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RESEARCH ARTICLE

An Investigation of the Factors Affecting Teacher and Student Motivation in Online Education

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Abstract

Online education has become a central part of our lives with the outbreak of coronavirus disease and it has determined the success of online education. The current qualitative study, which employs thematic data analysis, aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of online education on preparatory school students and instructors. Therefore, semistructured interviews were conducted with a total of six instructors and nine students in a large state university. All the participants were chosen via purposive sampling. The results indicate that online education has motivating and demotivating dimensions for the participants. Its flexibility, time-saving aspect, lesson recordings, and enabling introverted students to study at their own pace were found motivating, while distracting factors, lack of interaction especially for extroverted students, insufficient training to conduct online lessons, disconfirmation of expectations regarding the preparatory school students' first year of university life were found demotivating. However, the participants reported an increase in their motivation level since the beginning of the transition to online education with getting accustomed to online education and an increase in the proficiency level. The results of the study have a number of implications for policymakers to gain the utmost efficiency in the online education process.

Keywords: English language teaching, learner motivation, online education, preparatory school, teacher motivation

Introduction

It has been well-accepted that technology has several innovative characteristics for both learners and teachers in the language classroom and some recent theories of language teaching are designed around the integration of technology (computer assisted language learning (CALL), mobile assisted language learning (MALL), flipped language learning, etc.). Therefore, it has been considered crucial to embrace online tools to support teaching and learning. What's more, the integration of technology in the classroom has been proved to be effective in language learning (Kiyancicek & Uzun, 2022; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011; Merzifonluoğlu & Gonulal, 2018; Rintaningrum, 2016).

However, with the outbreak of the coronavirus disease in 2019 (COVID-19), the presence of technology in the educational context has shifted from partial integration of online tools in traditional classroom instruction to virtual synchronous classrooms, which depend on technology use to the fullest. As a consequence of this unexpected shift to online education (OE), there have been new considerations regarding the efficacy of language teaching and learning process, its effects on language education policies in institutions in the Turkish context, as well as the motivation of both learners and teachers in OE. Additionally, Uçar and Kumtepe (2020) claim that although there have been several studies on motivation, there is still a need to investigate how it affects the adaptation of learners into a new learning environment. As online platforms are the new instructional environment for both teachers and learners in

Turkey due to the COVID-19 outbreak, it is important to find out how both language teachers and learners can integrate into this new environment. This may imply that it is significant to analyze the relationship between OE and motivation.

Studies regarding OE generally focus on the effectiveness of online teaching or propose a comparative study of in-class teaching and online teaching (Shire et al., 2020). What's more, studies focusing on face-to-face teaching usually tend to concentrate on expectations from the course and the learning (Garnjost & Lawter, 2019; Mupinga et al., 2006) and satisfaction of the learners from the course (Garnjost & Lawter, 2019). However, very few studies have been able to explore the factors affecting motivation in a fully online teaching and learning context. Furthermore, the studies that investigate motivation in OE either focus solely on teachers or students, who are the stakeholders of OE. Therefore, based on the gap in the literature, the current study aims to explore the motivational and demotivational factors affecting language learning and the teaching process in OE and provides a comprehensive understanding of the issue from teachers' and students' perspectives. To this end, the current study tried to find answers to the following research questions (RQs):

RQ1: What are the perceptions of the teachers and the students regarding OE?

RQ2: Have participants experienced any changes in their motivation level according to their own perceptions?

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Literature Review

Motivation has been investigated by many researchers and is still under investigation now as it has a fundamental role in teaching and learning. Similarly, Dörnyei (1998) states that motivation is one of the key components affecting language learning success and several theories have been proposed to explore motivation in learning. However, apart from the motivation involved in language learning, it is important to analyze the role and effects of motivation during the OE process. It is of utmost importance to investigate whether there is an intention to carry out language learning and teaching on online platforms. To investigate the users' intentions to continue using online systems for a long time, the expectation-confirmation model (ECM) by Bhattacherjee (2001) can be used. Bhattacherjee (2001) adapted the expectation-confirmation theory proposed by Oliver in 1980 in the marketing field to evaluate user satisfaction and post-use behavior and defined ECM by integrating user intention to continue using the information system (IS). He claims that the confirmation of expectations is positively linked to user satisfaction with pre-IS use that, in turn, will further affect IS continuance intention of the user while disconfirmation of the expectations will negatively impact its users' satisfaction level who will be teachers and students as the recipients of OE in the present research. Although ECM was first introduced for banking and marketing, it has been used in various research in education (Hayashi et al., 2004; Lee, 2010; Lin et al., 2016; Tiyar & Khoshsima, 2015).

According to Lee (2010), while accepting and using e-learning for the first time is one of the most significant steps toward successful e-learning, its long-term success depends on its continued use. Consequently, the success of online learning is especially linked to satisfaction of learners and some other factors such as their familiarity with OE, its usefulness, and the enjoyment perceived from the learning process (Lee, 2010). Adapting the perspective of Bhattacherjee's concept in the current study, the study defined confirmation of expected OE outcome as the degree to which learners and teachers believe that OE will help the learners achieve language learning.

Student Motivation in Online English Classes

Dörnyei (2020) believes that motivation is closely linked to engagement and consequently needs to be assured to achieve engagement of learners. He, therefore, claims that no matter if it is face-to-face or online instruction, the main aim of instruction should be to help students get engaged in the learning process. The studies in the field of second language learning have proved the importance of motivation in traditional classrooms (Çolak, 2008; Genç & Aydın, 2017; Kıyançiçek, 2023; Kouritzin et al., 2009). Additionally, recently, motivation in the OE context has also been investigated by several researchers (Kyewski & Krämer, 2018; Lin et al., 2017; Özhan & Kocadere, 2020; Yantraprakorn et al., 2018).

Within the L2 learning literature, it is possible to find plenty of studies focusing on pure online instruction as well as hybrid course designs. In their study, Thompson and Ku (2005) investigated Chinese graduate students' experiences in online learning and their attitudes toward it. The findings of the study show that participants find online learning interesting but they also present mixed opinions regarding this new mode of learning. They find sharing opportunities, record keeping, and convenient discussion facilities effective. Nevertheless, they are worried about their writing skills in English, the insufficiency of the feedback provided, and the lack of opportunities for cultural exchange. Similarly, the study conducted by Yantraprakorn et al. (2018) shows that poor, discouraging teacher feedback influences the motivation of learners negatively in a foreign language course carried out online in Thailand.

Qunfei et al. (2020) conducted a qualitative study to analyze the factors affecting the motivation of learners positively and negatively to learn English online. The researchers concluded that, as learning materials and all the necessary information were recorded and shared online, they could go back to the content that they could not fully grasp and direct their questions to the teachers, which is not possible in a face-to-face education. Also, it is concluded that some learners could plan their learning process individually with the help of guidance from the teachers, which leads to learner autonomy. The researchers also proved that peers, a relaxing learning environment, and learners' plans for future studies had a positive effect on the motivation level of the participants. However, the researchers identified the following factors as demotivating: teaching method (i.e., homework, boring instruction, insufficient feedback from the teacher), learning experience (i.e., no significant progress in learning, low learning outcome), the role of English in their future career (i.e., the mismatch between the language learning and future), lack of online learning strategies (i.e., just listening to tutorials without active participation), and some technical problems (i.e., slow network connection, equipment).

Meşe and Sevilen (2021) conducted a qualitative case study to analyze the perceptions of the learners toward OE in Turkey and how their motivation had been affected by the end of the course. The researcher employed semistructured interviews and collected creative writing samples from 12 students to gather the data. It was concluded from both sources of data that students overall claimed OE harms their motivation because of lack of interaction, discrepancies between their expectations and the course content, problems related to organization, and the overall organization of learning environments.

Apart from these studies, Rubio (2013) claims that a well-designed course integrating the online and offline components may be more effective when compared to a pure face-to-face instruction or pure online course to help learners increase their motivation and succeed in language learning. Additionally, Ushida (2005) investigated motivation in online language courses and collected data from 30 participants who were doing online courses through interviews and three sets of questionnaires investigating general background, technology background, and attitudes and motivation. The findings of the study demonstrated that students with a high integrative motivation were found to be more satisfied with the online course and the researcher predicted a high correlation between voluntary participation in online discussions and motivational levels. The researcher stated that teacher-specific motivational components had an impact on overall student motivation and attitude toward OE. The researcher further concluded that blended courses were more efficient than exclusively online courses. Similarly, Murday et al. (2008) put forward that hybrid courses are usually thought to be more effective than their purely online counterparts.

Teacher Motivation in Online English Classes

Much attention has been paid to student motivation in the online L2 learning process; however, teacher motivation has also been under the investigation of a few researchers (Liu, 2020; Lüleci & Çoruk 2018). In a general sense, motivation is seen as a diverse, versatile, interrelated term that is difficult to define accurately (Liu, 2020). Although teacher motivation carries these features, it is generally referred to as the motivation of teachers to teach a language in the field of applied linguistics. It is well regarded that the motivation of teachers and success in the classroom have a mutual effect on one another. As teachers' motivation increases, it boosts student achievement (Dweik & Awajan, 2013).

Even though teacher motivation is believed to depend heavily on the values of teaching, it may be reduced because of some factors. Some studies have shown that teachers experience higher levels of stress related to their occupation and have lower motivation when compared to other professional groups (Bess, 1977; de Jesus & Lens, 2005). Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) propose five main groupings of demotivating factors for teachers: stress-related factors, restriction of

autonomy, low self-efficacy, unsatisfactory career design, content repetition, and few opportunities for intellectual improvement. However, the motivation of teachers can also be affected by the challenges resulting from OE. One of these challenges is related to the insufficiency or deficiency of the online teaching experience of the instructors (Coman et al., 2020; Meşe & Sevilen, 2021). Additionally, student motivation is a crucial factor in teacher motivation. In the study conducted by Şener et al. (2020), the researchers analyzed 39 teachers' experiences of OE and concluded that a lack of learner motivation, interaction, and learner autonomy, as well as other factors, affected teachers' experiences while teaching online. Thus, it may be inferred that there exists a vital relationship between learner motivation and positive classroom experiences in the online context.

Briefly, both motivation and demotivation may create remarkable effects on online language education for both for teachers and students. While a high level of motivation can be associated with achievement in language learning, demotivation leads to issues in the language learning process in both in face-to-face education and online contexts. Therefore, the current research aims to serve as an exploratory study to analyze the factors influencing online English learning motivation by highlighting both motivational and demotivational elements involved in language teaching and learning from the views of teachers and language learners.

Methods

Embracing a constructivist worldview, the present research has adopted a qualitative design to achieve an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon and to uncover new ideas and perspectives (Creswell, 2009). Following this worldview, semistructured interviews were conducted with six instructors and nine students to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' views.

Participants

The current study is conducted in the English preparatory program of one of the largest state universities in İstanbul, a major metropolitan city in Turkey. The students registered at the university are to study a 1-year preparatory program before they start their faculties. The institution employs both native and non-native English language instructors. The study group in the current study consisted of six English language instructors (four female and two male) and nine preparatory school students (four female and five male) who were chosen via purposive sampling that is regarded to enhance the understandings of selected participants (Devers & Frankel, 2000). Accordingly, typical cases were selected that are considered to provide the greatest payoff in purposive sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The group is homogeneous in the sense that they all work and study at the same university and are involved in the same educational conditions. All of the student and instructor participants have been involved in the OE process for around a year since the breakout of the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants were given pseudonyms for ethical considerations. Instructors' pseudonyms included T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, and T6 while the students' included St1, St2, St3, St4, St5, St6, St7, St8, and St9. The participants were contacted through an instructor working in the same institution. Details regarding the experience and the age of the participating teachers are presented in Table 1. The student participants are all in a similar age range of between 18 and 20.

Instruments

Semistructured interviews were conducted to elicit student and instructor perceptions about OE and its impact on their motivation to collect qualitative data. Following the RQs, initiating questions were posed to the participants, such as: "What do you think about OE?", "How does OE affect your motivation?" Follow-up questions were formulated according to the responses of the participants.

Table 1.
Demographic Information of Instructors

		Male	Female
Age	30–40	1	3
	41–50	0	0
	51–60	1	1
Experience	1–10 years	1	1
	11–20 years	0	2
	Over 21 years	1	1

The researchers as "an instrument of qualitative research designs" (Patton, 2001, p. 14) gathered possible questions that might be directed to the volunteering participants while doing literature review. Following this, both researchers cross-checked the semistructured interview questions before conducting the interviews to prevent any possible misunderstandings that might emerge from the clarity or the content of the questions and to increase the validity of the interview questions. Member checking was used to increase the validity of the data during and after the interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). To increase the reliability of the research, the researcher who conducted the interviews tried to avoid questions which could lead participants to specific responses. She instead provided ample details to make the interview questions clearer for the participants. The researcher also explained how she had interpreted the participants' expressions for approval of her understanding.

Procedures

Before the data collection phase, the researchers received necessary permission from the Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee of İstanbul University on May 25, 2021, to conduct the study in the English preparatory program. One-on-one online interviews on Zoom at a mutually agreed-upon time and date were employed to collect qualitative data. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants before the interview, and they were asked to sign consent forms. Before the interview, the participants were reminded that there were no correct or wrong responses and that the interview had no time limit. Signed consent forms were collected before the interview, and the participants were asked about their language preference through the interview. Subsequently, five of the interviews were conducted in English while the rest were conducted in Turkish based on the participants' preferences. The data collection period lasted around a month, and each interview took around 30–60 minutes. The interviews were video-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and the interviews conducted in Turkish were translated into English by the researchers to use the data.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted to analyze the data to gain an in-depth analysis of the students' and instructors' perceptions and to discover common patterns of meaning following the constructivist paradigm (Braun & Clarke, 2006). MAXQDA 2020 was used to analyze the data. The data were analyzed inductively. Therefore, codes and themes emerged during the data analysis process (Miles et al., 2014). One of the researchers analyzed the data. She developed emerging codes in relation to the transcriptions of the interviews. The codes were explained via the memo tool next to the codes defining what would be coded under the related code. Once the codes were created for all the participants, the codes were cross-checked and negotiated by the two researchers. Some codes having similar meanings were merged. Themes were identified in relation to the codes with the negotiation of the researchers. As shown in Figure 1, 2, 3, and 4 code maps were generated using a MAXMAP tool in MAXQDA. The researchers created a codebook containing the codes' names, an explanation of when to use the codes, and the example sentences related to the codes to avoid bias in the coding process (see Table 2 for samples).

Table 2.
Sample Codes and Subcodes to Exemplify the Data Analysis Process

Code	Subcode	Sample
Internal factors affecting motivation	Personality traits	*I am not a very talkative person. I am usually in a listening position. I do not usually talk a lot, but I think I have improved my speaking during online education…*
External factors affecting motivation	Environment (i.e., home)	*As there are some other people at home, there might be some distractions. For example, my family asks if I would like to eat something or would like a tea or something. This is not possible in a face-to-face classroom…*
Factors related to preparatory school	Participation	*I also feel like it's the lack of motivation of the students. Most of them don't show up to class or never participate. I can see they open the Zoom lesson but they are not participating. It's only the same few students….*
Factors related to nature of online learning	Interaction	*It is difficult to get connected with students and have a good communication with them. I can't see them or I can't feel their emotions….*

Results

The RQs examined the perceptions of instructors and students toward OE and its impact on their motivation. Four main themes emerged from the analysis of participants' interviews. The first theme includes perceptions related to the environment that the instructors and students are involved in during OE. The second theme is related to perceptions regarding the interaction between students-to-students (Ss-Ss) and students-to-teachers (Ss-Ts). The third theme is related to expectations and the level of satisfaction regarding expectations in OE. Finally, the last theme is related to the overall change in the motivation levels of the participants from the beginning of OE until the interview, which is after almost one year.

Environmental Factors

Related to the first research question, the participants mentioned factors regarding the environment in which they were maintaining their educational activities, namely the home. These factors are presented in Figure 1, while the percentages and the number of participants focusing on the environmental factors are given in Table 3.

Staying home was evaluated both positively and negatively. A majority of the participants stated that staying home was comfortable. As one instructor explained:
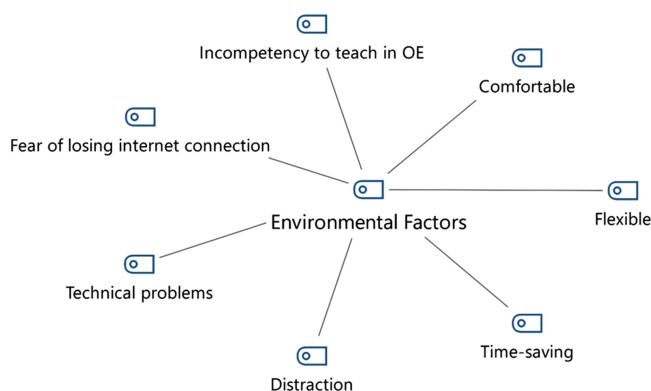

Figure 1.
Environmental factors. OE, online education.

Table 3.
Participants Focusing on Environmental Factors

	In Terms of Time	In Terms of Distracting Factors	In Terms of Comfort	Other Factors
Students	5 (55%)	6 (66%)	2 (22%)	2 (22%)
Instructors	0	1 (16%)	5 (83%)	3 (50%)

Being a teacher is not flexible in nature. You have lessons at a certain time and you have to do them. But actually, just being able to be in my own house, working from home. You know, I can do things in the house that I wanted to do but couldn't do before. So, it is more comfortable and there are a lot of benefits of doing online classes at home (T3).

In addition to being comfortable and more flexible, all the students expressed that they saved much more time with OE and they did not need to waste time to arrive at the school. St7 exemplified this by saying:

OE is much more comfortable and less tiring compared to face-to-face education. For instance, it would have taken 2 hours for me to go to my school within the same city every morning because of traffic in Istanbul. Now, I don't have this problem.

Apart from being comfortable and time-saving, almost all of the students mentioned distracting factors resulting from the environment in which they carry out their OE. All of the students highlighted that they were living with their family members, therefore, the noises distracted them. Student 2 said that if she had been at school, there could have been noises coming out of the classroom, but as all the students and teachers would have heard the noise at the same time, it would not have disrupted the flow of the lesson. Therefore, the students evaluated their home to be distracting while teachers did not mention disrupting factors.

Similarly, technical problems stood out in OE both for instructors and the students. Students reported that they often had technical problems such as internet cut-offs that demotivated them. Students reported that they watched the recordings of the classes as a compensation strategy if there was an internet cutoff. However, they said that it became irreversible when it took place during an exam and when the students were required to involve in a pair/group work activity. As for the instructors, most of them reported that they had not experienced many technical problems but all of them reported a strong fear of loss of internet connection. T4 stated that "part of me is always scared that something bad will happen during the class unavoidably due to internet connection." Similarly, T2 explained this "It's been almost a year. Still, the probability of the things going wrong freaks me out and makes me nervous." Furthermore, T5, who is comparably older than the others, pointed out her age and incompetency to teach online. However, she said that students and other instructors helped her when she faced technical problems. Therefore, she tried to overcome the problem with the help of the people around her.

Interactional Factors

Related to the first research question, the interaction was the factor that was mentioned and highlighted the most by the participants above all factors. Thematic analysis of interactional factors can be seen in Figure 2. All the participants have pointed out a lack of interaction between Ss-Ss and Ss-Ts.

Student-to-Student Interaction

According to the data gathered, the perceptions of students toward the interaction with their peers have immensely depended on their
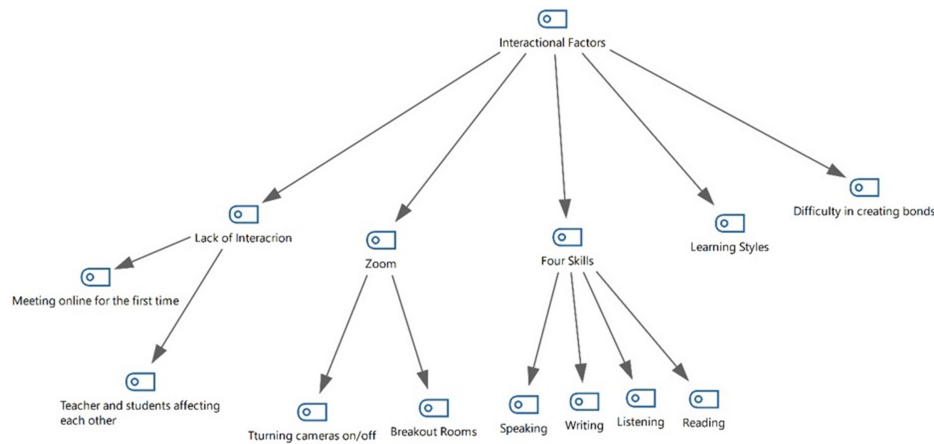
Figure 2.
Interactional factors.

personality traits and their ideas regarding the school. The students who perceived themselves to be extroverted and regarded school as a construct that enables them to socialize evaluated OE to be demotivating, while the introverted students reported OE to be much more motivating than face-to-face education. St5 explained this:

> My motivation toward learning in face-to-face education was much higher because I believe in interaction in the learning process. In my opinion, school is not only a place to learn about subjects but also a place to improve yourself by interacting with others. Similarly, teachers aren't the only source of information. We could have learned from our friends in and out of the classes in face-to-face education. None of these are possible now, and it demotivates me.

Similarly, St5, who regarded himself to be an extroverted person, reported that OE demotivated him, while St3 stated that she was an introverted person and OE motivated her. She expressed this:

> To be honest, I don't like to interact with people in general. I love to learn at my own pace. I also don't like pair and group work activities. I prefer to work individually. So, OE is better in the sense that there are more individual activities compared to face-to-face education.

Many of the students also highlighted a lack of friendship bonds with their classmates. They mostly reported that they interacted only with a few of their classmates, which would not be the case in face-to-face education. St2 went one step further and expressed "Face-to-face education is better because there I will have real friendships." She regarded her classmates to be fake friends because they interact with each other on an online platform. Therefore, she does not believe that they are real friends.

Similarly, St7 highlighted the lack of interaction but evaluated the topic from a different perspective. He expressed, "I experience lack of interaction in OE. We all just started university; therefore, we have never seen each other. If we had been in higher grades and had known each other, this would not have been a problem." Thus, he believed that they would not experience problems related to lack of interaction if they were given the chance to meet face-to-face beforehand.

Additionally, the majority of the students expressed that the lack of interaction affected them negatively when it came to improving their speaking skills. Unlike the other skills which can be mastered through individual effort, speaking requires high collaboration and interaction between students. In a similar vein, most of the participants expressed that writing, reading, and listening are the skills that could

be implemented online; however, they all expressed the need for the speaking skill to be practiced face-to-face and stated:

> Apart from speaking, the other skills can be improved individually. I think we fail in speaking skills. In OE, we have difficulty working in pairs and groups. Attendance to OE is already low and getting lower. We used to go to the breakout rooms the first semester, and I was trying to speak but we had technical problems usually and had long silences in breakout rooms. But I think this wouldn't be the case in face-to-face education as there would be a feeling of obligation. (St8)

Overall, the participants' expressions show that while other skills could be relatively more efficient, speaking skills can be considered to be the least efficient skill in OE.

Student-to-Teacher Interaction

Similar to the students' expressions, instructors reported that they could not build personal ties with the students. T1 expressed this:

> It sometimes gets difficult to create ties with students because our interaction is mainly based on educational matters, unlike face-to-face classrooms. In a face-to-face classroom, it is easier to create more than student-teacher relations. You become like friends after a while. But in OE, I feel like we have to follow the basic roles of being a teacher and a student strictly.

Similarly, T3 pointed out the same issue, saying:

> You know there are a lot of my students who I probably will never see face-to-face and I feel bad about that because I had little conversations with some of them and they seem really nice. I would like to meet them. You build more of a rapport as a teacher when you, you know, have a connection in face-to-face lessons.

Regarding student-to-teacher interaction, St9 had a similar stance with St7 in terms of meeting online for the first time. He said that if they could have met up with the instructors face-to-face and then gotten involved in the OE process, it would have been much better for them to build a relationship.

All of the instructors reported that they were affected by their students' motivation level and they thought that their motivation affected them as well. The instructors believed that their students were not motivated enough due to the factors mentioned above and there was a decrease in attendance. Therefore, the instructors reported low levels of motivation overall. A majority of the instructors also stated that they

could not create bonds with their students, which decreased their motivation, and expressed:

> I miss the classroom environment that's extremely important to me. I mean the closeness with the students. It's taken me months to get to know my students and the way I would usually get to know them in a week. (T4)

The lack of interaction with the students and instructors clearly decreased students' motivation according to the students' expressions as well as the instructors.

Zoom Classes

The participants conducted their classes via Zoom. The platform was mostly evaluated to be efficient and to draw away from its rivals as it gives opportunities for interaction via breakout rooms. OE and Zoom as a platform were evaluated positively in terms of screen recordings. Students reported:

> As we have our classes via Zoom, the lessons are recorded and I can go back and watch a recording many times when there is a topic I don't understand. This is very good because in face-to-face education recording lessons are forbidden and we have to do with only our lecture notes. (St6)

Therefore, the lesson recording feature via Zoom was reported to help the students in understanding difficult topics and when they could not attend the classes for various reasons. However, the students and the instructors have the option not to turn on their cameras in Zoom classes, and in most of the platforms similar to Zoom, this is highly criticized as it has reached a point where nobody turns on their cameras and has become demotivating for all of the participants. A great majority of the participants reported that they turned their cameras off just because the others did so, and nobody else gave another reason for the issue. Thus, this situation affected the instructors and the students:

> First of all, it's physically difficult. We're just sitting. And for hours I'm just sitting here and trying to teach something. And also, I don't think I can reach students because when they switch off their cams. I cannot see anything. I don't know what they are doing. This is very difficult and I can't hear the real reactions. Teaching is something like you should observe the class to understand whether they are understanding or not, but here I can't understand anything. I'm just speaking and sometimes they react if they want. That's all. (T6)

Furthermore, T2 stated "I can never be sure if they are there listening to me or not as they don't turn on their cameras. I feel like a Youtuber recording there, which is demotivating for me." Similarly, St1 explained, "You are talking to a black screen most of the time and this demotivates the teachers and students." Accordingly, the statements mainly show that turning off cameras demotivates instructors and students at the same time.

Expectations and Factors Affecting Satisfaction

Related to the factor, the instructors and the students evaluated their expectations regarding the program and OE and factors affecting their satisfaction (Figure 3). Because of the pandemic, most of the participants reported that they had an instant shift to OE which they were not expecting and dreaming about. The students reported that they had passed through a very important and difficult university entrance exam and that they were dreaming to be involved in face-to-face education, travel around the city, and build relationships with others as a reward at the end of this difficult period. However, their expectations did not come true about being in the school environment, which disappointed a majority of them in return. St3 expressed this situation: "Our school's location is really good. I dreamed about taking a ferry to my university,
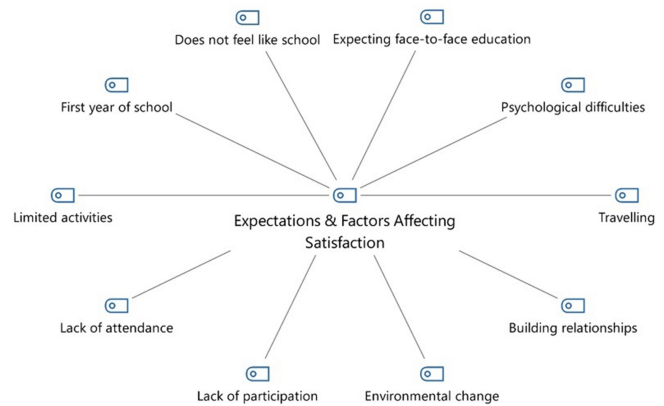

Figure 3.
Expectations and factors affecting satisfaction.

and having my breakfast on the ferry, and going back to Fatih again and walking toward my university but yeah it is all gone." Just like St3, St9 reflected on the situation: "As we just started university, changing the city and environment was a great source of motivation for us but in online classes, these are not possible and that demotivates me. Thus, this is reflected on my lessons willy-nilly." Similarly, T4 empathized with the students and reported:

> I also feel like it's the lack of motivation of the students. Most of them don't show up to class or never participate. I can see they open the Zoom lesson but they are not participating. It's only the same few students. I think they are being affected psychologically, as we all are, because of the COVID thing, how their lives have changed, and all the expectations they had of their first year of university are gone. Their whole lifestyle changed and it negatively affected them.

Apart from the expectations related to the first year of school, all of the participants reported that OE did not feel like a real school environment. Therefore, some students expressed that they were expecting to learn English in that year but they had difficulties in building discipline and focusing on studying English in a home environment. A majority of the students highlighted this situation:

> Actually, I have a room and a comfortable environment. Still, I am in the home environment and taking classes at the same place where I sleep and hang out and it doesn't give me the feeling and discipline of being at school. Sometimes, I don't think that I can learn things, I cannot intake the information provided to me by my teachers. (St1)

Apart from psychological factors, T3 highlighted the variety of activities and materials that were possible in face-to-face education but not possible in OE and expressed:

> Obviously, teaching online has a lot of limitations. There are a lot of activities that I could do in class with the students that are obviously not possible online. There are a few tools and a few kinds of programs that I do know from doing online now for over a year. I know that they work fine, but it's not really a the same as being in the classroom.

The participants, therefore, expressed that their expectations were not fulfilled and, as a result, they did not achieve the satisfaction level they had urged.

Overall Change in Motivation

Related to the second research question, the participants were asked to evaluate their overall change in motivation from the beginning of OE until the date of the interview (Figure 4). The teacher participants
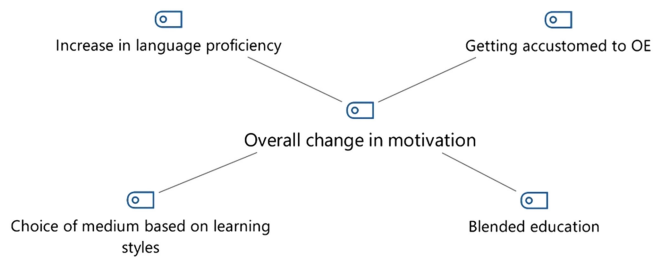
Figure 4.
Overall Change in Motivation. OE, online education.

mainly expressed that their motivation had increased when they compared their motivation at the beginning of the transition to OE and then because they became more accustomed to OE. T6 described this as, "I can say it has increased because last year I felt helpless and I didn't know what to do, but now I have experience and it motivates me. At least more than last year." Students, on the other hand, associated the increase in their motivation with their achievements rather than getting accustomed to OE. They reported that as their English proficiency increased, so did their motivation because they could understand and communicate in English much easier with the help of their current level of proficiency. Furthermore, they expressed that as they saw themselves achieving and improving in English, they became more motivated in the classes.

When the participants were asked whether they would choose OE or face-to-face education if they could have an option to choose, the students who regarded themselves to be extroverts chose face-to-face education while the introvert students preferred OE. On the other hand, although some of the instructors reported mainly demotivation associated with OE, they reported that we cannot disregard the advantages that are provided with OE and expressed:

I prefer them to be implemented together. I think ignoring online totally is not logical as we are working with young technology expert students. We all know that they are digital natives and online components should be part of education. (T1)

Thus, they mostly supported blended teaching via both online and face-to-face classes.

Discussion

Semistructured interviews conducted in the study aimed to find out the participants' perceptions regarding OE and its effect on the participants' motivation. Thus, qualitative forms through a thematic analysis were selected to analyze and present the data. Four recurrent patterns emerged as a result of the data analysis.

Related to the first RQ, the first theme reported was related to environmental factors. Environmental factors that were mostly home for the participants were evaluated in many aspects. The participants evaluated home to be both an advantage and disadvantage. Conducting classes online at home was reported to be flexible, time-saving, and comfortable as they reduce the loss of time spent on the road, and as the students can watch lesson recordings if they miss the class or if they just urge to repeat and memorize after the class. On the other hand, participants highlighted the abundance of distracting factors at home which is certainly a disadvantage for them. Furthermore, technical problems stood out as a disadvantage. While the students reported that they can cover this by watching lesson recordings as a compensation strategy, instructors reported a state of stress in all their classes with the idea of 'What if something goes wrong?' and highlighted insufficient training for conducting online classes. The results of the first theme are in line with the literature in the sense that

lesson recordings and a relaxing learning environment are a certain advantage while technical problems, stress-related factors, and low self-efficacy beliefs related to insufficient training are disadvantageous especially for instructors (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Qunfei et al., 2020).

The second emergent theme was interactional factors concerning the first RQ. As a result of the analysis of the students' expressions, it was found out that personality traits and learning styles have a lot to do with the efficiency of the OE. The students who regarded themselves as extroverts and social learners reported that they could not obtain efficiency in OE due to the level of interaction while the introverts and solitary learners preferred OE over face-to-face education. However, the students' all complained about the difficulty of creating bonds with students and teachers. The students stressed that it is the first year of their school and it is difficult to become friends with their classmates while it could have been easier to sustain their relationship easier if they had been in higher grades. The students' expressions show that they find it difficult to establish relationships in OE. Similarly, instructors reported that interacting with students is much more difficult in OE. In contrast to the findings of Thompson and Ku (2005) who reported writing skill to be worrying for students in OE, in the current study, the results show that writing, listening, and reading skills were found to be manageable in OE while speaking skill was found to be the skill that is difficult to practice online; therefore, the students were found to be worried the most in speaking classes in OE as it requires interaction between the students and instructors. In relation to the literature, this incompatibility may be due to a lack of online teaching strategies for speaking classes (Qunfei et al., 2020), and the strong cooperation of writing instructors in providing feedback. Another reason might be the fact that many students turn off their cameras in online classes which causes difficulty in intelligibility as gestures and facial expressions are crucial for meaning-making apart from verbal expressions in speaking skills. Still, lack of interaction in OE is a significant aspect as a result of the participants' expressions in accordance with the literature (Mese & Sevilen, 2021).

Related to the first RQ, expectation, and factors affecting satisfaction emerged as a third emergent theme. All of the student participants in the study highlighted the expectations of their first year in university. Most of them reported that they were expecting to move into the city of their university, socialize, create bonds with their classmates and instructors, and travel around the city. However, they highlighted that this was not possible in OE, which in turn resulted in disconfirmation of their expectations. Negative disconfirmation of expectations, according to expectancy-value theory, results in dissatisfaction of the learners that in turn causes a lack of motivation in learning (Bhattacheriee, 2001). Instructors in the current study reported that loss of motivation in students reflected on them and negatively affected them as well. Therefore, it can be concluded that disconfirmation of expectations in one of the stakeholders affects others and impacts the overall success of the program.

Finally, related to the second RQ, the fourth emergent theme is related to the overall change in education. As a result of the fourth theme, the participants reported an increase in their motivation level when they compared the overall change in their motivation level from the beginning of the OE until the interview. It was found that instructors were demotivated at the beginning of the transition from face-to-face education to OE because they believed that they were not equipped with the strategies to conduct online classes and it was new to them; however, they became more motivated as they became accustomed to teaching online in time. Similarly, literature shows that insufficiency of online teaching experience causes demotivation for teachers (Coman et al., 2020; Meşe & Sevilen, 2021), while Lee (2010) associated the

success of OE with its long-term use and reported an increase in the satisfaction level by familiarity with OE. On the other hand, students linked the increase in their motivation to the increase in their English proficiency. In line with the finding of the current research, Qunfei et al. (2020) also linked increased achievement levels with the increase in motivation in OE. Another finding of the theme is that instructors prefer blended teaching if they are given the chance to choose, as they believe that we cannot disregard the advantages of OE, similar to Rubio (2013) and Murday et al. (2008). However, students' preferences varied depending on their learning styles, as discussed in factor two.

Conclusion

The current study aimed to find out students' and instructors' perceptions and their level of motivation related to OE. In the light of the data that was collected through semistructured interviews, it was found out that the participants found OE advantageous and disadvantageous for many reasons. For instance, they found OE advantageous and motivating as it is comfortable, time-saving, and flexible. Furthermore, introverted students enjoyed OE over face-to-face education as they find the opportunity to study at their own pace. However, extroverted students preferred face-to-face education because of the lack of interaction especially in speaking classes in OE. Additionally, technical problems, distracting factors in the home environment, lack of interaction, insufficient training to conduct online classes, disconfirmation of expectations of students regarding their first year of university life, and the difficulty of maintaining discipline in the home environment were stated as the disadvantages with OE. Still, it was found out that long-term practices of OE caused an increase in the motivation for the participants as it resulted in getting accustomed to OE for instructors and an increase in the English proficiency for the students. Overall, a majority of the participants reported that thanks to its advantages, OE should maintain its place as a part of our lives along with face-to-face education, which indicates the preference for blended learning.

The findings of the study are significant since they provide a comprehensive account of the teachers' and the students' perceptions and motivation level toward language teaching and learning in OE in a preparatory classroom and fill the gap in the literature. However, the study is not without its limitations. First, being an exploratory qualitative study, the results of the data cannot be generalized to a large population due to the number of participants in the study. Secondly, the interviews were conducted once with individuals, which could be a factor decreasing the reliability of the data. Thus, further studies can examine the concept with a larger sample size and through multiple interviews with individuals. Furthermore, future studies can examine the relationship between learning styles and efficiency taken from OE.

The findings of the study have many practical implications for policymakers in their urge of increasing the efficiency of language education. Taking the motivational and demotivational factors affecting students and teachers is of utmost importance because they define the success of the teaching and learning process. Therefore, policymakers should design programs considering different characteristics of the learners, should provide training to better equip teachers with online teaching strategies, and should guide teachers to find ways to increase interaction in the classroom. Furthermore, when designing blended language programs and deciding the division of online and face-to-face classes, speaking classes should be prioritized in face-to-face education as it requires interaction the most. Additionally, preparatory classes should be mostly conducted face-to-face so as not to result in disconfirmation of expectations regarding their first year of university life.

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