PREDICTORS OF STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH A HYBRID ENGLISH COURSE

Ornprapat SUWANTARATHIP
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1037-8800
Language Institute, Bangkok University
Phathum Thani, Thailand

Received Date: 07/03/2018 **Accepted Date:** 19/04/2018

ABSTRACT

Hybrid learning is becoming a crucial part of education in the 21st century. It is one of the most popular methods that has been accepted and used in many educational institutions all over the world. Therefore, hybrid learning was adopted in an intermediate English course at a private university in the first semester of the 2017 academic year. This paper studied the satisfaction with the hybrid course of 415 students who experienced a hybrid learning environment (online classes + face-to-face classes) and investigated factors which predicted their satisfaction. The instrument was a five-part questionnaire in a five-rating scale format. The results of the study revealed that the students' satisfaction with the hybrid course was at a high level. Although computer literacy, attitudes toward hybrid learning, perceptions of the instructor and perceptions of online learning showed positive correlations with students' satisfaction, these variables were not predictors of satisfaction. In the same vein, gender was not found to be a factor that impacted satisfaction. From this study, attitudes toward hybrid learning were the only one significant predictor for students' satisfaction with the course. The conclusion part addressed several issues for future course improvement.

Keywords: Hybrid learning, language teaching, online, satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

In the past decade, technology has been developed and involved in our lives. This also includes our current education system which is an outstanding example. Traditional teaching and learning approaches have been changed. Bonk (2011) stated that anyone can now learn anything at any time. According to Dabbs (2012), instructors are now facing new challenges of planning appropriate lessons and being proficient at using the technology to provide instruction for learners. Selecting the right devices for students is necessary and crucial. Every selected device must be in good working condition.

This concept has led to a mixture of instructional modalities which has been commonly called "hybrid learning." Hybrid learning is an educational approach that combines conventional classroom methods with online learning activities. This means that learners are able to learn both from common traditional approaches and from web-based programs and instruction. Designing a hybrid learning environment is definitely challenging for instructors. Since technology is among the first elements to be considered in hybrid learning, educational institutions must ensure that they provide sufficient bandwidth on the Internet connection that all students are able to access. In hybrid learning, there should be at least one learning platform where online instructional materials are put or exercises can be done in order to support learning (Ahmad & Ismail, 2013).

The hybrid format which is a mixture of online learning and face-to-face methods helps instructors to manage class more successfully. In hybrid learning, when instructors have limited time to teach students in face-to-face meetings, they can provide online activities containing related content that students can study from remote locations such as their homes. Online learning, therefore, is a flexible learning option for students. They can choose what or when they want to learn. If they are not able to catch up while learning in class, they can go back to online lessons as often as they want. According to Ahmad and Ismail (2013), hybrid learning offers students the freedom of time, yet eliminates the limitation of location. However, learners must be responsible and self-disciplined.

Even though the positive aspects of hybrid learning have been widely mentioned, there have been some problems in this leaning method. Some students may have to put in a lot of effort. They may not feel familiar with this learning style. Online instruction may be appropriate for autonomous learners. This is in accordance with the leading change in public higher education that students who are competent, self-directed and have time-management skills can be successful learners. In addition, student support is also another important aspect. Students need technology skills to operate technological tools. They may struggle to deal with online materials, references, assignments submission and even final quiz (Hartoyo, 2012). Some students may feel less satisfied with the online instruction than the traditional method because they feel that they gain more knowledge through face-to-face instruction even though there is no difference in course content (Peterson & Bond, 2004).

Student Satisfaction with Hybrid Learning

An essential part of hybrid learning, student satisfaction is achieved when "students are successful in the learning and are pleased with their experience" (Moore, 2009). Sweeney and Ingram in 2001 also defined student satisfaction along the same lines when they put emphasis on enjoyment and accomplishment. Fun and learning feature predominantly in hybrid learning. According to Wu, Tennyson, and Hsia (2010), satisfaction refers to the aggregate of how a student feels and thinks which is derived from combining all the beneficial aspects of a hybrid learning environment. Knox, Lindsay, and Kolb (1993) propose that students highly value their tertiary education because they have to put in no small amount of time, money, and hard work. Student satisfaction and student motivation are closely related in that the former determines the latter (Chute, Thompson, & Hancock, 1999; Donahue & Wong, 1997). The more an institution can satisfy students in terms of their expectations, the more effectively those students can serve as examples of the institution's accomplishments. There are three very convincing reasons why student satisfaction is so significant (Sinclaire, 2011). First, it works as an impetus for continuous learning. Second, it is in a way how students assess the quality of the educational system. The higher the level of student satisfaction, the higher the rate of retention and the possibility of students taking more courses (Booker & Rebman, 2005). Third, there are no better advertisements than students with a high level of satisfaction when it comes to the reputation of an institution. This naturally tends to attract more prospective students. Consequently, it is necessary to understand the various elements that influence student satisfaction.

Factors Affecting Satisfaction with the Hybrid Course

In the hybrid learning setting, the levels of learner satisfaction are impacted by quite a few elements. Bollinger and Martindale (2004) have pointed out that the instructor and technology have a great impact on satisfaction. Other elements like attitude toward hybrid learning and the ability to use computers also play a part when it comes to learner satisfaction.

The first factor which is found to be related to satisfaction is the instructor. The instructor can anticipate the level of student satisfaction with the course (Finaly-Neumann, 1994; Williams & Ceci, 1997). The level of student satisfaction is closely related to the instructor, especially whether the instructor allows enough time for students who seek advice (DeBourgh, 1999; Hiltz, 1993). Moreover, the instructor should make the process of learning easier and more convenient and inspire students to learn (Finaly-Neumann, 1994).

The instructor's well-timed comments on students' assignments can encourage and inspire students (Smith & Dillon, 1999). Constant interaction with students goes a long way toward lessening their dissatisfaction (Hara & Kling, 2003). Lin and Vassar (2009) add that students' capacity to cope with technical difficulty, adequate skills in computer operation, and Internet searching are indicative of students' success and satisfaction.

The next factor that should not be overlooked is the online learning part. Since hybrid learning contains an online part, technologies have the potential to enrich the learning experience of learners. Students with good computer literacy can do better than those who are poor at using computers. Therefore, this factor may have something to do with satisfaction. According to Belanger and Jordan (2000), students must be familiar with the technology used in the course in order to be successful. If they are frustrated with technology, they may express less satisfaction (Hara & Kling, 2003).

Webster and Hackley (1997) suggest that besides the instructor and the course, one other factor that influences learner satisfaction with online learning is technology. One finding is that when a student finds it easy to use technology in learning, this will indirectly influence the student's willingness to use it. Similarly, studies by Leidner, Jarvenpaa, Dillon and Gunawardena as cited in Selim (2007) also propose that the instructor, the learner, and the technology involved are the three key elements for the success of hybrid learning.

Gender is another factor that might have an impact on satisfaction. According to Askar, Altun, and Ilgaz (2008), in terms of satisfaction with hybrid learning, male and female students exhibited no significant differences, but female students outscored male students in the face-to-face setting. Adas and Abu Shmais (2011) echoed the same results. Nevertheless, Al-Fadhli (2008) found that gender differences affected students' attitudes toward hybrid learning. Female students viewed hybrid learning in a very positive light and they outperformed male students in terms of scores. Yet there were others who argued that male students favored hybrid learning more than female students did (Koohang, 2004).

Attitude is the last factor that should not be overlooked. When investigating satisfaction, one of the significant factors that has been mentioned in many studies is attitude (Kintu & Zhu, 2016; Kintu, Zhu, & Kagambe, 2017). According to Owston, York, and Murtha (2013), perception is found to have impacted on students' grades. Students with high academic success regard their course favorably and maintain that their studies have improved because the course has been made more readily accessible and it enables learners to get involved. According to Green, Hood, and Neumann (2015), students' satisfaction was dependent on their attitudes and self-discipline.

Purposes of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to gauge the significance of satisfaction levels among students whose English course was conducted with the hybrid approach. How students respond to the hybrid approach is crucial as it reflects their perception of the learning method and helps to determine the well-balanced amount of online learning and classroom learning. Students' levels of satisfaction serve as a key determiner when it comes to assessing the merits of a course. In this regard, important factors including gender, computer literacy, instructor, online learning system, and attitudes toward hybrid learning were also examined to see whether they have any effects on satisfaction. The findings can benefit those who are responsible for formulating curricula and courses as they can build on the findings and make substantial improvements on the current educational system (Wu, Tennyson, & Hsia, 2010).

The five research questions guiding this study included:

- Are the students satisfied with the hybrid course?
- How do the students rate their computer literacy?
- What are their attitudes toward hybrid learning?
- How do the students perceive instructor and online learning of the hybrid course?
- What factors can predict the students' satisfaction with the hybrid course?

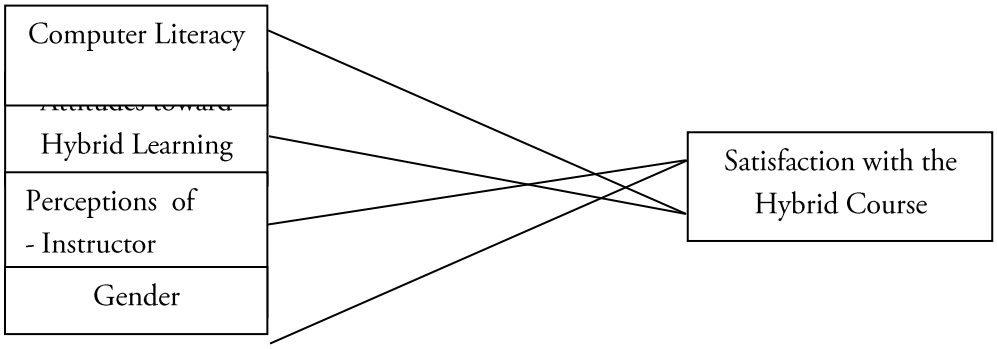


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Study

METHODOLOGY

Research Design & Participants

The research study employed an exploratory research approach. The research questions were designed to investigate the students' satisfaction with the course and factors that might predict the satisfaction. Quantitative data were gathered through a questionnaire from four hundred and fifteen students who were taking an intermediate English course entitled EN013 (hybrid course). They were enrolled in the first semester of the academic year 2017. It was a 3-unit credit course which was usually taken by second-year students from different fields of study. 61.4% of the surveyed participants were male while 38.6% were female. They were from different faculties such as Business Administration, Accounting, Humanities and Tourism, Fine and Applied Arts etc. In addition, 77.2 % of them did not have experience of hybrid learning while 22.8 % stated that they had experienced hybrid learning.

Research Instruments

The instrument used to collect the data was a questionnaire containing six parts. I developed this questionnaire specifically for this study. The first part was about gender and prior experience of hybrid learning. The second part, consisting of 5 items, surveyed about students' satisfaction with the hybrid learning designed for this course. Parts 3, which contained 4 items, investigated their perception of instructors. Part 4 containing 9 items investigated their perception of online learning. The next part, which consisted of 5 items, surveyed their attitudes toward hybrid learning. The last part containing 9 items asked them to evaluate their computer literacy. Parts 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 contained questions in a form of five-point Likert rating scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree). Three Language Institute instructors had studied and made comments on the rough draft of the questionnaire. As evaluated to find out the content validity by three instructors, values of all parts were higher than 0.5. The initial trial of the questionnaire was then carried out with a selected group of students. The reliability coefficients of Cronbach's alpha for the five parts were .88, .78, .86, .82 and .92 respectively.

Hybrid Course Format

In the first semester of 2017 academic year, the traditional learning format of EN013 was converted to a hybrid format. The hybrid learning comprised three main parts: face-to-face, online, and chat center. For

online instruction, there are three learning platforms which are OCW, Touchstone Online Learning and Speexx. Each platform is worth 10 points except Touchstone Online (5 points). The first platform is OCW. OCW stands for Open Courseware. It is a digital publication that provides necessary learning materials for students. Each student has to visit http://ocw.bu.ac.th and follow the learning instructions for each period before coming to class in the following week. The learning materials on OCW include introduction sheets, wrap-up video clips, OCW quizzes, and what to prepare for the next class. Also, students have to complete 5 OCW quizzes, one for each period. Each quiz is worth 2 points. Students, hence, have to visit the OCW site in weeks 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13. OCW in week 13 is the extra part, so there is no quiz in that week. The second platform is Touchstone Online Learning. In this platform, students are required to complete the online exercises from www.cambridgelms.org/main. In order to get full score, students have to complete both Coursebook and Workbook exercises on time. The last platform is Speexx, which is an online language training and testing program. Students can practice and test their English language skills through this program. This activity is done outside of class. As it is a cloud- based online program, it can be accessed anywhere via home computers or any mobile devices with Internet connection. Before and after Speexx practice, each student has to take the pre-test and post-tests respectively to measure their skill development. For the pre-test, students automatically get 2 points just from taking the test, regardless of their test scores. For the post-test, their post-test scores are calculated by the program. If they can do 80 percent of the test correctly, they will get 8 points. The pre-test and post-test total 10 points.

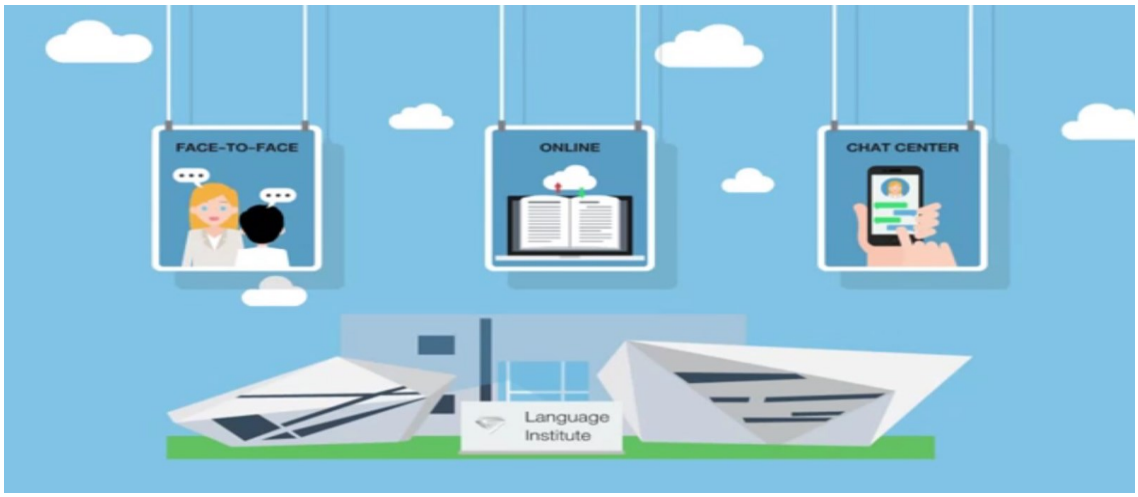


Figure 2. Hybrid Learning Format

Face-to-face is the traditional learning approach. The students have to come to study in class as usual. Teachers emphasize the important content and students do group assignments during this time. There are five assignments; one is individual work and the remaining assignments are group work. There are 55 points for in-class assignments (10,11,12,12, and 10 points). Each week students have to visit OCW after coming to class, so they are able to go back to practice what they have learned in class from OCW. Moreover, they can know in advance what they are going to prepare for their next class. These in-class assignments include four skills (reading, speaking, writing and listening). Therefore, in weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12, students have to be in the classroom.

The last channel is the Chat Center. The Chat Center is set up to supplement online learning weeks. Those who have questions related to this course can use this channel to get the answers or the information needed. At the Chat Center, there are teachers who are ready to provide the information and the answers through online channels such as LINE or Google Hangouts. Moreover, the students can come to meet the teachers at the Chat Center, where training is also provided for weak students. Apart from online channels and the

Chat Center meeting, the Chat Center also offers live tutorial sessions which students can attend to review each week's lesson. The Chat Center's schedule is announced every week through the Language Institute's Facebook page and emails.

Week	Activities	
Week 1	Lecture Hall	*Chat Center (Optional)
Week 2	Introduction: Classroom	
Week 3	Period 1: ONLINE Touchstone & OCW	
Week 4	Period 1: Classroom	
Week 5	Period 2: ONLINE Touchstone & OCW	
Week 6	Period 2: Classroom	
Week 7	Period 3: ONLINE Touchstone & OCW	
Week 8	Period 3: Classroom	
Week 9	Period 4: ONLINE Touchstone & OCW	
Week 10	Period 4: Classroom	
Week 11	Period 5: ONLINE Touchstone & OCW	
Week 12	Period 5: Classroom	
Week 13	Period 6: ONLINE EXTRA	
Week 14	Online Exam in language lab	

Figure 3. Hybrid Course Plan (Online + F2F Class Meetings)

Data Analysis

For data analysis, a descriptive analysis was conducted to report the mean scores and standard deviations and presented in tables based on the following ranges: 1.00-1.50 = very low, 1.51-2.50 = low, 2.51-3.50 = moderate, 3.51-4.50 = high, 4.51-5.00 = very high. Correlation coefficients were used to find out whether four factors including computer literacy, attitudes toward hybrid learning, perceptions of instructor, and perceptions of online learning had any relationships with the students' satisfaction with hybrid learning. Linear regression was conducted by using stepwise method to find out any predictors of satisfaction.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: Are the students satisfied with the hybrid course?

The data of students' satisfaction with hybrid learning were analyzed by mean and standard deviation and the results were presented in Table 1. From Table 1, the overall mean score of satisfaction was at a high level (Mean = 3.84). When considering all the items, it was found that the highest mean score was "The proportion of face-to-face and online learning is satisfactory", which was also at a high level (Mean = 3.90), followed by "The format of hybrid learning is suitable", which was at a high level (Mean = 3.89). The lowest mean score was item no. 5 "Assignments and activities are interesting.", which was also at a high level (Mean = 3.71).

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Satisfaction with the Hybrid Course

Statement	Mean	S.D.	Level
1. The proportion of face-to-face and online learning was satisfactory (face-to-face = 50%, online = 50%).	3.90	.90	high
2. The format of hybrid learning was suitable. (face-to-face + online + chat center)	3.89	.92	high
3. Learning content in the course was useful.	3.85	.93	high
4. Grading criteria and evaluation were appropriate.	3.84	.95	high
5. Assignments and activities were interesting.	3.71	.97	high
Total	3.84	.81	high

Research Question 2: How do the students rate their computer literacy?

From Table 2, it was found that the overall mean score of students' computer literacy was at a high level (Mean = 4.12). It is interesting to see that all items were rated at high levels. When considering each item, it was found that the three activities students were able to do the best were using e-mail (Mean = 4.29), assessing websites (Mean = 4.20), and receiving files electronically (Mean = 4.19).

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations of Computer Literacy

Statement	Mean	S.D.	Level
1. Using e-mail	4.29	.71	high
2. Typing and using the keyboard	4.17	.68	high
3. Accessing websites	4.20	.73	high
4. Sending files electronically	4.13	.75	high
5. Receiving files electronically	4.19	.74	high
6. Downloading files electronically	4.07	.77	high
7. Downloading multimedia content such as videos	3.89	.84	high
8. Listening via computers	4.13	.76	high
9. Watching videos via computers	4.08	.84	high
Total	4.12	.60	high

Research Question 3: What are their attitudes toward hybrid learning?

Table 3 indicates that students had positive attitudes toward hybrid learning. Among the five items, they rated item no. 5 the highest (Hybrid learning could improve their autonomous learning skills, Mean = 3.92), followed by item no. 4 (I found hybrid learning for language skills development, Mean = 3.88). However, item no. 1 (I had more convenience in hybrid learning) was rated the lowest (Mean = 3.72).

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations of Attitudes toward Hybrid Learning

Statement	Mean	S.D.	Level
1. I had more convenience in hybrid learning.	3.72	.99	positive
2. Hybrid learning was a good learning experience.	3.77	1.00	positive
3. Hybrid learning helped me to become self-disciplined.	3.82	.98	positive
4. I found hybrid learning useful for language skill development.	3.88	.94	positive
5. Hybrid learning improved my autonomous learning skills.	3.92	.93	positive
Total	3.80	.90	positive

Research Question 4: How do the students perceive instructor and online learning of the hybrid course?

The results in Table 4 indicate that students had a high level of perception of the instructor (Mean = 4.27). When considering all the items, it was found that the highest mean score was on the accessibility and availability of the instructor (Mean = 3.35), followed by receiving clear communication about the class assignments (Mean = 4.29). The lowest mean score was on the fluent use of technology (Mean = 4.20). All of the items were at high levels.

Table 4. Means and Standard Deviations of Perceptions of Instructor

Statement	Mean	S.D.	Level
1. The instructor used blended learning technology fluently.	4.20	.70	high
2. The class assignments were clearly communicated to me.	4.29	.75	high
3. The instructor provided feedback on assignments in a timely manner.	4.25	.73	high
4. I was satisfied with the accessibility and availability of the instructor.	4.35	.76	high
Total	4.27	.64	high

Table 5 demonstrated that students had a high level of perceptions of online learning that the course provided (Mean = 3.85). Furthermore, the three highest scores were on item no. 8 (I could control the pace of my own learning in online platforms, Mean = 4.02), item no.5 (The online materials were easy to follow, Mean = 3.97), and item no. 1 (The technologies used for hybrid learning were user-friendly, Mean = 3.89). The lowest mean score of perception was on item no. 2 (The design of the learning modules was motivating, Mean = 3.74).

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations of Perceptions of Online Learning

Statement	Mean	S.D.	Level
1. The technologies used for hybrid learning were user-friendly.	3.89	.87	high
2. The design of the learning modules was motivating.	3.74	.99	high
3. The application of these technologies was in a satisfactory speed.	3.84	.94	high
4. Technical problems that occurred when I studied online were not frequent.	3.76	.94	high
5. The online materials were easy to follow.	3.97	.81	high
6. The online exercises were helpful in understanding the course content.	3.86	.87	high
7. I didn't have any difficulty managing my time for the online part of the course.	3.80	.96	high
8. I could control the pace of my own learning in online platforms.	4.02	.79	high
9. Online learning enabled me to revise what I learned as much as possible.	3.80	.91	high
Total	3.85	.73	high

Research Question 5: What factors can predict the students' satisfaction with the hybrid course?

This study was conducted to find out the factors that predicted students' satisfaction with the hybrid course. Based on the correlation analysis, it was found that student satisfaction was positively correlated with four factors comprising the instructor ($r = .186$, $p < .01$), online learning ($r = .389$, $p < .01$), attitudes ($r = .452$, $p < .01$), and computer literacy ($r = .257$, $p < .01$). That is, the higher the students' perceptions of the

instructor and online learning, the higher their satisfaction. Moreover, when students had positive attitudes toward hybrid learning, they tended to have a high level of satisfaction. Students who were able to handle with computer tended to have a high level of satisfaction too. These positive relationships existed at low and moderate levels. However, it is interesting to see that online learning and attitudes toward hybrid learning were the only one pair with high correlation ($r > 0.80$).

Table 6. Intercorrelations among Variables

	Instructor	Online learning	Attitudes	Computer Literacy
Satisfaction	.186**	.389**	.452**	.257**
Instructor		.505**	.374**	.495**
Online learning			.837**	.574**
Attitude				.474**

**p< .01

Then data were analyzed by using linear regression (stepwise method). In order to find out which factors could be predictors of satisfaction with the hybrid course, four factors including gender, perceptions of instructor, perceptions of online learning, attitudes toward hybrid learning, and computer literacy were entered into the regression equation as independent variables while satisfaction was an dependent variable. Based on Table 7, attitude toward hybrid learning was the only one significant predictor for student satisfaction with the course. The findings showed correlation relationships between satisfaction and attitude at a moderate level (R = .452). The results showed standard error of estimate of .72138. The ANOVA test result indicated that p-value was less than .01 (F = 106.234, p = .001). The output generated the significant predictive model where the increase of attitude had an influence on satisfaction while other variables were excluded from the equation. The R square was .205, so this predictor accounted for 20.5 % of the variance. The equation is as follows: $\hat{y} = 2.297 + 0.406$ (attitude). In conclusion, gender, computer literacy, perceptions of instructor, and perceptions of online learning could not be used to predict learner satisfaction while attitude toward hybrid learning was a predictor, but it was not a strong one.

Table 7. Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Satisfaction

Predictor variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	2.297	.154		14.948	.000
attitude	.406	.039	.452	10.307	.000

R = 0.452, R2 = 0.205

DISCUSSION

The current study aimed at finding the factors that had an impact on student satisfaction with the hybrid course. There are many important issues to be discussed as follows:

The first discussion is on high satisfaction with the hybrid course. This indicated that students did not encounter many problems, so the course was accepted by them. According to Wu, Tennyson, and Hsia (2010), satisfaction refers to the aggregate of how a student feels and thinks which is derived from combining all the beneficial aspects of a hybrid learning environment. The finding can be explained by several reasons.

First of all, they were satisfied with the proportion of face-to-face (50 %) and online learning (50%). This enabled them to save money on traveling. Secondly, this was an intermediate course taken by the second year students, so they preferred to study with the new learning format. Moreover, when compared with the traditional approach, this new learning format was considered an appropriate learning format. Providing multiple learning channels can be the answer why students were satisfied with the hybrid course. Offering students choices can benefit student learning. If they miss a face-to-face session, they still have a chance to go back and study by themselves through online materials. Students are being taught even while they are online. The Chat Center is also another good assistant. When they have questions related to the course, they can get answers or the information needed from this channel.

For hybrid courses, dealing with online materials, assignments submission and the final test might be difficult for some students with poor computer literacy. The finding reveals that the overall computer literacy was at a high level. This shows that students had no problems with technological tools which were employed in the online part. Therefore, in the current study, it was found that computer literacy had a slightly positive correlation with satisfaction ($p < .01$, $R = .257$). According to Hara and Kling (2003), possessing high computer literacy skills can positively affect their satisfaction with the course. This is due to the fact that students were satisfied when they could operate the technological tools. For this generation, students have become more attached to technology. Even though they had not had any experience with hybrid learning, they did not seem to face any learning obstacles. It may be concluded that students' satisfaction with the course comes from their ability to deal with technical problems and competent computer skills (Lin & Vassar, 2009).

When investigating the attitudes toward hybrid learning, the finding shows that the students had positive attitudes toward hybrid learning. Among the five items, item no.5 "hybrid learning improved my autonomous learning skills" got the highest mean score. This is probably because students placed a lot of importance on time spent on online learning and face-to-face learning. This learning approach can lessen the students' worry about time and place to complete their tasks. Suitable division of time for learning can lead to students' higher satisfaction. The earlier discovery supported the current finding that students preferred to have more freedom of time and this learning platform could eliminate time and place barriers (Ahmad & Ismail, 2013). It is not surprising why a positive relationship was found between attitudes toward hybrid learning and satisfaction with the course ($p < .01$, $R = .452$). That is, when students had positive attitudes toward hybrid learning, they tended to have a high level of satisfaction. This result is consistent with that in the study of Owston, York, and Murtha (2013). This is probably because hybrid learning was introduced to them on their orientation day; students understood what hybrid learning was and knew what they had to perform throughout the semester.

This study not only found students' good perceptions of the instructor, but also positive relationship between perceptions of the instructor and satisfaction with the course ($p < .01$, $R = .186$). Two possible reasons can be used to explain as follows. Firstly, their instructors provided enough help and support both inside and outside class. Although they were accustomed to traditional teacher-directed pedagogical learning environments, interaction with the instructor was still needed in a hybrid course where autonomous learning was utilized (Peterson & Bond, 2004). All instructors teaching the course realized the importance of communication. So, they provided various channels of communication such as LINE, email, and the Chat Center. Timely feedback on students' performance can help promote students' learning (Smith & Dillion, 1999). On the contrary, delayed feedback might cause the feeling of resentment in students. Thus, teacher accessibility and availability of the instructor contributes crucially to students' satisfaction. Lastly, all instructors teaching the hybrid course used blended learning technology fluently. Especially, when there were any problems concerning online platforms, they could have solutions for all troubles. The result was in accordance with what Bollinger and Martindale (2004) found in that students' satisfaction could be

influenced by the instructor. Students' satisfaction can be anticipated by the instructor (Finaly-Neumann, 1994).

When investigating the perceptions of online learning, the finding shows that students had a high level of perceptions of online learning that course provided. Among the nine items, item no. 8 "I could control the pace of my own learning in online platforms" got the highest mean score. This is probably because hybrid learning offered a more flexible learning option for students. The online part enables students to learn at their own pace. According to Ahmad and Ismail (2013), hybrid learning offers students the freedom of time, yet eliminates the limitation of location. A study indicated that technology used in online learning influenced learner satisfaction (Naaj et al., 2012).That is why perceptions of online learning were positively related to satisfaction with the course as found in this study ($p<.01$, $R = .389$). This might be because the designs of the three learning platforms were user-friendly; they could go through exercises and materials on platforms well. The contents in video clips were rather motivating.

On closer inspection, the interconnection among several factors in this study should be brought to discussion. It is interesting to see that perceptions of online learning were positively correlated to computer literacy skills at a moderate level ($p< .01$, $r = .574$). This is in accordance with Webster and Hackley, (1997) who stated that having good perceptions of online learning could be influenced by the familiarity of students with technology. Students with good perceptions of online learning tend to have high computer literacy as they do not face any technological difficulty while learning online. Frustration with educational technology can lead to low level of learning satisfaction (Hara & Kling, 2003). Moreover, there is one noteworthy aspect regarding a highly positive relationship between two factors namely, attitudes toward hybrid learning and perceptions of online learning ($p < .01$, $r = .837$). Their correlation can be explained with the highest mean scores of both factors. For "attitudes toward hybrid learning", the students rated "Hybrid learning improved my autonomous learning skills" the highest. As for "perceptions of online learning", the students rated "I could control the pace of my own learning in online platforms" the highest. This demonstrated the interconnection between the two highest-rated items, showing that when students were able to manage their own online learning pace, thus they felt they improved their independent learning skills.

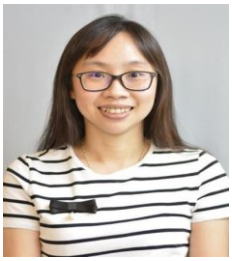
Regarding the positive relationships, computer literacy, instructor, online learning as well as attitudes toward hybrid learning were regarded as factors that might predict the students' satisfaction. However, after a linear regression was conducted, attitude toward hybrid learning was found to be the only one factor for predicting satisfaction in this study. More favorable attitudes toward hybrid learning indicate higher satisfaction with the course. Therefore, creating positive attitudes among students was considered important. The result was consistent with the findings of Kinto, Zhu, and Kagambe (2016) in that the significant factor that predicted satisfaction in a blended learning course was learner attitudes. According to Green, Hood and Nuemann (2015), how students viewed the course and how satisfied they were with the course were closely related. However, the current result was different from the study conducted by Eom, Wen, and Ashill (2006) who found that interaction was significant for learner satisfaction.

In the current study, the four factors comprising gender, computer literacy, instructor, and online learning were not found to be predictors of their satisfaction with the hybrid course. Regarding gender, both male and female students had to complete the same given assignments which were the requirement of the course. They learned from the same learning platforms to obtain knowledge, so gender seemed to have no effect on their satisfaction. The findings were found to be similar to the previous studies (Adas & Abu Shmais, 2011; Askar, Altun, & Ilgaz, 2008) which found that the students' satisfaction was not affected by gender. Meanwhile, students highly agreed that computer skills became very important in the new learning format. If they were not good at technology, they tried to familiarize the new tools or equipment. In addition, they accepted that both instructors and students were new to hybrid learning, and the online learning platforms that were set in the course were like a new experience.

CONCLUSION

Hybrid learning is the integration of online learning and the classroom environment which combines the advantages of both learning formats. In this research, data analysis from the survey has shown that the proportion of face-to-face and online learning is satisfactory. It is, therefore, important to balance the contents of the online session with those of the face-to-face one. Proper Instructional design is still one of the most important elements that provide learners with meaningful opportunities. Planning and preparing the appropriate instructional materials should be seriously considered. Most importantly, attitude has become the most significant predictor of students' overall satisfaction, so creating and maintaining an optimistic attitude among students is needed for hybrid learning. The study of students' satisfaction with hybrid learning is crucial and should not be neglected. The results from this study can be used as a course evaluation and future course improvement. In addition, although computer literacy is not an obstacle of hybrid learning, it should be taken into account. Educational institutions should provide a small training workshop before offering hybrid classes to make students feel familiar with technology. By doing so, students may reduce their stress.

BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESSES of AUTHOR



Ornprapat SUWANTARATHIP is a full-time teacher with 13 years of teaching experience at Language Institute, Bangkok University. She obtained her Master's degree in Linguistics from Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. Her field of interest is in English Language teaching. She is currently working as a coordinator of two courses (EN003: English for Global Communication, EN 014: English for Exploring the World) at Language Institute, Bangkok University, Thailand. She has presented research papers at international conferences.

Ornprapat SUWANTARATHIP
Language Institute
Address: Bangkok University, 12120, Phathum Thani, Thailand
Phone: +662 9020922 ext. 2680
E-mail: ornprapat.s@bu.ac.th

REFERENCES

Adas, D., & Abu Shmais, W. (2011). Students' perceptions towards blended learning environment using the OCC. An-Niajah University Journal of Research—*Humanities, 25(*6), 1681-1710.

Ahmad, Z., & Ismail, I. Z. (2013). Utilization of hybrid learning in accomplishing learning satisfaction as perceived by university student. *International Journal of E-Education, E-Business, E-Management and E-Learning*, 3(2), 98–101.

Al-Fadhli, S. (2008). Students'perceptions of e-learning in Arab society: Kuwait University as a case study. *E-Learning and Digital media, 5(4)*, 418-428.

Askar, P., Altun, A., & Ilgaz, H. (2008). Learner satisfaction on blended learning. In *E-Leader Conference*, Krakow, Poland.

Belanger, F., & Jordan, D. H. (2000). *Evaluation and implementation of distance learning: Technologies, tools and techniques*. Hershey, PA: Idea Publishing Group.

Bolliger, D. U., & Martindale, T. (2004). Key factors for determining student satisfaction in online courses. International Journal on E-Learning, 3(1), 61-67.

Bonk, C. J. (2011). *The world is open: how web technology is revolutionizing education*. USA: Jossey-Bass.

Booker, Q. E., & Rebman, C. (2005). *E-student retention: Factors affecting customer loyalty for online program success. Issues in Information Systems, 1(1)* 183-189.

Chute, A. G., Thompson, M. M., & Hancock, B. W. (1997). *The McGraw-Hill handbook of distance learning*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Dabbs, L. (2002). *Blended learning: We are all new teachers*. Retrieved from https://www.edutopia.org/blog/blended-learning-getting-started-lisa-dabbs.

DeBourgh, G.A. (1999). Technology Is The Tool, Teaching Is The Task: Student Satisfaction In Distance Learning. In J. Price, J. Willis, D. Willis, M. Jost & S. Boger-Mehall (Eds.), *Proceedings of SITE 1999--Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference* (pp. 131-137). Chesapeake, VA: Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE). Retrieved March 5, 2018 from https://www.learntechlib.org/p/7521/.

Donahue, T. L., & Wong, E. H. (1997). Achievement motivation and college satisfaction in traditional and nontraditional students. *Education,* 118, 237-243.

Eom, S.B., Ashill, N., & Wen, H.J. (2006). The determinants of students' perceived learning outcomes and satisfaction in university online education: An empirical investigation. *Decision Sciences Journal of Innovative Education, 4*(2), 215-235.

Finaly-Neumann, E. (1994). Course work characteristics and students' satisfaction with instruction. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, *21*(1), 14-24.

Green, H. J., Hood, M., & Neumann, D. L. (2015). Predictors of student satisfaction with university psychology courses: A review. *Psychology Learning & Teaching*, *14*(2), 131-146.

Hara, N., & Kling, R. (2003). Students' distress with a web-based distance education course: An ethnographic study of participants' experiences. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education – TOJDE,4(1),* 1-30.

Hartoyo, K. (2012). *Information and communication technology in language learning*. Semarang: PelitaInsani.

Hiltz, S. R. (1993). Correlates of learning in a virtual classroom. *International journal of man-machine studies*, *39*(1), 71-98.

Kintu, M. J., & Zhu, C. (2016).Student characteristics and learning outcomes in a blended learning environment intervention in a Ugandan university. *The Electronic Journal of e-Learning,* 14 (3), 181- 195.

Kintu, M. J., Zhu, C., & Kagambe, E. (2016). *Learner Attitudes as a Factor in Blended Learning Effectiveness: Proceedings of INCEDI 2016 Conference (pp.50-60). Accra, Ghana*

Kintu, M. J., Zhu, C., & Kagambe, E. (2017). Blended learning effectiveness: The relationship between student characteristics, design features and outcomes. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education, 14*(7), 1-20.

Knox, W. E., Lindsay, P., & Kolb, M. N. (1993). *Does college make a difference? Long-term changes in activities and attitudes*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Koohang, A. (2004). Students' perceptions toward the use of the digital library in weekly web-based distance learning assignments portion of a hybrid programme. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 35,* 617-626.

Lin, B., & Vassar, J. A. (2009). Determinants for success in online learning communities. *International Journal of Web Based Communities*, *5*(3), 340-350.

Moore, J. C. (2009). A synthesis of Sloan-C effective practices: December 2009. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks, 13(4)*, 84-94.

Naaj, M. A., Nachouki, M., & Ankit, A. (2012). Evaluating student satisfaction with blended learning in a gender-segregated environment. *Journal of Information Technology Education: Research*, 11, 185-200.

Owston, R., York, D., & Murtha, S. (2013). Students perceptions and achievement in a university blended learning strategic initiative. *Internet and Higher Education, 18,* 38-46.

Peterson, C. L., & Bond, N. (2004). Online compared to FTF teacher preparation for learning standards-based planning skills. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education, 36(4)*, 345–361.

Selim, H. M. (2007). Critical success factors for e-learning acceptance: Confirmatory factor models. *Computers & Education, 49*(2), 396–413.

Sinclaire, J. (2011). Student satisfaction with online learning: Lessons from organizational behavior. *Research in Higher Education Journal, 11*, 1-18.

Smith, P. L., & Dillon, C. L. (1999). Lead article: Comparing distance learning and classroom learning: Conceptual considerations. *American Journal of Distance Education*, *13*(2), 6-23.

Sweeney, J.C., & Ingram, D. (2001). A Comparison of Traditional and Web-Based Tutorials in Marketing Education: An Exploratory Study. *Journal of Marketing Education, 23*(1), 55-62.

Webster, J., & Hackley, P. (1997). Teaching effectiveness in technology-mediated distance learning. *Academy of management journal*, *40*(6), 1282-1309.

Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (1997). "How'm I doing?" Problems with student ratings of instructors and courses. *Change: the magazine of higher learning*, *29*(5), 12-23.

Wu, H., Tennyson, R. D., & Hsia, T. (2010). A study of student satisfaction in a blended e-learning system environment.*Computer and Education, 55*, 155-164.

APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Instructions: Please check (✓) in the box next to the answer of your choice.

Sex

☐ Male ☐ Female

Do you have any hybrid learning experiences?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Instructions: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each item.

5 means you strongly agree with the item.
4 means you agree with the item.
3 means you neither agree nor disagree with the item.
2 means you disagree with the item.
1 means you strongly disagree with the item.

	5	4	3	2	1
Satisfaction with a hybrid course					
1. The proportion of face-to-face to online learning was satisfactory (face-to-face = 50%, online = 50%).					
2. The format of hybrid learning was suitable. (face-to-face + online + chat center)					
3. The learning content in the course was useful.					
4. The grading criteria and evaluation were appropriate.					
5. The assignments and activities were interesting.					
Perception of instructors					
1. The instructor used blended learning technology fluently.					
2. The class assignments were clearly communicated to me.					
3. The instructor provided feedback on assignments in a timely manner.					
4. I was satisfied with the accessibility and availability of the instructor.					
Perception of online learning					
1. The technologies used for hybrid learning were user-friendly.					
2. The design of the learning modules was motivating.					
3. The application of these technologies was at a satisfactory speed.					
4. Technical problems that occurred when I studied online were not frequent.					
5. The online materials were easy to follow.					

6. The online exercises were helpful in understanding the course content.					
7. I didn't have any difficulty managing my time for the online part of the course.					
8. I could control the pace of my own learning in online platforms.					
9. Online learning enabled me to revise what I learned as much as possible.					
Attitudes toward hybrid learning					
1. I had more convenience in hybrid learning.					
2. Hybrid learning was a good learning experience.					
3. Hybrid learning helped me to become self-disciplined.					
4. I found hybrid learning useful for language skill development.					
5. Hybrid learning improved my autonomous learning skills.					
Computer literacy					
1. Using e-mail					
2. Typing and using the keyboard					
3. Accessing websites					
4. Sending files electronically					
5. Receiving files electronically					
6. Downloading files electronically					
7. Downloading multimedia content such as videos					
8. Listening via computers					
9. Watching videos via computers					