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IDEAL TIME FOR THE EXECUTION OF ASYNCHRONOUS CLASS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING T&L SESSION

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Abstract: *This study seeks to determine the duration of learning focus by gender that influences the optimal time in asynchronous classes for language learning. This implies that this study will clarify the difference between male and female students' time or focus during a single online learning session. The primary impetus is the realisation that students must identify the optimal time for Teaching and Learning (T&L) sessions to be more effective, particularly in language learning. An effective T&L procedure will undoubtedly result in increased student achievement. A critical review of previous studies revealed that there is no research discussing the optimal time or hours for online language learning. The majority of previous research has concentrated on the motivation, positive effects, and impact of online teaching. In online language learning, the quantity of time or hours required to determine a student's focus is never taken into account. Therefore, based on the analysis of questionnaires from 91 students, the optimal duration for online language learning by gender has been determined. Results on the optimal time for online language learning by gender revealed no significant difference in the best time to maintain focus between male and female UUM students.*

Keywords: *Students focus, Learning focus, Optimal time, Asynchronous class, Online language learning*

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Introduction

Everybody needs some time to learn how to finish or achieve a certain task or goal. The recommended learning time is different according to age, type of duty or goals aimed. Even though with a variety of opinions about the ideal time to learn, a few studies show that excessive leaning time might not assist in achieving a target. There are some factors that must be considered to identify how long does a student need to allocate in learning a language. These include the student's ability, interest and motivation, and physical comfort.

Those who are below 18 years of age is not recommended as younger students are tired easily dan they need time to exercise and play. However, it is still dependend on the student's ability and motivation. If the student can understand the language concept and learn easily, they might need a little bit more time to learn. If the student's aim to master a language, the range of time can increase. The implementation of asynchronous class (video conference, teleconference, live chat and live lecture) in a long and continuous time can decrease students' interest and focus in class. According to Implementation of Teaching and Learning at Home, *PDPR (2020)* guide implemented by the Malaysian Education Ministry (3.5.1. Item ii (b)) also allocate a short break between 2 to 5 minutes long for a 30 minutes long of PDPR session. Apart from that, according to Kamarudin (1997), process of learning foe ech individual is different, however the learning readiness between individuals are usually not much of a difference. This is due to the level or growth process and their development are not the same and aligned. Even though there is likely a common trend in their development, but based on their physical, mental, emotional and social is still different. Normally, these issues are the ones causing a lot of problems to the teachers, be it at the readiness level, planning, or at the stage where they execute their lesson/teachings. Hence, this study is carried out with the main objective to identify the ideal time or duration to carry out asynchronous class so that the students can focus and benefit each teaching and learning session done.

Literature Review

Huang dan McConnell (2010) in their studies has examined about students' satisfaction generally in synchronous online learning, which is through distributing the evaluation form containing open-ended questions. The results shown that 90% of the students are satisfies with the synchronous online learning.

May (2020) saw that the effect of short attention span and lower concentration gives a higher impact in an online learning class/session. Fenny et al. (2021) menjalankan a motivational study towards the Chinese students have found that they are very motivated during an online class. The students arrived early from the beginning to the final learning session. Irma Mahad et al. (2021) found that the Malay students in primary school also had a highly positive and motivated attitude towards the online learning session of a Malay language subject during the movement control order (PKP). However, these two results did not state the students' online learning time or duration where it contributes to a high motivation in learning a language virtually

Arwansyah *et al.* (2021) in their studies related to the impact of online learning have found that the online T&L session have a positive impact towards the students such as saves time, reduce cost and *et cetera*. Apart from the positive impact, there are also some negative impact felt by the students during online class such as boredom, apathetic towards learning, unable to concentrate, less communication between the educators, friends and many more. However, this study did not explain in detail about the boredom factor, decrease of feeling interest, unable to concentrate in the learning session. Is it possible that the boredom, loss of interest and unable

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to focus in learning factor are caused from the learning duration in an online learning which took quite some time or is it from the non-involvement of the teacher in the teaching session.

Research Question

Is there any difference in the ideal time based on gender for the execution of asynchronous class in T&L session?

Research Objective

To examine the difference in the ideal time based on gender for the execution of asynchronous class in T&L session.

Research Problem

The changes of the educational norms during the MCO has actually affect the T&L execution. Norazlin dan Siti Rahaimah (2019) stated that the strategy selection, method and resources can affect the effetiveness of teaching practice in an online teaching.

According to Otter, R. R. Et al. (2023), a majority of students left the online course compared to the courses taught face-to-face due to the boring and long duration. Bradbury (2016) stated that there is no finite evidence about how long does a student can focus in an online class. However, just like what we have known, the learning duration is very important to both the students and teachers to be more sensitive based on the suitability of this online class.

According to Heny Pujiyanto dan Wiwik Sulistiyowati (2016), focus is someone's concentration level which concentrating at only one problem faced and goals to be achieved by focusing the mind only on one purpose hence the purpose will be easier to achieve. Long class duration will cause the students to lose their focus and have less motivation to learn. This situation will contribute to lack of understanding to the lesson's contents which will give negative impacts to the students and teachers.

In tracing the studies done involving the students' focus in learning a language through online class, there is still no research explain about the ideal time for each online learning session. Previous studies, which involves online learning on focusing on students' motivation closely related to their academic achievement.

Research Method

Research Instrument

Based in this research, survey instrument is used to get the necessary information. According to Chua Yan Piaw (2014), survey instruments is very suitable in survey study because this method can produce reliable and consistent item if prepared properly. The survey form in this study was modified from ARCS model by Keller (1987). The survey questions are developed including four types of ideal time slot for each learning session. The time slot given is 1 hour 15 minutes, 60 minutes, 45 minutes and 30 minutes. Students are required to identify the timing following a topic, topic of discussion, learning through video, learning through online learning and learning through social media

Reseach Framework

This study uses qualitative approach, which data collection using survey instrument through online (Google Form). Respondents selected are students from Semester A221 who have gone

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through language courses in School of Language, Civilisation and Philosophy, Universiti Utara Malaysia. The survey form contains demographic questions and also questions to extract information showing the ideal duration for learning a language online.

Pilot Test

A pilot test has been done towards 60 respondents consist of students who has taken language course in semester A212 in testing the validity of survey set and looking at the weaknesses that might exist while making sure the realibility of the study instrument developed. According to Fraenkel dan Wallen (1996), a pilot test is a small research done to identify the weakness of research instruments and procedure. Pilot reseach also an early study executed in small scale, with multiple purposes and needed to be done before an instrument can be used. Apart from that, pilot test can identify problems that might arise and some aspects that can be improved to increase the quality of the questions in the survey. As for this research, the pilot test is done to see the total ideal and suitable time to be inserted in the question set. In this research, 26 feedback forms received and analysed. The result found was there is no significant problem which made the respondents make a mistake thus mutilate the form or made the form to be rejected. Based on the result from this pilot test, there are a few improvements made for the reseach question set in getting one set of questions that can be used and suitable woith the research objective.

Research Analysis

Table 1: Differences In Time Period Or Ideal Hours Based On Gender

	Time period	Question				
		No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4	No.5
Male students (25)	30 minutes	3	3	11	5	2
	45 minutes	7	11	8	3	9
	60 minutes	12	9	1	11	9
	1 hour 15 minutes	3	2	5	6	5
Total		25	25	25	25	25
Female students (66)	30 minutes	9	9	24	10	14
	45 minutes	21	29	19	25	21
	60 minutes	27	19	16	17	19
	1 hour 15 minutes	9	9	7	14	11
Total		66	66	66	66	65*

According to the data shown in Table 1, there is a total of 25 male students and 66 female students. In response to the first question on the extent of concentration on the subject matter, it was observed that both male and female students exhibited the longest duration of 60 minutes. Regarding the second question pertaining to the focus in group discussion activities, it is seen that both male and female students exhibit a preference for a duration of 45 minutes. Specifically, 11 male students and 29 female students concur on this time frame. In response to the third question, which pertains to the utilisation of video as an instructional tool within the classroom setting, both male and female students indicated a preference for a concise duration of 30 minutes as the optimal timeframe for maintaining their attention and engagement. There were 11 male and 24 female students. The fourth question demonstrates a discernible disparity

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in the selection of time periods for maintaining concentration among male and female students. In the context of online learning, it was observed that male students exhibited a preference for a 60-minute time period to maintain their attention, with a total of 11 individuals. Conversely, female students shown a preference for a 45-minute time period to sustain their focus, with a total of 25 individuals. In relation to questions pertaining to social media, male participants indicated a preference for time intervals of 45 minutes and 60 minutes to maintain their concentration. This preference was shared by a total of 9 individuals. A cohort of 21 female students collectively determined that a duration of 45 minutes was optimal for maintaining their concentration while using social media platforms for educational purposes. In response to question 5, the female student population decreased by one participant due to the absence of a response among the available alternatives.

Discussions

This section discusses the research findings in accordance with the research question "Is there a difference in ideal hours based on gender?" The conclusions are discussed in the following section.

The data indicate that there is no significant difference between male and female students regarding the optimal time for them to maintain concentration during language learning in the lecture hall. Nonetheless, some findings from other studies, such as the study by Ahlam, Aryn, Andrew, and Jacob (2020), indicate that male and female students differ of opinion. According to their research, male students demonstrated a diminished capacity for self-directed learning. The findings of Chyung (2007) regarding online learning for male and female students in terms of performance, motivation, perception, and learning practises are comparable. The study discovered that female students are more capable than male students of enhancing performance and self-efficacy. Although Chyung (2007) and Ahlam, Aryn, Andrew, and Jacob (2020) did not concentrate on study time, both studies concluded that female students are more adept at online learning than male students. In addition, this study reveals some very intriguing results.

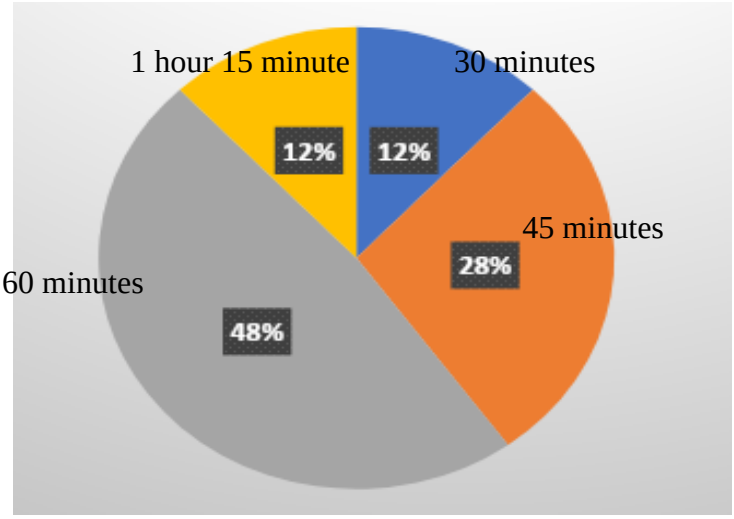


Figure 1: Percentage Of Male Students' Focus On Learning Topics

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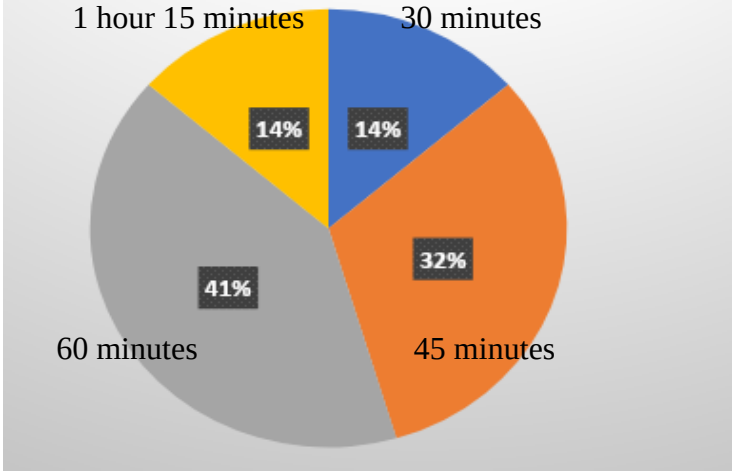


Figure 2 : Percentage Of Female Students' Focus On Learning Topics

Based on the analysis of Figure 1 and Figure 2 shown above, the research reveals that there is no statistically significant disparity in the proportion of students' attention time between males and females. The maximum duration observed is 60 minutes, representing a proportion of 40 percent or more for both. Upon further analysis, it becomes evident that a greater proportion of male students exhibit sustained attention for a duration of 60 minutes compared to their female counterparts, with a discernible discrepancy of 7 percent. Despite the relatively modest proportion, this result has distinctiveness since it elucidates a disparity in levels of concentration between male and female students. This conclusion diverges with the prevailing perception that male students often exhibit a more aggressive learning style, perhaps resulting in a broad generalisation of their perceived lack of discipline. Female students have a greater inclination towards discipline and see quiet as a beneficial approach in the language acquisition process, in contrast to their male counterparts.

Conclusion

In language teaching and learning, instructors play a crucial role in organising the allocation of study time in order to ensure the quality of instruction and acquisition. However, the length of time does not solely depend on the instructional personnel. For the teaching and learning process to be well-balanced, students' perspectives must also be taken into account. A stable and objective teaching and learning process will result in improved learning quality. Quality is just as essential as quantity. In other words, learning for an extended period of time is not advantageous if the learning is ineffective.

The study also reveals that there is no significant difference between male and female students regarding the optimal time period or hours for maintaining focus.It is anticipated that this study will be expanded to include physical classes in addition to online classes, as study classes are beginning to return to their original method which is face-to-face. In addition, the study is conducted not only for language courses, but for all courses offered at Universiti Utara Malaysia, in order to obtain a period of student concentration in the learning process to aid lecturers in lesson planning. By comparing the student's focus period to methods or activities in class, the instructor will be able to arrange teaching topics according to difficult to simple topics based on the student's focus period. In conclusion, the researchers anticipate that this study can serve as a guide for enhancing the level of teaching and learning in language instruction at Universiti Utara Malaysia.

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