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POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ONLINE LEARNING IN A JOINT MA TESOL PROGRAMME: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: Since Covid-19 pandemic, the use of online learning has gained far more currency, not merely in domestic training programs but also in transnational ones. Drawing on a case study of joint MA TESOL program between a Vietnamese college and an Australian college, the researcher investigates the perception of postgraduate students, who are mostly in-service English teachers, towards their online learning experience on LMS (learning management system) as well as Zoom and Microsoft Teams platforms with professors from the two countries. The study employs mixed methods, including a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. 18/43 students in the chosen cohort answered the questionnaire, and three of them attended the interview. The study found that the students' overall perception towards the LMS of the joint program was quite positive, as it was user-friendly and had useful resources although some limitations still existed. Regarding online learning experience on Zoom and Teams, many students admitted that they could not maintain their interest and engagement throughout the online sessions on these platforms though professors employed different techniques.

Keywords: online learning, TESOL, MA, transnational

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NHẬN THỨC CỦA HỌC VIÊN CAO HỌC VỀ HỌC TẬP TRỰC TUYẾN TRONG MỘT CHƯƠNG TRÌNH THẠC SĨ TESOL LIÊN KẾT: MỘT NGHIÊN CỨU ĐIỂN HÌNH

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Tóm tắt: Kể từ sau đại dịch Covid-19, học tập trực tuyến ngày càng trở nên phổ biến, không chỉ với các chương trình học trong nước mà còn cả các chương trình đào tạo xuyên quốc gia. Với phạm vi nghiên cứu là các học viên tham gia một chương trình thạc sĩ TESOL liên kết giữa một trường tại Việt Nam và một trường tại Úc, tác giả tìm hiểu góc nhìn của các học viên, vốn là các giáo viên dạy tiếng Anh, về trải nghiệm học tập trực tuyến trên hệ thống LMS, Zoom và Microsoft Teams với giảng viên của cả hai nước. Nghiên cứu sử dụng phương pháp hỗn hợp, bao gồm bảng câu hỏi và phỏng vấn. Tổng cộng có 18/43 sinh viên của khóa học đã trả lời bảng câu hỏi và 3 người tham gia phỏng vấn. Nghiên cứu cho thấy học viên đánh giá trải nghiệm học tập khá tích cực với hệ thống LMS vì sự hữu dụng và nguồn tài nguyên hữu ích mặc dù vẫn còn một số hạn chế. Mặt khác, về trải nghiệm học tập qua Zoom và Teams, nhiều học viên thừa nhận không thể duy trì sự tập trung và tương tác trong suốt buổi học mặc dù các giảng viên đã sử dụng đa dạng các kỹ thuật giảng dạy.

Từ khóa: học tập trực tuyến, TESOL, thạc sĩ, xuyên quốc gia

1. Introduction

Transnational educational programs have gained in popularity over the past years. Statistics of the two leading countries in this field, namely the UK, and Australia reveal significant growth in the number of international students, with a rise of 32% from 2016-17 to 2021-22 reported in the former and a soar of 128% reported in the latter (Riaz & Trifiro, 2024). The trend is also seen in Vietnam. According to Ministry of Education and Training, there are currently over 400 transnational educational programs as of 2023, including those in TESOL sphere. These programs attract TESOL students as many of them aspire to gain international experience in an authentic environment of an English-speaking country to facilitate their journey of gaining more in-depth insight into the language and culture (Scally & Jiang, 2019; Yeo & Newton, 2021). According to Yeo and Newton (2021), these programs, with their convenience as they allow students to receive international exposure while staying at the home country to work, have become an appealing option for many; and Vietnamese TESOL students are no exception (Tran, 2014).

At the same time, this trend has been boosted, with the development of technologies, especially after the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. As emphasized by Barnawi and Ahmed (2021), information and communication technologies (ICTs) has tremendously facilitated this “virtual mobility” (p. 2), which means that more translational activities can be conducted in numerous ways thanks to ICTs tools. Meanwhile, Covid-19 pandemic, which forced many schools to shut down, has also triggered an exponential growth in the use of e-learning platforms and online learning mode (Ebner et al., 2020; Stecula & Wolniak, 2022). This impact has become

a long-lasting one, even when the pandemic is no longer a global health emergency by WHO.

Despite the popularity of transnational programs in TESOL fields, few studies have investigated the postgraduate students' perception of transnational programs conducted online. Therefore, this article aims to investigate this to draw certain implications for this mode of training for MA TESOL programs. The study aims to answer the question: What is the perception of in-service teachers regarding their online learning experience in an MA joint program?

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Transnationalism

According to Oxford Learner's Dictionary, "transnational" is defined as "existing in or involving different countries". Vertovec (as cited by Barnawi & Ahmed, 2021) perceived transnationalism as "multiple ties, interactions, and activities that connect people, institutions, and cultural practices across the borders of nation-states" (p. 2). Barnawi and Ahmed (2021) also emphasized that transnational activities are manifested in various aspects, including mobility of knowledge, culture, people, commodities among others. Interestingly, these activities are even re-shaped and diversified with the advent of ICTs because technology enables them to operate faster and more efficiently in cyberspace.

Taking transnationalism in academic setting, Knight and McNamara (2017) referred to transnational education as "the mobility of academic programmes and providers across international borders" and it can operate in various ways such as "international branch campuses, franchise programmes, distance education partnership programmes and joint universities" (p. 6). They also highlight one of its notable characteristics is that an academic provider typically sends its program to a host country and supports the implementation, in other words, the provider moves towards the students rather than the opposite direction, that is students moving to the country of the provider.

2.2. Online Learning and E-Learning

The two terms online learning and e-learning have been discussed and debated in terms of their definitions. Moore, Dickson-Deane and Galyen (2011) presented conflicting views of many scholars on e-learning, online learning and distance learning in their article. Regarding e-learning, while some scholars tend to view it as web-based courses, some argue that it also includes other instructional content and methods such as on CD-ROM or TV. With respect to online learning, they admit that this is the hardest one to define. Singh and Thurman (2019) conducted a systematic review on 46 definitions of online learning and underscored the overlapping between the terms online learning and e-learning. For instance, Curtain (2002, as cited by Singh and Thurman (2019) considered e-learning as the synonym of online learning. Based on the review and analysis, they suggested a few definitions, and the most comprehensive can be seen as follows (p. 302):

"Online education is defined as education being delivered in an online environment through the use of the internet for teaching and learning. This includes online learning on the part of the students that is not dependent on their physical or virtual co-location. The teaching content is delivered online and the instructors develop teaching modules that enhance learning and interactivity in the synchronous or asynchronous environment."

Another interesting finding from Singh and Thurman (2019) is that the definition of the term "online learning" evolves along with the development of technology, for example, in the later years, the definition tends to include the interactivity.

Overall, due to the overlapping in the two terms, this study will use online learning as the only terminology to cover the learning experience of participants, in both synchronous and asynchronous modes.

2.3. Factors Affecting Students' Experience in Online Learning

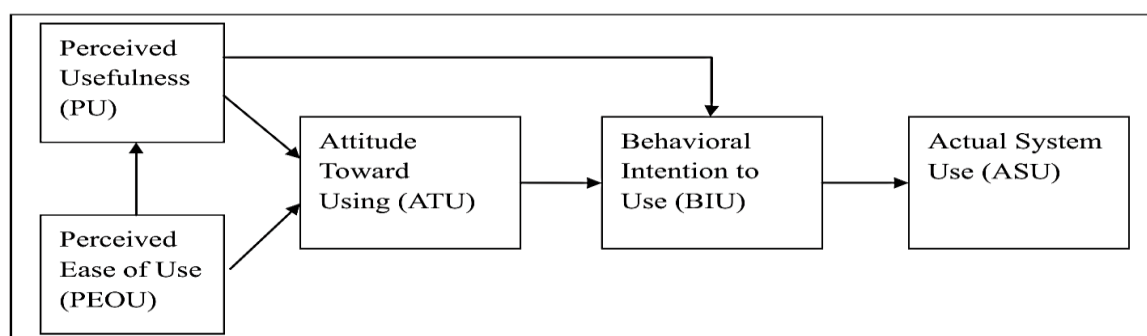
A wide range of studies have been conducted to explore how online learning has been implemented in different contexts and whether it meets the demands of related stakeholders. In order to do it, it is important to identify the essential variables that determine the success of an e-learning course.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Figure 1) developed by Davis et al. in 1986, is a notable model used in the field. TAM shows how the user accepts and uses a type of technology. According to this model, a person's acceptance to use a technology is based on two major factors - the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, which then positively affect their attitudes toward using (ATU), which then positively affect their behavioral intention to use (BIU) and lead to actual system use (ASU) (Tan, 2015, p. 5).

Tan (2015), for example, employed the model to examine the experience of Taiwanese ESL students when learning online. The study revealed that Taiwanese learners find it more convenient and useful to learn English on e-learning websites rather than in conventional methods. Besides, data indicated that the usefulness of the course was positively correlated with students' acceptance to use an e-learning course while perceived ease of use did not have a positive impact on their willingness.

Figure 1

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis et al., as cited in Tan, 2015)



In another study, Almarabeh (2014) also used TAM to shed light on the e-learning experience of students in University of Jordan, and likewise, Alfadda and Mahdi (2021) employed TAM to examine students' use of Zoom application. However, it seems that as it is a general model for measuring the willingness to use one type of application, some other researchers still seek other models or seek to add the attributes to the model. In their study on the e-learning experience of students in Serbia, Jovic, Stankovic and Neskovic (2017) suggested that besides PU and PEOU, the design of the materials can also affect students' willingness to use e-learning.

On the other hand, other frameworks are also used to measure students' attitudes towards e-learning. Paechter and Maier (2010), for instance, carried out extensive research into the experience in e-learning and their preference between online learning and face-to-face learning of over 2000 students in 29 Austrian tertiary institutions. Based on the quality assurance criteria in e-learning developed by Ehlers (2004), Young and Norgard (2006) and

Brophy (1996), the two researchers identified five fields of instruction that are desirable in an e-learning course, including course design, learning outcomes, student-instructor interaction, student-student interaction and individual learning processes. Learning outcomes are defined as the competence that students are expected to achieve till the end of the course. Course design is regarded to provide the learning environment and refers to the structure of the curriculum as well as the materials used. Student-instructor interaction primarily indicates the tasks that the professor does to support students' learning journey while student-instructor interaction refers to their exchange of information on the content of the course. Finally, individual learning processes in online learning mean how students regulate their own studies. Based on these five criteria, detailed corresponding questionnaires were developed to measure students' experience in online learning. The study found that students showed appreciation for online learning as it presents course content in a clear and coherent way while facilitating self-regulated learning. However, when it comes to the acquisition of knowledge and skills in applying knowledge in practice, they preferred face-to-face learning. Besides, they also favored in-person contact with their instructors and peers rather than online channels which are only preferred when fast exchange of information is needed.

The current study focuses on investigating MA students' attitudes towards online learning which include both web-based material and online sessions rather than one application, therefore, the set of desirable criteria for an e-learning course identified by Paechter and Maier (2010) would constitute a more appropriate framework for the research.

2.4. The Use of Online Learning in Transnational Programs

Several studies have been conducted to investigate how online learning is employed in transnational programs. For instance, Ren and Zhou (2024) investigated the problems and opportunities reported by Chinese students learning ecology in a US transnational online program. The study showed that English learning resources and students' adjustment in online learning practices were considered important contributors to students' satisfaction and growth in the course. At the same time, students also reported the lack of student-to-instructor interaction and timely feedback from professors while some also admitted their reluctance to raise questions because of the unconfidence in their English-speaking skill. Moreover, they cited the problems in Internet connection, online infrastructure and even the access to electronic materials. With similar interest in the topic, Miliszewska (2014), examined how students from four countries in Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, perceived fully-online versus hybrid learning mode in a transnational education program. It is found that the hybrid model, which incorporated face-to-face interaction, was preferred by participants.

That said, just a little research in this field was conducted to focus on TESOL student's context. Yeo and Newton (2021) investigated the impact of a Master TESOL program jointly conducted in a hybrid way by a New Zealander institution and a Singaporean college as well as evaluated the inclusivity of the program. The study found that the joint program significantly improved students' professional development, for instance, the exposure to more interactive and cooperative learning methods employed in the program enabled them to adjust their teaching practices in a more effective and comprehensive manner. Furthermore, the program was found to reflect inclusivity thanks to the close collaboration between the staff of two institutions, the blend of local and foreign expertise, and the close link between theory and real-life practice.

In summary, because of the limitation in research exploring TESOL students' online learning experience in transnational programs, the research will seek to answer the question, based on the framework suggested by Paechter and Maier (2010).

3. Research Methods

3.1. Research Context and Participants

The participants of the research are 18 postgraduate students in the same cohort who took the joint MA program between an Australian university and a Vietnamese in the period of time from 2020-2022. All of them had obtained a bachelor's degree and they were in-service English teachers in different contexts, such as English centers, high schools or colleges.

In fact, the whole MA course was organized into two phases. In the first phase, the students were taught by Vietnamese lecturers and professors in seven courses in classrooms and received a diploma granted by the host school. In the second phase, the students took eight courses jointly taught by Vietnamese professors and Australian professors with the former accounting for the overwhelming majority. Their studies mostly took place on an LMS (learning management system) of the Australian country and on online sessions on Microsoft Teams or Zoom applications although several sessions of the course were done face-to-face in Vietnam. The LMS offered not only the learning materials but also served as a platform for students to submit their assignments and hold discussion. Because the second phase was the main component, which showed the clear coordination between the two schools and was also delivered online, the focus of the study is the second phase of their MA course.

3.2. Research Methods

The study employed the mixed method, which included a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The former was adapted from the one developed by Paechter and Maier (2010) while the latter was used to further explore students' perception. The pilot questionnaires were conducted among a few participants in 2023 before the refined version were finalized and sent the whole cohort in 2024.

In terms of the questionnaires, students evaluated the online joint MA course by marking the choices in 24 statements which depict their positive or negative experience in five fields, namely course design, learning outcomes, interaction with the instructor, interaction with peers and individual learning processes. Their evaluation is presented on a five-point scale (ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree".)

Besides, the researcher conducted open-ended interviews to explore students' perspectives, and the list of these interviewees are presented below:

Table 1

List of Participants in the Interview

Name (Pseudonym)	Age	Gender	Current Workplace
Ann	33	F	English centre
Hoan	32	F	High school
Khanh		M	College

4. Findings and Discussion

In general, the students showed their positive attitudes towards their online learning experience, with the summary of their response to questionnaire presented in Table 2. This is in line with previous studies which examine the experience of students in general in terms of online learning (Paechter & Maier, 2010). The specific findings will be discussed below, based on the five variables.

Table 2*TESOL Students' Perception of Their Online Learning Experience in the MA Joint Program*

Item	Mean	SD
Course Design		
The learning environment offers e-mail, chat, newsgroups and/or other communication facilities for the interaction with other course participants.	4.11	.583
The course itself and the learning material are clear and well structured.	3.83	.786
The learning environment is easy to handle.	3.89	.832
I often have to deal with technical problems (e.g., errors of the software, slow access to the internet).	2.78	1.437
The course is demanding with regard to the organizational and temporal effort.	3.61	.850
Interaction with the instructor		
When I need advice from my instructor, I can easily get in contact with her/him via e-mail, chat, forum etc.	3.50	.707
My instructor has a high expertise in the implementation of e-learning courses.	4.00	.767
My instructor gives fast feedback via e-mail, chat, newsgroups and/or other communication facilities.	3.50	.707
My instructor supports and counsels me with regard to my learning processes.	3.78	.732
Due to the online communication in the course personal relations are neglected.	3.11	1.079
Interaction with peer students		
I can easily and fast exchange knowledge with other course participants via e-mail, chat, newsgroups etc.	3.94	.802
There are ample opportunities in the course to establish personal contact with other participants.	3.78	.647
The online communication tools facilitate establishing new contact with other students.	3.67	.594
Learning in groups and cooperation with other learners are fostered in the course (e.g., by group activities, discussions etc.).	3.72	.752
The communication with the media complicates group work.	3.22	1.003
Individual learning processes		
I decide on my own at what times and where I am learning (e.g., at the university, at home).	4.17	.786
I can decide on my own about the pace of learning and the use of learning strategies.	3.94	.938
The learning environment offers the possibility to control my increase in knowledge (e.g., via tests).	3.89	.676
I find it difficult to motivate myself and to maintain learning motivation in the course.	3.39	1.092
Learning outcomes		
I acquire (conceptual) knowledge in the subject matter of the course.	3.94	.416
I learn to apply my knowledge to different problems.	3.78	.548
I acquire skills in the self-regulation of learning.	3.89	.676
I acquire skills in using the internet for scientific work routines (e.g., online research).	4.00	.686
I acquire skills in communication with the media.	3.67	.594

4.1. Learning Outcome

With respect to learning outcomes, the data results showed the satisfaction of respondents. The highest score in this aspect could be seen in the skills of using the Internet for

regular scientific work ($M = 4.0$). This is quite understandable because the course required them to complete a wide range of academic tasks. Besides, many gave favorable evaluations to their knowledge acquisition in the MA course ($M = 3.94$), their use of theory to solve problems ($M = 3.78$) as well as their improvement in self-regulation of learning ($M = 3.89$). These findings were in consistent with previous studies that showed the professional growth of students in the transnational TESOL program (Yeo & Newton, 2021)

However, data from interviews reveal that respondents thought they could acquire theories and apply them into practice better, if certain courses could be delivered offline instead. Specifically, all three respondents wished to have the Language Teaching Practice module to be implemented in physical classrooms. Khanh, for instance, stated “*the demo lesson conducted online does not fully reflect class management skills of teachers.*” Similarly, Ann preferred to observe her lecturers and students perform English language teaching in the classroom because most of her lessons in reality were conducted in this setting.

Overall, it can be seen that although the course outcome received a high degree of satisfaction, several subjects might be better to be taught in a hybrid way, especially when it comes to language teaching practice. This finding is consistent with previous studies that students barely preferred a fully-online learning mode, instead, they appreciated the hybrid mode with face-to-face sessions being held (Miliszewska, 2014; Paechter & Maier, 2010).

4.2. Course Design

In terms of the course design, the highest rating was the diversity of the communication channels such as e-mail, chat, newsgroups and others which facilitated the interaction among students ($M = 4.11$). Besides, many respondents agreed that the course and the learning materials were provided in a clear and well-structured manner ($M=3.83$); and the learning environment is easy to work with ($M=3.9$). This is confirmed by all three interviewees. For instance, Ann shared that:

I am not a person who is good at technology, but to me, the interface of LMS is really user friendly. I mean, the folders of all the courses are well organized, and I can easily find the information that I want to look for.

Similarly, Khanh agreed with Ann on this point, and praised the phone version of the system, which helped him save time.

I think that the tabs and sections that were organized in the site, well logically arranged. And if there is something that I have to search for, the only thing that I have to do is to type into the search bar. The response time is quite impressive. The internet connection is good. And one of the best things I love about this course is that I can even find the Canvas mobile application on the App Store so that I can check the up-to-date assessment scores and comments.

These findings are in line with previous studies, which emphasized that the course design is closely associated with students’ overall course satisfaction and performance (Paechter & Maier, 2010).

However, interviewees also mentioned lack of diversity of the materials and their struggle to access certain learning materials on the LMS. For example, Ann shared that several books could not be accessed online, but rather, they were only available by contacting the officers offline, which was more time-consuming. Likewise, Hoang struggled to find some materials for her assignment, as she shared that the materials provided were not diverse, and in many cases, the articles she needed required more payment, so she had to turn to other websites. This finding conforms to previous findings which also showed students’ occasional struggle in

using the materials provided online (Ren & Zhou, 2024).

4.3. Interaction With the Instructor

Regarding the interaction with the instructor, the results were quite mixed. First, most of them agreed that the instructors had high expertise in conducting e-learning courses ($M=4.0$), nevertheless, interviewees still shared that it was hard for them to maintain interest during the lessons. There are different reasons for that. For instance, Ann attributed it to her short attention span and for the general content of the lecture, which she thought would receive more of her attention if it directly solved her problems. Likewise, Hoang shared that it was dull to hear instructors sticking to the slides when she had already downloaded it beforehand.

I can download all the material so that I can read before and after the lesson. That means during the lesson, if the teachers just focus on reading the slide, and explaining some terms on the slides, sometimes I find it boring. Then I switched to social media, like YouTube or Facebook.

Furthermore, it is notable that although different activities like the use of pair work, group work were still used, their effectiveness was a question, because as Hoang shared, everyone just turned off the camera in the Breakout zoom, and they were not fully engaged in the group discussion.

Second, the contact of students with the lecturers via communication channels when they needed professional advice was not significantly favorable ($M= 3.5$), and the same figure was seen in the statement on the quick feedback from the tutor. The data from the interviews also indicates mixed views. While Khanh thought the lecturers could consult the students well, Hoang preferred to be able to meet the lecturers in person to discuss because she was quite hesitant and shy to contact them via email and was afraid to bother them. Below are the two opposing comments from them.

From what I observed, the lecturer never hesitated to give comments and feedback to any of the students in class. (Khanh)

Professors just give me feedback after I submit my assignment only. And all I received is the comments for each paragraph that they disagree with my opinion. When I go to offline classes, I can ask for help from them, I can ask the reason why the paragraph is not suitable, and what things that we're doing need to add. Instead, in online learning, it's kind of hard for the professor to manage, you know, students' questions to answer it immediately. (Hoang)

Besides, several respondents thought that personal relations were neglected online ($M= 3.1$). Khanh believed it was when teachers could not see students' faces, it was hard to form a close connection. The lack of interaction is also confirmed in previous studies (Ren & Zhou, 2024; Miliszewska, 2014; Tan et al., 2010) which showed students' preference to have face-to-face communication with the professor and receive timely feedback. Miliszewska (2014) even underscored that the "physical presence" of lecturers is of significance (p. 88).

Moreover, it is notable from the interviews that these MA students wanted to have more interaction with foreign lecturers from the Australian institution although they were happy to study with both Vietnamese professors and foreign ones. As Ann shared that only 10-20% of the course was guided by the foreign lecturers, and they hoped this proportion could have been higher because they wanted to see different perspectives from TESOL foreign professors.

4.4. Interaction With Peers

In terms of interaction with peers, respondents gave favorable or neutral evaluation. They could easily discuss the content with their peers via different communication channels ($M= 3.94$), and they agreed to have chances to set up contact with participants ($M = 3.78$) and

different tools helped them to do it ($M=3.67$). Moreover, cooperation and group work were enhanced in the course ($M= 3.72$). These could be attributed to a wide range of discussion and group assignments that they had to complete throughout the eight subjects.

However, it is also seen from interviews that students discuss more with each other in the applications where they can see each other rather than in discussion or chat platforms. As shared by the interviewees, although there is a discussion function in the LMS, they hardly used it. As Khanh stated that:

The first and the only time that I knew about and I used the discussion function was when I had to join the discussion as part of the assessment. Otherwise, the discussions that were held in the live classes were more practical to the students.

This finding, in fact, is not in line with Tan et al. (2010) which showed students' feeling of loneliness in online learning and their disappointment when the peer relationship was not fostered. However, such divided perspectives have been reported in previous studies which showed both positive and negative views of students on the issue (Paechter & Maier, 2010).

4.5. Individual Learning Processes

Respondents gave quite a high degree of satisfaction in terms of their decision on the time and place they could study ($M= 4.17$). Hoang shared a positive point of view when she praised the availability of the slides, videos and articles on LMS which help her to study before and after the lesson.

Because the teachers attached all materials that the student needs on that learning platform, it's easier for me to collect all the materials for the previous lesson, or the next lesson.

Similarly, they could choose their pace of learning and the use of learning strategies at their convenience ($M= 3.94$) as well as to control their increase in knowledge ($M=3.89$). This is because they could see their completion of the quiz, the completion of the assignment in proportion to the whole course and the detailed comments from the lecturers.

However, it is worth noting that several found it hard to motivate themselves ($M=3.39$); in fact, half of the respondents admitted this condition. Hoang blamed it on three reasons. First, some theories discussed in class were hard to understand when she did not have time to read the required material beforehand. This is quite paradoxical because although she hailed the availability of the materials as mentioned above, she could not make time for them prior to lectures. Second, she doubted the practicality of some courses whether they are truly relevant and beneficial for her teaching job. Khanh also sided with her on that because he blamed the high proportion of the theory for his lack of motivation to learn. Third, she complained the heavy loads of assignments required a great amount of time and effort while the guideline was not clear enough for her to cope with it properly. This final reason is quite reasonable for a shy student like Hoang who often hesitated to email to reach out to professors for help when she was confused.

These findings are somewhat consistent with previous studies, which stated that time management is often regarded as a challenge to many students (Tan et al., 2010), and students sometimes were hesitant to approach professors to support their learning process (Ren & Zhou, 2024) though the reasons behind may vary.

5. Conclusion and Implications

It can be concluded that Vietnamese TESOL students were generally satisfied with their online learning experience in the transnational MA joint program between the Australian

institution and a Vietnamese university. Among those, students showed their positive attitudes towards five variables including the course design, learning outcomes, student-instructor interaction, student-student interaction and individual learning processes. First, they were content with the well-structured and user-friendly LMS system and the availability of various communication channels available, though the struggle in finding several materials was still reported. In addition, the interaction with both the instructors and peers was adequate, though the lack of interpersonal connection was still cited in the interview. Students also expressed their satisfaction with professors' expertise in teaching online, however, they stressed the desire to be instructed equally by both local and international professors. Moreover, they were also content with the personal learning process in the course as they can easily track their learning pace, though the time management issue and the feeling of demotivation were still occasionally reported. Finally, they were content with the learning outcome with the improvement in their professional knowledge and skill, though several subjects were still expected to be delivered online.

Given the aforementioned findings, several pedagogical implications can be drawn. First, to best facilitate the learning experience of TESOL students, hybrid modes of learning should be encouraged due to the students' preference for face-to-face sessions in certain teaching practice modules. Second, the transnational program should consider providing an equal number of local and international lecturers because when enrolling in the course, students expect to receive "transnational" instruction rather than being taught by an overwhelming majority of local experts. Finally, more learning materials should be made accessible to students for the sake of their learning and research.

Due to the time constraint and resource, the study can only investigate the perception of a limited number of in-service TESOL teachers in the same cohort who studied online in a transnational MA joint program. Further research can expand the number of participants or the number of programs. Furthermore, the triangular perspectives of students and lecturers and program coordinator can also be examined to produce more comprehensive findings.

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