

Indonesian EFL Students' Perceptions of Hybrid Learning in English Speaking Classes: A Qualitative Study

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore students' perceptions of online-based hybrid learning in developing English speaking skills in higher education. Employing a qualitative research design, the study was conducted at the Faculty of Languages and Literature, Universitas Negeri Makassar, Indonesia. The participants consisted of 87 second-semester students enrolled in an Interactive Speaking course, with 20 students purposively selected for in-depth interviews based on their Grade Point Average (GPA). Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns. The findings reveal four key themes: motives, interests, experiences, and expectations. In terms of motives, students are driven by the flexibility, convenience, and cost-effectiveness of hybrid learning, which allows them to access materials anytime and manage their learning independently. Regarding interests, students show positive engagement with diverse learning activities, such as video projects, discussions, and multimedia-based tasks, which support their speaking practice. In terms of experiences, students report both benefits (increased technological proficiency and opportunities for self-paced learning) and challenges (unstable internet connections, reduced interaction, and distractions during online sessions). Concerning expectations, students hope for a more interactive learning environment, including meaningful feedback, and effective integration of synchronous and asynchronous learning. In conclusion, online-based hybrid learning offers flexibility and supports independent speaking practice, but its effectiveness depends on balancing interaction, motivation, and technological support. Practically, educators should provide structured, interactive hybrid settings with meaningful speaking tasks and ongoing feedback. Theoretically, this study will be useful for educators to apply online-based hybrid learning in the teaching and learning.

Keywords : English-Speaking Skill, Hybrid Learning, Students' Perceptions, Higher Education

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are rapidly transforming many aspects of human existence especially education. The incorporation of digital technologies has transformed traditional teaching and learning techniques into more flexible, accessible and technologically driven environments. The shift to online and hybrid learning models has been fast-

tracked, particularly in higher education, as schools are forced to adapt to changing educational expectations and policies in the post-pandemic (Taimur et al., 2022; Thamarasseri & Martin, 2024). As a result, students have been looking for more and more learning experiences that are not only flexible in terms of time and place but also sensitive to their own learning preferences. One of the biggest developments that have come from this change is hybrid online learning that blends synchronous and asynchronous education. Synchronous learning enables live interaction between teachers and students, allowing for instant feedback and conversation, whereas asynchronous learning gives options for self-paced interaction with learning materials (Mata et al., 2023; Olivo Camacho et al., 2024). This combination creates a dynamic learning environment that can enhance student participation, autonomy, and engagement. Recent studies indicate that hybrid learning environments contribute positively to student motivation and learning outcomes when effectively implemented (Ngo & Ha, 2022; Lokollo & Mali, 2024)

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), particularly in Indonesian universities, the development of speaking skills remains a central objective. Speaking is considered one of the most challenging language skills, as it requires learners to actively produce language in real-time while managing linguistic components such as pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and grammatical accuracy. Moreover, students often face psychological barriers, including lack of confidence, anxiety, and limited opportunities for authentic communication (Angraeni et al., 2024; Sukmojati & Rahmat, 2024). Thus, it is very important to develop an engaged and supportive learning environment to facilitate students' speaking skills. Hybrid learning based on online-based has promising prospects to tackle these difficulties. Through digital platforms, students can participate in a variety of speaking activities, such as virtual discussions, recorded presentations and collaborative projects that may not be completely possible in traditional classroom environments (Kholodniak, 2026). Hybrid learning also provides students with the chance to practice speaking outside the classroom and allows for continual access to course materials. Research has shown that the combination of synchronous and asynchronous techniques can lead to more meaningful learning experiences and enhance students' communicative ability (Musliadi et al., 2024; Goestina & Sugirin, 2025).

However, despite its potential benefits, hybrid learning also presents several challenges. Some students perceive online and hybrid formats as less effective compared to traditional face-to-face learning due to issues such as limited interaction, technological barriers, and difficulties in maintaining motivation (Qin, 2025). Furthermore, the effectiveness of hybrid learning largely depends on how students perceive and adapt to this mode of learning. Their perceptions play a crucial role in determining their engagement, participation, and overall learning outcomes. Although numerous studies have explored hybrid learning in general, there remains a significant gap in understanding how students perceive online-based hybrid learning specifically for developing English speaking skills in Indonesian higher education contexts. Many existing studies tend to focus on either technological implementation or learning outcomes, rather than examining students lived experiences and perceptions as central elements of the learning process (Musliadi et al., 2024; Lokollo & Mali, 2024; Sosnova et al., 2025).

To address the issues discussed above, this study seeks to answer the following research question: How do students perceive online-based hybrid learning in learning English-speaking in Indonesian higher education?

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore students' perceptions of online-based hybrid learning in learning English speaking. Qualitative research was considered appropriate as it allows for an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perspectives, and interpretations within a specific educational context. The study was conducted at the Faculty of Languages and Literature at Universitas Negeri Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. This institution was selected due to its policy encouraging the implementation of online and hybrid learning in response to evolving educational demands. Such a setting provided a relevant context for investigating how online-based hybrid learning is implemented, particularly in teaching English speaking at the university level. The researcher implemented online-based hybrid learning in an Interactive Speaking course. The participants of this study were 87 second-semester students enrolled in the English Education program. From this population, 20 students were purposively selected for in-depth interviews based on their Grade Point Average (GPA), ensuring representation of varying academic achievement levels.

In terms of data collection, this study utilized semi-structured interviews as the primary technique. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allow for flexibility while maintaining a clear focus on the research objectives. As suggested by (Miles et al., 2014), this type of interview enables researchers to prepare guiding questions in advance while still allowing participants to express their thoughts openly. The interview guide was initially developed in Bahasa Indonesia and then translated into English to ensure clarity and consistency. The data collection process followed several steps. First, the researcher asked questions based on the prepared interview guidelines. Second, students were encouraged to respond freely based on their motives, interests, experiences, expectations, engagement, and self-confidence in learning English speaking through online-based hybrid learning. Third, after the implementation of hybrid learning in the Interactive Speaking class, all interviews were recorded using both audio and video devices, with prior consent obtained from all participants. This dual recording method was used to ensure data completeness and avoid potential technical issues.

For data analysis, this study adopted a three-phase qualitative analysis procedure. First, the interview data were transcribed and reviewed multiple times to identify recurring patterns or "regularities," as suggested by Merriam (1998). During the transcription process, participants' real names were replaced with pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality (Silverman, 1993). The researcher then highlighted significant statements and coded relevant segments of the data through an iterative process. Second, the coded interview data were combined with field notes, and relationships within and across the data sources were examined. Finally, the researcher refined and integrated the emerging categories into broader themes, following the analytical procedures proposed by (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). This process resulted in well-defined themes that represent students' perceptions of online-based hybrid learning in developing their English-speaking skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

This study aimed to provide a thorough and comprehensive understanding of how students perceive the use of online-based hybrid learning in acquiring English speaking skills. To achieve this objective, the data analysis was conducted to identify emerging themes related to students' motives, interests, experiences, and expectations. Furthermore, these themes serve as a foundation for

interpreting students' perceptions, as well as for explaining how online-based hybrid learning influences their speaking development.

1. Motives

The following data analysis provides a comprehensive overview of the students' motives and benefits associated with hybrid learning. The analysis was based on students' responses organized into three primary themes: Convenience and Flexibility, Technological Proficiency and Resource Utilization, and Cost-Effectiveness and Reduced Commute.

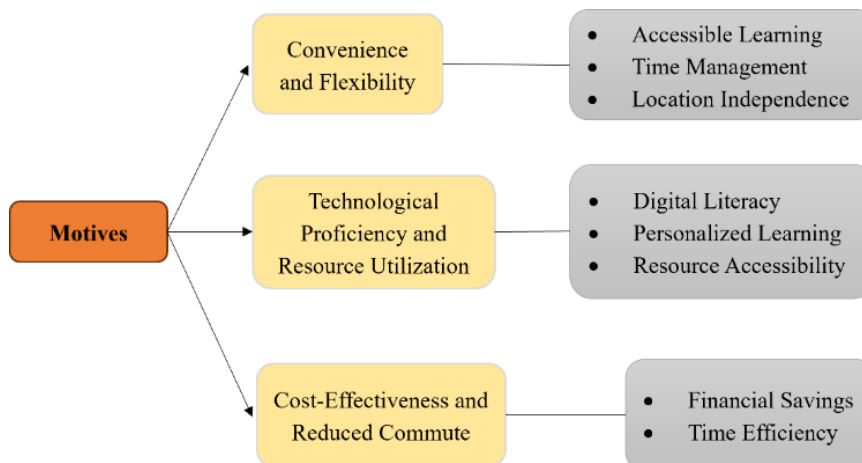


Figure 1. Themes in Students' Perception of Online-Based Hybrid Learning in Terms of Motives

Based on the figure 1 above, I aim to highlight the potential of online-based hybrid learning in enhancing technological proficiency, cost-effectiveness, and fostering a motivation for continuous learning. The data provide offered a comprehensive qualitative exploration into the students' experiences and benefits of online-based hybrid learning, divided into five core themes.

The first theme, 'Convenience and Flexibility', emphasizes how online-based hybrid learning has simplified the learning process. Key elements include accessible learning, time management, and location independence. Online-based hybrid learning is seen as a very accessible educational method that allows students to access course materials and engage in learning activities from anywhere at any time, thus enhancing the overall learning experience, as one participant expresses,

"Because online-based hybrid learning is indeed more suitable, like it is easier to access from anywhere." (Student 8)

In terms of time management, the flexibility and efficiency of online-based hybrid learning are highly valued, as online-hybrid hybrid learning allows students to balance their studies with other life commitments seamlessly. One participant notes the importance of flexibility in scheduling, stating,

"Using online-based hybrid learning is very important and flexible because sometimes mam taught us not based on our schedule from campus. If we have another subject that is not finished yet, mam conducted the class in another time by online." (Student 17)

Moreover, the concept of location independence further underscores the convenience of online-based hybrid learning, allowing students to study from anywhere without the need for a physical commute to a campus or a specific location. This provides the students with the freedom to learn from anywhere. One participant mentions,

"I have experienced online-based hybrid learning. So, we don't need to force it to be offline, it has to be online but in accordance with the learning objectives we want to achieve."
(Student 13)

Convenience and flexibility significantly enhance the learning experience, making online-based hybrid learning a preferred method for many.

Moving on to the second theme, 'Technological Proficiency and Resource Utilization', online-based hybrid learning is recognized for its ability to enhance technological proficiency. As one student shares,

"Positive effect from this online-based hybrid learning is enhanced technological proficiency. This plays an important role in developing the digital literacy that is needed in society."
(Student 2)

The integration of digital technologies into the learning process not only bolstered students' technical skills but also played a crucial role in developing the digital literacy needed in today's society. The sub-theme of 'Personalized Learning' emphasizes the bespoke nature of online-based hybrid learning. By leveraging online resources, online-based hybrid learning offers education tailored to the individual pace and style of each student, thereby enhancing the learning experience and outcomes. A student finds online-based hybrid learning particularly helpful in situations with a lack of classes, adding,

"Using online-based hybrid learning is very helpful, especially with our current condition of lacking classes. Sometimes we already have a class on the schedule, but there are other classes that are learning it at the same time in that room. Therefore, sometimes lecturers directly direct us to online learning even though we are already on campus. So, it could be said that hybrid learning is very flexible." (Student 18)

This flexibility and personalization make online-based hybrid learning a greatly effective and efficient learning method, catering to the diverse needs and preferences of students. Under the sub-theme of 'Resource Accessibility', online-based hybrid learning is noted for its ability to provide easy access to a wide range of learning resources. A student shares how online-based hybrid learning helps in specific situations like being unable to join a class due to illness, stating,

"When I cannot join in the class because I was sick, I can watch again your explanation mam because you record the material and share the link in Google Classroom." (Student 20)

These resources, encompassing various online platforms and applications, significantly enhance the learning process, allowing learners to revisit materials, explore additional content, and engage in self-paced learning. Finally, the 'Cost-Effectiveness and Reduced Commute' associated with hybrid learning are greatly appreciated. Under the sub-theme of 'Financial Savings', online-based hybrid learning is seen as a cost-effective method that allows students to save on commuting and related costs. As one participant states,

"The most important thing is that I can save on costs to get to campus." (Student 9)

The cost-effectiveness of hybrid learning extends beyond financial savings, as it also equips students with technical competencies required in future society. In relation to 'Time Efficiency', online-based hybrid learning is appreciated for its ability to offer flexible learning schedules that align with the students' convenience rather than fixed timetables. One participant highlight how online-based hybrid learning allows for time savings, stating,

"It is good mam. Because Interactive Speaking class is 3 credits so it can minimize the time. For example, sometimes mam did not teach us fully 2 hours and 30 minutes. Sometimes only 1 hour and 40 minutes or 2 hours and the rest time you send the material or module in Gmeet chat box or WA or LMS and mam gave us assignments or project to do." (Student 9)

The flexibility provides in learning schedules, coupled with the elimination of unnecessary time expenditure, makes it a very efficient and practical learning method, particularly in the current pandemic situation.

2. Interest

The data provided elucidates two critical themes that highlight the appeal of hybrid learning: 'The Convenience and Flexibility', and 'The Diversity and Innovation of Online-Based Hybrid Learning'. Under the theme of 'Convenience and Flexibility of Online-Based Hybrid Learning', two sub-themes emerge: 'Flexibility of the Learning Environment', and 'Accessibility of Learning'. The second main theme, 'Diversity and Innovation of Online-Based Hybrid Learning', focuses on the 'Diversity of Learning Tools and Methods', and 'Innovative Teaching Methods'.

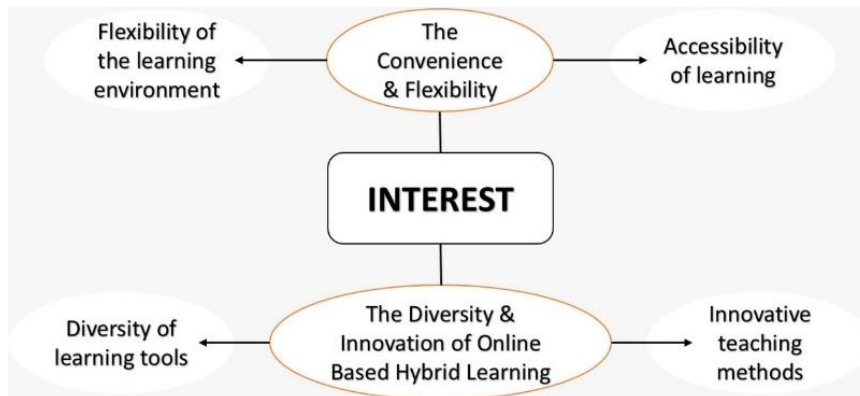


Figure 2. Themes in Students' Perception of Online-Based Hybrid Learning in Terms of Interest

The figure 2 above presents 'The Convenience & Flexibility'. The first sub-theme which is the 'Flexibility of Online-Based Hybrid Learning Environment' as a key factor. Students find it interesting to how online-based hybrid learning provides a flexible learning environment that facilitates self-paced learning, which is seen as essential in effectively improving speaking skills. As one participant notes,

"What piques my interest about online-based hybrid learning is how it provides a flexible learning environment. It facilitates self-paced learning, which is essential in effectively improving speaking skills." (Student 2)

This flexibility allows students to adapt their learning pace, catering to individual needs and schedules, and is thereby perceived as a crucial element in enhancing speaking skills effectively. Moreover, online-based hybrid learning platforms offer the unique advantage of revisiting lessons and replaying conversations. This feature is greatly appreciated by students as it enables them to understand their mistakes and learn from them. As expresses by one participant,

"What interest me about online-based hybrid learning is the ability to revisit lessons and replay conversations. This feature helps me understand my mistakes and learn from them." (Student 2)

This aspect of online-based hybrid learning serves as a valuable tool, providing students with the opportunity to self-assess and improve their learning outcomes. The second sub-theme, 'Accessibility

of Learning', highlights the convenience of online-based hybrid learning. Students express their interest in how online-based hybrid learning platforms allow them to practice speaking anytime, anywhere. This feature, which will not be feasible in a traditional learning setting, significantly increases the accessibility of learning. A participant states,

"One of the things that interest me about online-based hybrid learning is the convenience it offers. It allows me to practice speaking anytime, anywhere, which would not be possible in a traditional learning setting." (Student 2)

Moreover, participants find that online-based hybrid learning has made speaking practice more accessible, allowing them to practice their speaking skills without leaving their homes. A participant says,

"What I find interesting about online learning is how it has made speaking practice more accessible. I can now practice my speaking skills without leaving my home." (Student 13)

The second major theme, 'Diversity and Innovation of Online-Based Hybrid Learning', encompasses the sub-themes of 'Diversity of Learning Tools and Methods, and Innovative Teaching Methods'. Participants find it intriguing that online learning offers a wide range of tools and resources to enhance speaking abilities, likening it to having a language lab at their fingertips. One student points out that,

"I find it intriguing that online learning offers a wide range of tools and resources that can help enhance my speaking abilities. It is like having a language lab at my fingertips." (Student 3)

In this digital age, the proliferation of such diverse tools and resources significantly enhances the learning experience, providing comprehensive support to learners. Online-based hybrid learning platforms also captivate participants' interest by providing varied methods for speaking practice, from video calls to interactive games. The myriads of options provided by these platforms cater to the diverse needs and preferences of students. As one participant notes,

"Online-based hybrid learning has captivated my interest by providing varied methods for speaking practice. From video calls to interactive games, the options are endless." (Student 3)

The sub-theme of 'Innovative Teaching Methods' underscores the importance of innovation in online learning. Participants are intrigued by the innovative teaching methods employed by online platforms, which make the learning process more enjoyable and engaging. This is in line with a student's statement,

"I am intrigued by the innovative teaching methods in online learning. They make the process of learning and improving speaking skills more enjoyable." (Student 12)

Moreover, the continuous evolution and improvement of online-based hybrid learning platforms, as noted by participants, keep them interested and engaged. This excitement stems from the platforms' effort to enhance their features, thereby aiding in improving speaking skills.

"The evolution and improvement of online learning platforms is what keeps me interested. It is exciting to see how these platforms continue to enhance their features to aid in improving speaking skills." (Student 17)

The convenience, flexibility, diversity, and continuous innovation of online learning platforms play a significant role in their appeal, particularly for students seeking to improve their speaking skills. These

insights will contribute to the continuous improvement and development of online learning platforms, making them more attuned to learners' needs and preferences.

3. Experiences

The incorporation of technology into education has fundamentally transformed the methods by which students acquire knowledge, particularly in the field of language learning. This transition marks the beginning of the online-based hybrid learning era, characterized by the utilization of digital tools and platforms to facilitate and augment the learning process. This study conducted a qualitative analysis to explore students' experiences of online-based hybrid learning in their Interactive Speaking learning journey. The analysis explored key themes and sub-themes, including applications and websites, challenges in the learning process, enthusiastic and easy, boring and disturbance, individual and group video project, discussion, and non-stopped discussion, summarizing, focus on speaking, and focus on the unit each meeting. The subsequent paragraphs offer an elaborate analysis of these concepts.

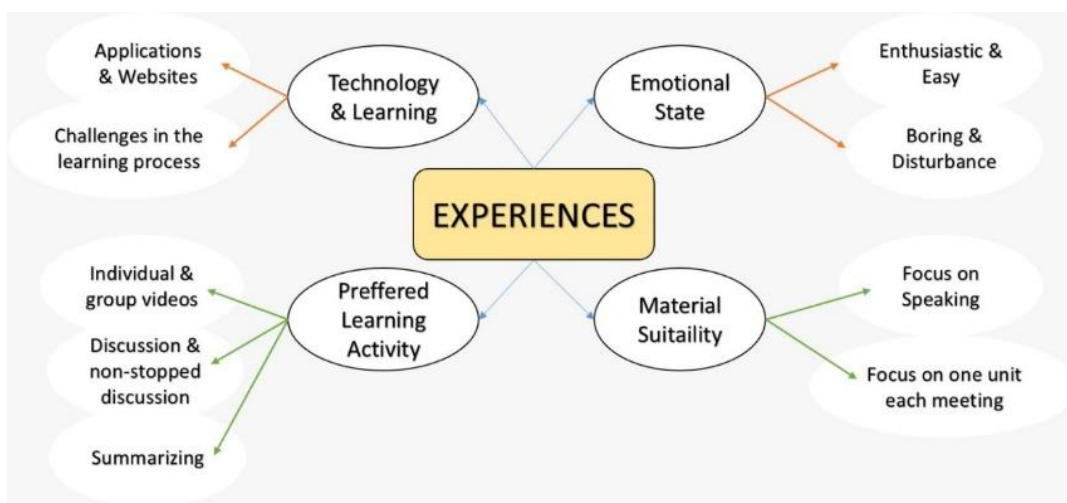


Figure 3. Themes in Students' Perceptions of Online-Based Hybrid Learning in Terms of Experiences

Based on the figure 3 above, the first theme focuses on 'Technology and Learning'. The use of technology in the world of education has changed from previous face-to-face learning to online learning or online-based hybrid learning. Utilizing several applications and websites such as Google Meet, Zoom, YouTube, Google Translate, Spotify, Grammarly, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, TikTok, Duolingo, British Council, Google Scholar, Google Chrome, Discord, Webtoon, and Offline Digital Dictionary have revolutionized the educational landscape. The students use these applications and websites to improve their English especially English-speaking skill. The use of applications and websites has been found to offer a unique learning experience.

These applications and websites also offer an unprecedented level of convenience and accessibility. For example, language learning apps like Duolingo and communication tools like WhatsApp have made it possible for learners to practice new languages in real-time, with instant feedback. Research tools like Google Scholar have streamlined the process of finding academic resources, while platforms like YouTube and Instagram have made learning more engaging with their vast array of educational videos. Offline digital dictionaries have made it easier to understand complex terms, and apps like Grammarly and Quillbot have become invaluable tools for improving writing skills. Thus, this flexibility can significantly enhance motivation and engagement. Furthermore, many

platforms leverage gamification strategies, which can make learning more enjoyable and rewarding, for instance, one student states:

"I often use Twitter. So, Twitter is like all in one. Sometimes I interact with friends from various countries there so I can get used to interacting with people who can speak English there because Twitter has a space feature so we can talk directly like that. Then secondly, I often use YouTube. So, I often watch live streamers that speak English. In my opinion, it's easier for me to learn English by listening to people who are relaxed and talk like that, right? For example, if we study formally like this the language is also formal, for example, if I watch a live streamer, their language seems relaxed. It's everyday language, so it really makes it easier for me to learn English." (Student 7)

A key theme that emerged from the data is experiences with applications and websites in improving the students' English-speaking skill particularly YouTube, Google Translate, Spotify, Grammarly, Twitter, and Instagram. Some students use these applications and websites to improve their English-speaking skill by watching movies and videos, listening to music and podcast, following English accounts, talking with native speakers, and translating sentences.

However, it is not without its pitfalls. Many students mentioned the potential for network and technical issues, less effective, and less interaction. One significant hurdle is network and technical issues, which can disrupt the learning process and lead to frustration. Not all students have access to stable internet connections or high-performance devices necessary to run some applications smoothly, exacerbating educational inequities. A student expresses:

"I think mam not all students have access to the latest technology, and technical issues can disrupt the learning process. Sometimes, if my friends go back to their village, they cannot participate in the class because of bad internet connection." (Student 3)

Furthermore, some students find online-based hybrid learning less effective than traditional classroom instruction. The lack of face-to-face interaction can make it harder to stay engaged and absorb complex concepts. This is supported by the statements from some students who say:

"Reduced face-to-face interaction can lead to fewer opportunities for students to engage socially, potentially hampering the development of communication and collaboration skills." (Student 6)

This can be particularly challenging for subjects that require hands-on practice or experiential learning. The impersonal nature of online-based hybrid learning can also lead to less interaction. Online-based hybrid learning cannot fully replicate the nuances of in-person communication. This can result in feelings of isolation and hinder the development of interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence.

The second theme focuses on 'Emotional States'. Online-based hybrid learning has been instrumental in affecting emotional states of the students, as indicated by the sub-theme enthusiastic and easy. Student 6, 12, and 15 shared their experiences in using online-based hybrid learning in learning speaking in terms of emotional states. The 'Enthusiastic and Easy' emotional state in the context of online-based hybrid learning can be characterized by elevated engagement and motivation, coupled with the ease of navigating the learning platform. For instance, one student states:

"I think the mood is better than full face-to-face because I can study anywhere and don't have to be bothered going to campus. Apart from that, it doesn't have to be bothered getting ready, especially if I wake up late." (Student 6)

This emotional state often arises when students have a quiet, dedicated space for learning, free from disturbances. The flexibility to learn at one's own pace and the convenience of not having to commute to a physical location can also contribute to this positive emotional state as well as the convenience of accessing course materials anytime and anywhere, the innovative use of multimedia and interactive tools, and the blend of synchronous (real-time) and asynchronous (self-paced) learning activities. Engaging course materials, the use of interactive tools, and the support of instructors and peers in the virtual environment can further enhance students' enthusiasm.

Conversely, the sub-theme of 'Boring and Disturbed' emotional state can often be linked to the challenges of learning from home, particularly when they must focus on the screen for hours that make them sleepy, need to wait for other students to join the class, must do other assignments from other lecturers, network issues arise, and there are frequent disturbances from others in the household. As two students express:

"Yes mam. To be honest, in online-based hybrid classes students are usually more flexible so usually there are students who are cooking while in class, there are those who are washing while in class and I think maybe that is also a problem. Students don't really focus on their classes, maybe that's the reason. So, if that's the case, I'm not in a good mood because sometimes people at home tell me to do something while I'm having class."
(Student 12)

This can lead to feelings of frustration, stress, and a lack of focus, disrupting the learning process. Constant interruptions can make it difficult for learners to engage with the course content and participate in online discussions. Additionally, it can make the learning process seem monotonous and boring, as students may struggle to manage their time effectively between household responsibilities and learning tasks.

The third major theme focused on 'Preferred Learning Activities'. Three sub-themes based on the experiences of students who have experienced various kinds of learning activities in Interactive Speaking classes using online-based hybrid learning. In the context of online-based hybrid learning, students exhibit preferences for certain learning activities that foster engagement, collaboration, and comprehension.

One of the activities that students like is individual video projects where students are free to explain a topic for a predetermined time duration and group video projects where students are free to determine the topic and play their respective roles. This activity allows students to creatively express their understanding of a topic while improving their multimedia skills. As one participant states,

"The group's task that is to make videos because I can interact directly with my friends to make video projects." (Student 3)

Students have the freedom to work individually and in groups, which can foster teamwork and collaboration. Apart from that, the video format can make the learning process more interesting and enjoyable because it combines visual and auditory elements. The students also felt happy because the videos they made were uploaded on YouTube and Instagram where they could give likes, comments and input to each other, even other people who were not their classmates could also give likes, comments, and input on their videos.

Another very popular learning activity is discussion and non-stopped discussions. The continuous exchange of ideas, opinions, and feedback fosters a collaborative learning environment, enhancing their overall learning experience. This sentiment is echoed by another participant who says,

“Honestly, I really like non-stop discussion. Actually, that's very good because we are really asked to talk and think. We are also trained to think critically, so that's good, I like it.”
(Student 7)

In discussion activities, the lecturer conveys the topic at each meeting without explaining in detail because the essence of this activity is that students must express their opinions about the topic, images and statements that focus on one topic. They will also discuss with each other, ask questions, and provide input to each other. Moreover, non-stopped discussion requires all students to explain and express their opinions. One student starts explaining a topic that has been given and the next student must continue the explanation based on their ideas. If they do not continue with one student's explanation, then the student who is explaining must continue talking until another student wants to continue.

This format encourages students to think critically, express their own opinions, and engage in intellectual debate with their peers. The continuous nature of discussions keeps students actively involved in the learning process and encourages them to stay up to date with course content. Additionally, these discussions can be asynchronous or synchronous, providing flexibility for students with different schedules and learning preferences. Lastly, students appreciate the activity of summarizing a topic that has been discussed in written form. As one participant notes,

“Writing summaries forces me to distill key points from our discussions, which enhances my ability to grasp and retain the course material.” (Student 4)

This task challenges students to distill complex information into a concise summary, thus testing their comprehension of the material. Writing a summary also allows students to review the content and reinforce their understanding. Additionally, students can refer to their summaries for future studying, making this activity beneficial for long-term retention of the course material.

These findings indicate that students prefer learning activities that engage them in active learning, offer opportunities for collaboration, and challenge their understanding of the material. By incorporating these activities into online-based hybrid learning, lecturers can create a more engaging and effective learning environment. In online-based hybrid learning environments, the ‘Suitability of materials’ greatly influences the effectiveness of teaching speaking skills. One sub-theme, “Focus on Speaking,” emphasizes the use of materials specifically designed to hone speaking skills.

“I think it is appropriate because when mam gives the material, mam always invites us as students to actively participate in speaking so I think it is very appropriate mam.” (Student 2)

These materials may include role play, pronunciation exercises, or platforms for delivering speeches and receiving real-time feedback. Students often respond well to these resources because they provide practical and direct practice in speaking. The use of multimedia and interactive platforms can further enhance this experience, provide immediate feedback and foster an engaging learning environment.

The second sub-theme, “Focus on One Unit Each Speaking,” highlights the approach of breaking down speaking skills into smaller, manageable units. Each unit may concentrate on an individual aspect of speaking, such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, or the use of language in specific contexts. This methodical approach allows students to focus on one element at a time, leading to a deeper understanding and mastery of each component. Additionally, this approach enables educators to utilize materials that are specifically targeted to each unit, enhancing the learning process. This is in line with a student's statement,

"We only focus on one unit per meeting which we really cover to the basics mam." (Student 1)

Experiences with material suitability in teaching speaking through online-based learning have been largely positive. The ability to utilize diverse, targeted materials and to break down the learning process into distinct units has proven effective in enhancing speaking skills. This approach caters to individual learning styles and paces, leading to increased student engagement and improved learning outcomes.

4. Expectations

This section delved into students' expectations of online-based hybrid learning in the context of English speaking, revealing two central themes and their corresponding sub-themes. The first theme, 'Flexibility and Convenience of Online-Based Hybrid Learning,' underscores the value students placed on the adaptability of the online component and the immediacy of the offline component in their learning experience. The second theme, 'Supportive and Interactive Learning Environment,' highlights the students' desire for regular group activities, interactions, and effective utilization of technology in their learning process. These themes and sub-themes, derived from hypothetical quotations, provided valuable insights into students' perspectives on online-based hybrid learning in English speaking. This report further explores these themes and their implications for online-based hybrid learning design and implementation.



Figure 4. Themes in Students' Perception of Online-Based Hybrid Learning in Terms of Expectations

The expectations for online-based hybrid learning in English speaking were multifaceted, indicating that students were seeking a comprehensive learning experience that blended the advantages of both online and offline learning environments. 'The convenience and flexibility of online learning' were highly valued. Students expected the online component of online-based hybrid learning to provide a variety of resources and activities that they could access at their own convenience. As one student states,

"I hope that the online component of online-based hybrid learning will offer a variety of engaging activities and resources that I can use to practice English speaking at my own pace." (Student 12)

The face-to-face component of online-based hybrid learning was seen as an essential opportunity for real-time communication practice and immediate feedback. This was reflected from a student:

"I expect that the face-to-face interaction in hybrid learning will provide real-time feedback on my pronunciation and accent, something that's really important when learning English speaking." (Student 4, Interview, 24/05/2023)

Students also expected online-based hybrid learning to provide a 'Supportive and Interactive Learning Environment'. They hope for regular opportunities to engage in English speaking activities, both individually and in groups, to enhance their fluency and confidence. As one student says,

"In an online-based hybrid learning set-up, I hope to have regular opportunities to engage in English speaking activities, both individually and in groups, to enhance my fluency and confidence." (Student 11, Interview, 24/05/2023)

Lastly, students expect online-based hybrid learning to effectively utilize technology to support their learning. They hoped for the use of online discussion boards, video conferencing tools, and other digital resources to practice and improve their English-speaking skills. One student argues:

"I expect online-based hybrid learning to make effective use of technology, including online discussion boards and video conferencing tools, to help me practice and improve my English-speaking skills." (Student 16, Interview, 24/05/2023)

Moreover, students see the potential for online-based hybrid learning to offer a unique blend of traditional and digital learning methodologies. They anticipate that the integration of technology will not only diversify the learning resources available to them but also create a more engaging and interactive learning experience. The use of tools like online discussion boards and video conferencing was seen as a way to extend learning beyond the confines of the classroom, allowing students to continue practicing their English-speaking skills in varied and flexible contexts.

In addition to the benefits of flexibility and technological integration, students also appreciate the potential for online-based hybrid learning to provide a more personalized learning experience. They hope that the format will allow them to progress at their own pace, with the online component offering self-study resources that they can access as needed. This expectation is reflected in a student quote:

"I expect the online-based hybrid learning model to provide a more personalized learning experience, enabling me to focus on improving my English-speaking skills at my own pace, but also providing opportunities for face-to-face interaction." (Student 8, Interview, 24/05/2023)

However, despite these great expectations, students also recognize potential challenges. The need for self-discipline in managing their own study schedule, the potential for distractions during online sessions, and the reliance on stable internet connectivity were among the concerns raised. Addressing these challenges effectively will be crucial in ensuring that online-based hybrid learning can meet students' expectations and support their English-speaking skills development.

The expectations for online-based hybrid learning in English speaking are diverse and complex, reflecting students' desire for a learning experience that combines the best of synchronous and asynchronous learning. The findings highlight the need for educational institutions to carefully design and implement their online-based hybrid learning programs, taking into consideration these expectations and potential challenges.

Students' perceptions and involvement in online-based hybrid learning are significantly shaped by their motives, interests, experiences, and expectations. As students experience the creative and participatory aspects of online-based hybrid learning, their original expectations of traditional teaching approaches may be pleasantly impacted. In addition, online-based hybrid learning promoted motivation for lifelong learning, simplicity of use and comfort in the classroom, enhanced English proficiency through a variety of activities, and promoted peer referrals and sharing.

Discussions

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of students' perceptions of online-based hybrid learning in English speaking classes in higher education. In particular, the findings highlight a set of inherent tensions including flexibility versus reduced interaction, technological access versus digital disruption, and independent learning versus motivational challenges. These tensions offer a deeper understanding of how students engage with and respond to hybrid learning environments.

Students had a positive view of the online-based hybrid learning because of the flexibility and accessibility. The ability to access materials anytime and anywhere enables students to manage their time efficiently and balance academic and personal responsibilities. This approach offers students the opportunity to review recorded courses, practice speaking at their own pace, and prepare more comprehensively before engaging in class activities. However, this same flexibility can reduce opportunities for spontaneous interaction, such as immediate discussions, peer collaboration, and real-time feedback from lecturer. As a result, students may experience fewer chances to practice speaking in authentic communicative situations, which are essential for language development. This aligns with recent findings by Liu (2025) and Dwivedi et al. (2024), who emphasize that flexible learning environments support self-paced learning while also requiring careful design to maintain interaction.

Moreover, access to technology plays a crucial role in supporting hybrid learning. Students benefit from various digital tools that facilitate communication, presentation, and speaking practice, contributing to improved technological proficiency and digital literacy (Muhaimin, 2023; Wildaniati, 2025). Nevertheless, this access is often accompanied by digital disruption. Students frequently encounter unstable internet connections, limited access to reliable devices, and interruptions during online sessions. In addition, the presence of multiple digital platforms can lead to distractions, such as notifications from social media or multitasking during class activities. These disruptions can interrupt concentration, reduce participation, and affect the overall learning experience. These findings are consistent with Mekheimer (2025) and Maleki (2025), who identify technological limitations as a significant obstacle in online learning contexts.

Another important tension is between independent learning and motivational challenges. Hybrid learning encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning by managing their schedules, completing tasks independently, and engaging with materials outside of class time. This autonomy can support the development of self-regulated learning skills, particularly in practicing speaking through repeated exposure and self-reflection. However, without sufficient guidance and structured support, students may struggle to maintain consistency and engagement. The absence of direct supervision and immediate feedback can lead to feelings of isolation, reduced participation, and difficulty sustaining motivation over time. This issue is particularly relevant in speaking classes, where continuous interaction and encouragement are necessary to build confidence and fluency (Cao, 2025).

These findings suggest several practical implications for the design of hybrid learning in EFL contexts. First, educators should balance flexibility with structured interaction by incorporating synchronous speaking activities, such as live discussions, peer feedback sessions, and real-time presentations, to ensure consistent communication practice. Second, the use of digital tools should be carefully organized to reduce distractions and support focused learning. Third, instructors should provide clear instructions, regular feedback, and scaffolding strategies to support students' independent learning while maintaining their motivation. Finally, hybrid learning designs should consider technological accessibility to ensure that all students can participate effectively.

In addition, recent studies (Olivo Camacho et al., 2024; Lokollo & Mali, 2024; Culbreth & Martin, 2025) reinforce the importance of combining synchronous and asynchronous strategies to create a

more interactive and supportive learning environment. These studies suggest that effective hybrid learning is not merely a combination of online and offline modes, but a carefully designed pedagogical approach that addresses students' cognitive, social, and emotional needs.

This study highlights that online-based hybrid learning offers significant potential for enhancing English speaking skills; however, its effectiveness depends on how well educators navigate the tensions between flexibility and interaction, autonomy and support, as well as technology and pedagogy.

CONCLUSIONS

This study indicates that students' perspectives on online hybrid learning in English-speaking classes are complex and influenced by the interaction of learner autonomy, flexibility, technology access, engagement. Students appreciate the flexibility and accessibility of hybrid learning since it enables them to practice speaking at their own pace, revisit information, and exercise greater autonomy in their education. These advantages are accompanied by disadvantages, including less interaction, interruptions from technology, and trouble sustaining motivation and regular participation.

The results show that unless hybrid learning is carefully planned to balance these conflicting factors, it is not inherently effective. Lack of meaningful communication opportunities may hinder students' speaking development in EFL contexts, where interaction, feedback, and confidence enhancement are essential. Students' perspectives underscore the importance of integrating both educational and technological elements in the development of hybrid learning environments.

A number of practical recommendations for educators can be made in light of these findings. To facilitate regular opportunities for real-time speaking practice and conversation, educators should initially design hybrid courses that intentionally include synchronous and asynchronous activities. Secondly, to minimize distractions and enhance focused learning, the utilization of digital tools must be efficient and purpose-driven. Third, to foster students' self-directed learning and sustain their motivation, educators must consistently provide guidance, feedback, and scaffolding. To lessen differences in students' educational experiences, institutions should also guarantee fair access to technology.

Future study on hybrid learning in various EFL contexts, including comparisons across skill levels, institutional settings, and technology environments is recommended. Furthermore, longitudinal studies may provide greater insight into the evolution of students' opinions and speaking skills over time. Moreover, the effectiveness of certain hybrid learning models or pedagogical strategies in enhancing motivation and engagement in speaking classes may be explored in future research.

In conclusion, while online hybrid learning offers significant opportunities to enhance English speaking skills, its efficacy depends on the ability of educators and institutions to address the pedagogical and technological challenges identified in this study.

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