# Some Considerations In Investigating Synchronous Online Delivery Of English Courses: Interfacing Qualitative And Quantitative Paradigms

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**Abstract**

E-learning is not just another add-on to the existing system of learning. It is a technology that is transforming our educational institutions and how we conceptualise and experience teaching and learning. Teaching online is becoming more flexible and innovative in its preparation and delivery, as content and activities can be placed on websites for students both as supplement to lectures or as replacement for them. This paper discusses how a doctoral dissertation was designed to gather information on three areas related to the synchronous online delivery of English courses namely teaching and learning, technology, and management in a virtual institution of higher learning. It explains the design of the study and its rationale within the qualitative and quantitative paradigms. The discussion in this paper also attempts to highlight plausible issues that researchers may encounter when conducting research in a technology enhanced context and suggests practical way to consider.

**Keywords:** synchronous online delivery, English language, quantitative and qualitative research methods

**Introduction**

With the expansion of Information Communication Technology (ICT) and the Internet in many countries, the phenomenon of online learning has attracted much attention in research today. Online learning is a relatively new field in education and research in Malaysia. However, there is an increasing interest in external, distance and open learning and this makes it an opportune time for educators, researchers and course designers to examine how students go through the learning process in this mode. Researchers in Malaysia have addressed distance and online learning issues, especially with regard to learners' perceptions (Abu Daud Silong et al., 2002), Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) using bulletin board platform (Masputeriah Hamzah, 2003) and web-based activities for writing course (Norlida Alias and Supyan Hussin, 2001). Pramela (2006) has addressed the factors influencing language learning online. However, there is still inadequate understanding of the phenomenon of online language learning in the Malaysian setting. Hence, more research is needed in this area of study (Warschauer, 2000; Murray, 2000; White, 2003, Pramela, 2006).

**Research Perspectives**

This section looks at research studies relevant to the parameters of the study.

Warschauer (2000) notes that language learning is a complex social and cultural phenomenon, even more so when it involves new technologies that connect the classroom to the world.  He believes that short-term quantitative studies may fail to account for the complex interaction of social, cultural and individual factors which shape the language learning experience.  Researchers in education and applied linguistics are increasingly turning to interpretative approaches. Such research can examine not only the language used by learners in particular technology-enhanced environments, but also how computer-mediated language and literacy practices are shaped by broader institutional and social factors as well as what these new practices mean from the perspective of the learner. This is different from the conventional style of learning where learners have to be present in class to listen to their lectures.

Johnson (1995 cited in Hoepfl, 1997) is of the opinion that the technology educators "engage in research that probes for deeper understanding rather than examining surface features". Therefore he suggests that qualitative methodologies are powerful tools for enhancing understanding of teaching and learning and these approaches are gaining increasing acceptance (Hisham Dzakiria, 2004).

Quantitative report typically reduces data to numerical relationships and presents findings in a formal, disembodied fashion that follows a standardised form and style.  In contrast, qualitative reports are often crafted in ways to 'exploit the power of form to inform' (Eisner, 1987: 7, cited in Glesne and Peshkin, 1992: 8).  Final narratives seek to make the researched phenomena accessible, tangible and imaginable.

Qualitative researchers depend on a variety of methods to gather data. The use of multiple-data-collection methods contribute to the trustworthiness of the data.  This practice is commonly called 'triangulation' and could also involve the incorporation of multiple data sources, investigators and theoretical perspectives in order to increase confidence in research findings (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Denzin and Lincoln (1994: 2) define qualitative research as:

> … multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter.  This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical material, case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals' lives.

One of the rationales for the qualitative approach in a study is the significance of understanding, describing and explaining complex social phenomena that take place. As Schein (1985: 311, cited in Marshall and Rossman, 1995: 44) points out, researchers cannot understand organisational phenomena without considering culture both as a cause and as a way of explaining such phenomena. Qualitative methodologies are powerful tools for enhancing our understanding of teaching and learning, and they have gained increasing acceptance in recent years.

The key to good research is the accuracy of the data collection procedures (which relates to the concepts of reliability and validity), regardless of the label given to the analysis – qualitative or quantitative (Newman and Benz, 1998). According to Landsheere (1988), researchers recommend the use of the qualitative approach, which generates rich descriptive data and is capable of providing a holistic analysis of a phenomenon. However, other social scientists insist on a more scientific quantitative approach, where the data gathered is quantified and interpreted using statistics, the strength of which lies in its validity and reliability (Mason and Bramble, 1989). Russek and Weinberg (1993, cited in Hoepfl, 1997) explained that both quantitative and qualitative data in their study with technology based materials for classroom, gave insights that one approach alone could not have provided.

## Objectives of the Paper

This paper attempts to share how a doctoral dissertation in an electronic mode of teaching was designed to gather information on three related areas namely teaching and learning, technology and management in a virtual institution of higher learning. The paper elaborates the mixed mode of qualitative and quantitative approaches interfaced in a technology-based research.

## Research Questions

Below are the research questions that shaped this study.

1. What are the perceptions of learners and instructors towards the delivery of English courses online at the institution?

2. How are the online tutorials (OLT) conducted?

3. What are the learning and teaching factors that emerged during the delivery of online English courses?

These three broad questions warranted the qualitative and quantitative approaches to collect the necessary data for this study. The complex nature of the language learning process and differences among learners in the online environment were important factors for the mixed data collection method. An important point to note here is that asking the right research questions is the key academic skill.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods enabled the researcher to realise the objectives of the study, particularly to address and answer the research questions. The more you know about research methods the more likely that you would be able to carry out a good research with minimal wasted effort. As a researcher you need to have some basic knowledge about research techniques to enable you to make an informed choice before embarking on a research.

According to Yin (1994), a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not really evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. Yin (1994) explains that in a case study, the researcher has to create the form of the research questions best matching the strategy. Yin further explains that the form of the questions in terms of 'what' provides an important clue regarding the most relevant research strategy to be used. Research questions may be general or particular, descriptive or exploratory. They may be formulated at the outset or later on, and may be refined or reformulated in the course of the fieldwork (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

**Research Framework**

The following description of the context of the study was used as a platform to discuss perspectives and experiences of using the mixed methods.

The study was conducted at Universiti Tun Abdul Razak (UNITAR), Malaysia's first e-learning institution. At UNITAR e-learning has become a reality where the entire degree programmes are conducted mainly through virtual means. The term virtual education is synonymous to online education, cyber learning, cyberspace education, web-based education and distance learning through information technology. Zahran (1996) describes virtual education as the liberation of the education processes from the bounds of physical limitations with high technology support. Hiltz (1994) explains the virtual classroom as a means of "learning without limits". There is no limit on time, place or pace of learning in this mode. There is also no limit to the size of the collaborative learning community, which can include people from all walks of life.

The 'who', 'what' and 'how' constructs are used in this paper to present a more comprehensive view of UNITAR's virtual learning concept.

*Who* – The students comprise working adults with minimum academic qualifications for entry into university but with appropriate and relevant working experience. Fresh school leavers who are unable to gain entry for on-campus degree programmes also take the opportunity to pursue their degree through this mode.

*What* – The University offers more than 13 academic programmes in the fields of Arts, Information Technology, Humanities and Social Sciences from bachelor to post graduate levels. Like other institutions of higher learning in Malaysia, UNITAR has also made it

compulsory for all undergraduates to acquire an adequate level of English language proficiency on completion of the programme.

*How* - The students and faculty members engage in learning and teaching activities through the mixed mode of face-to-face (FTF), online and multimedia environments. The traditional lecture method is replaced with web-based courseware. Students learn through online interaction performed synchronously through the Virtual Online Support System (VOISS) which represents the core component of teaching and learning

**Procedures and the Different Stages in the Study**

The design of the study involved five stages and the procedures taken in each stage are explained in this section. Byrne-Armstrong et al. (2001) share that to admit dilemma, mistakes, difficult relationships struggles, or less than perfect practices of research may be a little edgy but if these things are not openly talked about we cannot learn from them. These they call critical moments or disturbing moments cannot be written in your dissertation or research document but it tells us the truth about research. In explaining the procedures, some disturbing moments and how they were overcome are also shared.

**Stage one**

The site for this study was identified based on the concepts and definition of online teaching and learning and on the fact that it possesses the features of a virtual university. What is interesting about UNITAR is its approach in utilizing multimedia courseware in web or CD-based formats and the online course management system VOISS as part of its teaching and learning tool.

After some administrative formalities to gain access to UNITAR, several FTF discussions were conducted with the instructors teaching English to obtain the necessary information on the language courses. At the same time, several online tutorials (OLTs) were observed as a non-participant to experience how the online lessons were conducted. At this stage several visits to UNITAR was made to establish a working rapport with the instructors and administrative staff to gain the insider status. Such visits help to strengthen ties and build confidence between the researcher and the institution (Pramela, 2004).

**Stage two**

After the initial observation of the OLT sessions, permission was obtained from the participants to audio record the interviews with them. The researcher assured the participants of the confidentiality of these interviews. Once this was achieved, a general interview was conducted with instructors to obtain relevant information in the teaching and learning of English courses online. This was conducted as a pilot study at the initial stage of the data collection procedure. This data helped in the formulation of the learner questionnaire and the questions for the in-depth semi-structured interviews with the instructors and the learners.

Next, in-depth interviews (Refer to Appendix B) were conducted using a list of semi-structured leading questions with instructors teaching at the centre and with learners recommended by their respective instructors.

**Stage three**

In the third stage, focused observations were carried out with the aid of a checklist. The checklist (Refer Appendix C) contained questions mainly focused on teaching by the instructors and learning by the learners in the online environment. These observations enabled a better understanding of the teaching and learning issues in a naturalistic context.

The OLTs were observed over six months (two semesters in the Malaysian system). The passage of time is an integral part of qualitative research. The researcher examined the sequence of events and paid attention to what happens first, second, third and so on. The same set of cases needed to be observed over time to see how issues evolve. It was during this stage the researcher experienced more critical moments. Instructors who had earlier allowed the researcher to observe the online classes changed their mind due to technology problems and poor attendance for OLT. The researcher became hesitant whether to carry out the study in the same institution as more and more online classes were cancelled or converted to FTF classes for reasons that could not be avoided by the instructors.

In situations like these changes were inevitable due to the nature of the OLT especially when the OLTs were cancelled due to poor attendance and learners having difficulty getting connected, the researcher made immediate decisions to use the time to clarify with the instructors on issues related to the OLTs and looked at some previous online work done by the learners.

**Stage four**

In the fourth stage, the questionnaire was piloted with 30 learners. A pilot study was necessary to allow the researcher to improve and make modifications. The revised questionnaire was then administered to 200 learners with the cooperation of the instructors.

**Stage five**

At this stage, the results were analysed. Based on the analysis, conclusions on the findings were drawn and necessary recommendations made.

**The Selection of Participants**

Purposeful sampling was necessary for this study to allow the participants to illustrate features or processes that illuminate the research questions. However, the researcher had to be selective in the choice of participants. Purposive sampling demands a researcher to think critically about the parameters of the population and choose the sample cases

carefully on this basis. The researcher selected only students who had undergone online tutorials for English courses. The selection was further endorsed by the instructors over students' exposure in the OLT.

As Denzin and Lincoln (1994: 202) put it:

> Many qualitative researchers employ […] purposive and not random sampling models. They seek out groups, settings and individuals where […] the processes being studied are most likely to occur.

According to Meriam (2002),

> Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select from which the most can be learned.

The strategy of participant selection in qualitative research rests on the multiple purposes of illuminating, interpreting and understanding a phenomenon and on the researcher's own imagination and judgment (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992). Qualitative researchers tend to use non-random samples. This means they rarely determine the sample size in advance and have limited knowledge about the larger group or population from which the sample is taken (Neuman, 2000).

Stake (1994) argues that choosing the case (participants) well is crucial for the researcher to understand the phenomenon. The case study researcher has to decide on how much and how long the complexities of the case should be studied.

Since this study is focused on learners as well as the instructors, the researcher had to first decide on the sample size of the participants. An important point to remember here is that increasing the sample size will not transform bad data into good data. Thus a researcher needs to look statistically in advance how much data would give a clear quantitative picture. As explained earlier, where in-depth data was not required; a survey allowed wide sampling to be conducted. The data was elicited from 200 learners through the use of a questionnaire (Refer to Appendix A).

Initially the questionnaire for the survey was intended to be posted to students through VOISS (where announcements are uploaded). However, after a quick check with several students, the researcher found that students do not regularly look out for announcements. Furthermore answering questionnaires online may pose problems as students may need clarifications on some questions. The researcher was fortunate to obtain the help of the instructors who taught FTF classes.

All nine instructors teaching English courses at the Centre for Languages at UNITAR were interviewed. As mentioned in the research procedure, the researcher planned to observe online tutorials of all the nine instructors but the instructors often changed their OLT to FTF classes. So, the researcher had to increase the time period for observations

for the OLT for a longer period with two very committed instructors. However, the other instructors in the regional centres (Sarawak, Sabah, Kuala Lumpur, Perak[1], and others) could not be included as part of the sample because these instructors did not carry out OLTs. These instructors conducted FTF sessions using materials prepared by the Centre for Languages, at the main campus, downloading them from VOISS. However, the researcher contacted these instructors via telephone and e-mail to obtain the required information.

The parameters for selection of learners included experience in the learning of English through the online mode at UNITAR. Thus, ten learners who were highly recommended by their instructors were considered most appropriate to be interviewed. These learners had undergone the OLTs regularly and were considered mature enough to understand, evaluate and give valuable informative feedback on the OLTs.

**Data Collection**

Sources for the data included a survey of learners (via questionnaires), interviews with instructors and learners, observations of OLT classes during the teaching and learning of English courses and analysis of the transcripts of the OLT text chats. A mixed methodology design enabled the researcher to triangulate the data. Bringing together (triangulating) findings or conclusions (from survey, interviews, observations and other documents) in a case study is likely to be much more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information.

**Suggestions and Recommendations**

Firstly, when collecting data make sure you have ethical clearance and the necessary documents to carry out the study especially if you an out *outsider*. Establishing a good working rapport with parties concerned definitely helps in conducting a research.

Secondly, a researcher should expect technical problems during online observations and plan for more sessions or lessons to be observed. Do not get dejected during these times; instead utilize the time effectively to carry out work related to your research which might be useful for the research for example talking to students at the workstation or computer labs who may have many things to share about their technical problems during lessons.

Preparing an interview schedule or guide always helps to stay focus and saves time during interviews. Recording devices are recommended to keep accurate notes of interviews. In the same light, having a focused checklist helps a researcher during observations although at initial stages of the observations this may seem unnecessary. In the initial stages of observations researchers need to be observant and receptive to make plans for future observations.

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[1] Sarawak, Sabah, Kuala Lumpur, Perak are states in Malaysia with regional centres

Most importantly, qualitative data alone may not reflect the bigger picture to answer a certain research question. Thinking and planning is needed at the early stages for mixed mode approaches are necessary to illuminate research questions. Discussion with your supervisor or advisor does help to iron out such problems. At the beginning of the research the researcher was questioned on the mixed method used - *How are you going to present your findings?* Undeniably, the question was relevant and had to be addressed to make careful decisions on the approaches employed for the study.

Much thought and planning on the part of the researchers is needed to make quick and correct moves to overcome the barriers without losing focus on the research. This is crucial in order to obtain maximum output or data required to complete the research successfully. The problems faced during this study were inevitable as the institution was in its developmental stage especially where technological matters were concerned. If critical issues in a research especially where technology is involved is addressed, from the beginning, then research on language teaching and learning in a technological setup can proceed in fruitful directions.

**Conclusion**

This paper discussed how a doctoral dissertation was designed to gather information on the synchronous online delivery of English in a virtual institution of higher learning. It explains the design of the study and its rationale within the qualitative and quantitative paradigms. The procedures, experiences and suggestions shared in this paper hopes to increase the awareness of educational researchers of the mixed mode of research. Most important the research has provided a detail and holistic understanding of the online learning at this institution. Interfacing both methods has also contributed to the rich data.

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**APPENDIX A**

**Learner Questionnaire**

**Part A**

1. Name of University:

2. Faculty:          _____

3. Programme:      _____

4. Year of Study /Semester: _____

5. Specialisation/Major:  _____

Please **CIRCLE** the letters.

6. I am a

   a.  Full Time learner
   b.  Part Time learner.

7. **Gender:**

   a.  Male
   b. Female

8. **Ethnic Groups**:

   a.  Malay
   b. Chinese
   c.  Indian
   d. Others (please state):  _____

9. **Age group**:

   a.  18-20
   b.  21-23
   c.  24-26
   d.  27-29
   e.  30-32
   f.  33-35
   g.  35 and above

10. **Marital Status:**

   a. Single
   b. Married
   c. Divorced

11.  **Highest Academic Qualifications:**

 a. SPM
 b. STPM
 c. Matriculation
 d. Diploma
 e. University

If University, please state the field. _____

12. **English courses** taken so far:

 a. TOEFL       Grade ____
 b. MUET       Grade ____
 c. Others (please state):  _____    Grade _____

13. Grade for **English** in **SPM**. _____

14.  Are you working?
 a. Yes
 b. No

If yes, answer Question 15.

15. Job category

  a.  Government
  b.  Private
  c.  Self-employed (please state) _____
  d.  Others (please state) _____

16**.** Do you own a PC?
 a. Yes
 b. No

17.  In your opinion, is it important for an e-learner to own a PC?
 a. Yes
 b. No

18.  Do you have any IT qualifications?
 a. Yes
 b. No


 If yes, state the qualifications.  _____


19. Have you had e-learning exposure at school, college or IT institution?

 a. Yes
 b. No

 If yes, state the courses and the number of weeks/months/years of exposure.

 _____


For questions 20-24 you may **CIRCLE more than one selection.**

20. I enrolled in this program because _____.

  a.  It is different from other programmes.
  b.  I was attracted to the flexibility of the course schedule.
  c.  I can work at my own pace.
  d.  I consulted other learners who have pursued the online mode of learning.
  e.  I am good at technical skills.
  f..  I am attracted to the technology.
  g.  I feel comfortable with the online mode.
  h.  I do not feel anxious/threatened.
  g.  Others (please state) _____


21.  I frequently log on from

a. Home.
b. Workplace.
c. Friend's home.
d. Cyber Café.
e. Workstation
f. Others (please state) _____

22. Besides OLT, my reasons to go online is to

  a. Obtain information from websites.
  b. E-mail my instructor.
  c. Share views with my coursemates.
  d. Discuss my assignments with coursemates.
  e. Pass information to my coursemates.
  f. Read announcements on the VOISS.
  g. Socialise with my coursemates.
  h. Others (please state) _____

23. Issues I have discussed with my coursemates are:

  a. Assignments
  b. Course content
  c. Examinations
  d. Methods of learning
  e. Current issues
  f. Others (please state) _____

24. Issues I have discussed with my instructors are:

a. Assignments
b. Course content
c. Examinations
d. Technical problem
e. Methods of learning
f. Current issues
g. Others (please state) _____

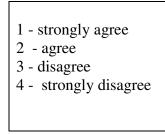25.  Do you have any problem with the OLT (e-learning system)?
 a. Yes
 b. No

26. The main problem in OLT (e-learning) is

a. difficulty to log on.
b. slow network connection.
c. the system hangs.
d. getting disconnected.
e. others (please state) _____

**Part B**

For Questions 27 onwards, use the scale below and **CIRCLE** your selection.

> 1 - strongly agree
> 2 - agree
> 3 - disagree
> 4 - strongly disagree

27. **Some perceptions on online learning**:

a. Instructor helped in the learning during OLT.      1  2  3  4

b. Online learning can be boring due to poor interaction with
    other learners.      1  2  3  4

c. Online learning can be boring due to technical problems.      1  2  3  4

d. Online learning takes up much of my time because of
    technology problems.      1  2  3  4

e. The connection to the facilitator/tutor is
    often disrupted due to  technical  problems.      1  2  3  4

f. There is often difficulty in getting the line
    when trying to follow the OLT sessions.      1  2  3  4

g. I find it difficult in expressing my thoughts
   on the  computer  because I lack computational
    skills.      1  2  3  4

h. The online learning materials motivates me.
   I put in more time on this course than
    other courses.      1  2  3  4

i. My reading skills have improved
   through OLT sessions.                                 1  2  3  4

j. My writing skills have improved
   through OLT sessions.                                 1  2  3  4

k. Activities/tasks help me to improve
   my  grammar.                                          1  2  3  4

l. I find several opportunities to practise
   my grammar.                                           1  2  3  4

m. I feel satisfied on the content learned through
   OLT.                                                  1  2  3  4

n. I have learned to be resourceful in finding the
   meanings of words and phrases that
   are difficult or new.                                 1  2  3  4

o. I have gained confidence to be an independent
   learner.                                              1  2  3  4

p. Some assignments and tasks are dependent on other
   learner/s.                                            1  2  3  4

q. The instructor's voice and enthusiasm
   during OLT sessions keep me motivated.                1  2  3  4

r. OLT sessions give me enough time to think
   before answering questions.                           1  2  3  4

s. I can correct my work without
   wasting much time.                                    1  2  3  4

t.  I make use of my consultation hours to
   clarify what I couldn't follow in the OLT.            1  2  3  4

### 28. **Instructor's Role**

a. The number of face to face sessions is
   sufficient to help me understand the
   OLT lesson.                                            1  2  3  4

b. My instructor's enthusiasm keeps me
   motivated during OLT.                                  1  2  3  4

c. When I face difficulties the instructor helped me     1  2  3  4

d. The instructions prepared by my instructor for the
   web activities are  easy to follow.                    1  2  3  4

e. My instructor has good computational skills to
   teach OLT.                                             1  2  3  4

f.  My instructor provides feedback on my work immediately.   1  2  3  4

g. The feedback I receive from my instructor helped me to
   understand my work better.                             1  2  3  4

h. I also learn from the feedback/corrections made by my
   instructor for other learners.                         1  2  3  4

i.  I learn a lot about the language
    from the  feedback.                                   1  2  3  4

j. I learn a lot about the content
   from the  feedback.                                    1  2  3  4

k. I receive private messages from my instructor
   on my work.                                             1  2  3  4

l. My instructor assigns roles like group leader,
   coordinator, and editor to do certain assignments.    1  2  3  4

29.  **Technology**

a. When I experience technology problem my instructor
   solves the problem for me.                                          1  2  3  4

b. I call the technical assistants for help.                          1  2  3  4

c. I log out when I experience connection
   problems.                                                          1  2  3  4

d. My instructor refers me to the technical people
   for help.                                                          1  2  3  4

e. The technical people can be easily contacted.                      1  2  3  4

f. The technical people are approachable.                             1  2  3  4


30. **Management**

a. The management assists learners in course selection.               1  2  3  4

b. The management makes sure the OLT is conducted
   smoothly.                                                          1  2  3  4

c. There is no problem in contacting the management
   for help on OLT.                                                   1  2  3  4

## APPENDIX B

### In-depth Interview Schedule for Learners

**Background of the Learners**

Gender:  male/ female

Ethnic Group:  _____

Faculty/Programme:  _____

Specialisation:  _____

Highest Academic Qualifications: _____

IT Qualifications:  _____

IT Exposure at school/college/institution: _____

English Courses taken at UNITAR: _____

**1. Lead off Question**
What skills do you need for the OLT?
**Follow-up questions**
Why do you think these skills are important?
What would happen if you do not have these skills?

**2. Lead off Question**
How do you prepare yourself for the OLT?
**Follow-up questions**
Does the preparation make the OLT lesson easier to follow? Why?

**3. Lead off Question**
What types of activities/tasks do you normally do during the OLT?
**Follow-up questions**
Explain why a certain activity is more popular.
Do you find yourself improving by practicing the activities? Explain.

**4. Lead off Question**
What do you do to motivate yourself during the OLT?
**Follow-up questions**
What motivates you the most to stay online during the OLT?
Do you find yourself motivated even without the instructor's help? Explain.

**5. Lead off Question**
How is self-initiated learning promoted through the OLT?

**6. Lead off Question**
Is there importance given to feedback? If so, why?
**Follow-up questions**
How do you learn through your feedback? Explain.
Does your instructor encourage feedback from you? Explain.
How do you feel if there is no feedback? Explain

**7. Lead off Question**
Between FTF and OLT which mode do you prefer to learn English? Why?

**8. Lead of Question**
What are the strengths and weaknesses of OLT?
**Follow-up questions**
Can the strengths overcome the weaknesses? Explain.
What can be done to overcome the weaknesses?

**9. Lead off Question**
How do you handle the technical problems during OLT?
**Follow-up questions**
Besides the instructors' help/advise is there other forms of technical support?
Do you receive the technical support well?

**10. Lead off Question**
How does the management help?

**11. Lead off Question**
Do you have additional comments on the OLT?

## APPENDIX C

## Checklist for the OLT Observation

| Item | Yes | No | Remarks |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Online Culture**<br>Social Skills | | | |
| **Informal Language**<br>Capitalisation<br>Punctuation marks<br>Contractions<br>Emoticons | | | |
| **Learner Participation**<br>Active Learning<br>Participating collectively<br>Contributing ideas to the lesson | | | |
| **Motivation**<br>Enthusiasm of learners<br>Enthusiasm of instructors | | | |
| **Self-initiated learning**<br>Seeking clarification<br>Expressing opinion<br>Making decision | | | |
| **Language Skills**<br>Grammar accuracy<br>Spelling | | | |
| **Feedback**<br>from instructors<br>from peers<br>corrective feedback<br>immediate feedback | | | |
| **Learning Material**<br>lessons clear<br>interesting<br>interactive<br>Questions/Tasks/Activities<br>References/Websites | | | |
| **Technical help**<br>Connection problems<br>Clarity of slides<br>Clarity of speakers | | | |

## About the author

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