary and grammar are also improved with the e-learning platform which offers plenty of enjoyable learning experiences for them. Educators should start redesigning the existing curriculum by making necessary changes to the teaching approach. This effort must be supported by suitable teaching aids. Although it seems like a time-consuming effort, it has indeed shown that the students will be motivated to learn better and can improve themselves in the long run. Comparing the students’ proficiency when they have speaking classes online or conventional teaching is left for another study to explore in the future.

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