ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ONLINE INSTRUCTION AT THE FACULTY OF SECURITY IN SKOPJE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

The paper addresses the issue of online English lessons at the Faculty of Security in Skopje, from students’ perspective. More specifically, it focuses on the students’ perceptions regarding the design of the online activities implemented in the virtual classroom and their effectiveness regarding the enhancement of the different language skills.

For this purpose, a special questionnaire was designed and distributed among students who have attended online lectures in English Language in the first and the second year of the first cycle studies at the Faculty of Security in Skopje. The questionnaire was distributed online, via email, as a Google Forms document, and the results were submitted anonymously. The collected data was statistically processed, and the results and the obtained answers were narratively discussed.

The research findings presented in the paper will serve as an indicator of the effectiveness of the online English Language, and may be used as the basis for possible modification of the online activities that would better suit the students’ needs.

**Key words:** online classes, English Language, e-learning, covid-19, students

1. INTRODUCTION

The beginning of 2020 was marked by the occurrence and the global spread of the Covid-19 virus, which was later officially labelled as a pandemic, affecting all segments of life, including education. The virus was first recorded on Macedonian ground on 26th February 2020. This date marked the beginning of the spread of the virus on the territory of the entire country, as a logical and expected consequence. Taking into account the conclusions and recommendations of the Steering Committee for Coordination and Management at the System of Crisis Management, the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, at its regular session held on 10th March 2020, inter alia, brought the decision “to suspend the educational process and teaching in all kindergartens, primary and secondary schools and high-education facilities, and in the public science institutes on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia in the following 14 days”\(^1\). On 18th March

\(^1\) The quoted text was posted in English on the official website of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, accessible on the following link: [https://vlada.mk/covid19_en?ln=en-gb](https://vlada.mk/covid19_en?ln=en-gb). The text of the original document in Macedonian (the conclusion from the 15th official Session of the Government held on 10th March 2021) can be accessed on the following link: [https://vlada.mk/node/20446](https://vlada.mk/node/20446)
2020, the President of the country declared a state of emergency\(^2\), which was followed by
the Government’s decision that all activities in the educational institutions were to be
carried out online. This practically meant an overnight shift from the traditional classroom
to the virtual one – an unprecedented experience for most Macedonian teachers at all levels
of education. Macedonian tertiary level students thus “joined” the global online
community comprised of over 220 million students from 175 countries and communities,
as estimated by the World Bank on 8\(^{th}\) April 2020, whose studies were either ended or
significantly disrupted resulting from the spread of Covid-19\(^3\).

2. E-LEARNING: FEATURES AND SPECIFICITIES

The notion of e-learning is a relatively new one and is closely related to the mass
use of computers and the internet technology. If we try to look it up, for instance, in the
Online Oxford Learners Dictionaries, as a dictionary of general English language, we will
find that e-learning is “a system of learning that uses electronic media, typically over the
internet”\(^4\). Despite its breadth, this definition includes the key semantic features
encompassed by the notion of e-learning, with the emphasis on electronic media and the
internet as the medium through which the learning process occurs. Class activities are
carried out in the virtual classroom, located somewhere in cyberspace, while the learners
can use the comfort of their homes or other places to access the course content and to
attend the classes from any location on the world map. In the online classroom, technology
acquires a new role, and turns into, as C.H.Major (2015: 10) calls it “context for
instruction” due to the fact that “it functions as the place where teaching and learning
happen” (ibid: 10-11).

In addition to this type of broader, dictionary definition that addresses the concept
of e-learning in a general way helping us to grasp the general idea behind it, there are
authors who have attempted to provide more specific elaborations on this notion. Thus, for
instance, Clark & Mayer (2016:10) define e-learning as “instruction delivered on a digital
device (such as a desktop computer, laptop computer, tablet, or smart phone) that is
intended to support learning”. They also give a more specific explanation of their
understanding of the concept of e-learning, and identify the specific features of e-learning
they elaborate on in the cited book, stating that it:

- “Stores and/or transmits lessons in electronic form on external drives, the cloud,
local internet or external memory, or servers on the Internet or intranet;
- Includes content relevant to the learning objective;
- Uses media elements such as words and pictures to deliver the content;
- Uses instructional methods such as examples, practice and feedback to promote
learning;
- May be instructor-led (synchronous e-learning) or designed for self-paced
individual study (asynchronous e-learning);

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\(^2\) The President’s speech announcing the decision to the public can be accessed here:
https://pretsedatel.mk/вонредно-обраќање-на-претседателот-и/

\(^3\) World Bank Group, The COVID-19 Crisis Response: Supporting tertiary education for continuity, adaptation,

\(^4\) https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/e-learning
• May incorporate synchronous learner collaboration as in breakout rooms or asynchronous collaboration as on discussion boards;
• Helps learners build new knowledge and skills linked to individual learning goals or to improved organizational performance.” (ibid)

An important aspect of Clark & Mayer’s definition is the distinction between asynchronous and synchronous e-learning, which can be found in the works of other authors as well. A specific feature of asynchronous e-learning is its flexibility in terms of the access and completion of the tasks within a given course which are based on the learner’s own pace, where the learner interacts with the instructor and other learners using various online tools, mainly discussion boards. As Hrastinski (2008:51) puts it, asynchronous e-learning “supports work relations among learners and with the teachers, even when participants cannot be online at the same time”, which adds to the flexibility of its nature. On the other hand, synchronous e-learning refers to a learning practice where the traditional classroom is replaced by a virtual one, with both the learners and the instructor being connected at the same time and completing the given tasks in the virtual classroom.

The distinction between synchronous and asynchronous e-learning is a common constituent of most definitions of the notion of e-learning before the Covid-19 era. Thus, for instance, many self-paced online courses have been developed to suit the needs of learners by various educational institutions where e-learning occurs in an asynchronous manner. However, when we elaborate on the issue of e-learning in the context of Covid-19 pandemic teaching practice, we mainly refer to synchronous e-learning as a closer virtual “equivalent” of traditional learning. The difference is that the learners are not physically present in a traditional classroom, but simultaneously connect via their computers or other similar devices and using video and audio tools interact between each other and with the instructor using mainly videoconferencing software.

3. CHALLENGES OF THE VIRTUAL LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

In its traditional classroom form, the English language instruction at the Faculty of Security in Skopje is mainly based on the principles of communicative language teaching. A key component in foreign language instruction based on this approach is the learner’s active involvement in the language acquisition process which is achieved through his/her interaction both with the other learners and the instructor. In a typical communicative language classroom this interaction is achieved through information gap activities, jigsaw activities, task-completion activities such as puzzles, games, map-reading, information-gathering activities, opinion-sharing activities, information-transfer activities, reasoning-gap activities, and role plays (Richards, 2006: 18-20). These types of activities are usually conducted through pair work or group work (ibid: 20). The traditional concept of a classroom with physical attendance provides the necessary environment for achieving pair and group work i.e., for implementing these types of communicative tasks.

What makes online foreign language instruction challenging is the achievement of a successful transition of communicative classroom activities from the traditional classroom to the virtual one. The ability to establish unmediated face to face contact and use of both verbal and non-verbal communication makes interactive group work tasks easily achievable when the teaching is conducted onsite. The ability to move physically in the classroom makes this type of tasks even more enjoyable for them, and the instructor
can follow their progress, engagement, enthusiasm, boredom, etc., thus making it possible for him/her to intervene by modifying the tasks, clarifying possible ambiguities or misunderstandings and take various other actions on an ad hoc basis. As far as virtual instruction is concerned, learners’ real time interaction and collaboration are mainly achieved through discussions and completion of tasks at class level, as well as learners’ group work in breakout rooms that videoconferencing applications provide as an online alternative. However, working in breakout rooms disables the possibility for a simultaneous visual observation of the learners’ work, and the level of involvement of all group members cannot easily be assessed.

Apart from videoconferencing tools, communicative collaboration can be achieved inter alia, by using various online applications that can be adapted for the acquisition of knowledge in any subject, including foreign languages. Such practice has also been applied in the English language virtual classroom at the Faculty of Security in Skopje since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in the country and the shift to online instruction. The online English language classes are conducted through the videoconferencing tool Zoom. The course content is usually delivered through a PowerPoint presentation, which is used for presenting new content as well as for checking students’ understanding through instructor-designed games and quizzes, while the group activities are carried out in breakout rooms. Content is also presented through an online interactive whiteboard, as well as applications such as Padlet, Kahoot, Answer Garden, etc. These applications are used for supplementary materials, brainstorming sessions, group work project assignments and quizzes for assessing students’ progress. Beside these applications, many authentic documents published online are also used for practicing the newly presented material, as well as YouTube videos, online newspapers and other materials that may serve a didactic purpose.

Learners’ feedback is another challenge faced by teachers in the virtual classroom. In a traditional teaching and learning environment the learners’ understanding of the subject taught can be achieved in many ways. As McVay Lynch (2004: 23) puts it, the teachers “constantly scan their students to look for body language that indicates they are engaged in the learning or that they are confused – for example, frowning or that “glazed” look in the eyes”. They may also “ask questions and test student understanding by having them respond or discuss” (ibid). In an ideal virtual classroom, this type of feedback may be achieved when all students are connected via audio and video connection. However, simultaneous audio and video connection of a larger group of students requires stable and high-speed internet and computers or smartphones with adequate technical characteristics, which is still a challenge for some students, as well as teachers. For that reason, students mainly use pictures for their visual representation, and the microphone for verbal participation. Thus, we would agree with C. H. Major (2015: 11) who, discussing technology as an interpretative lens in the context of online teaching, writes that when interacting with the students online and they are visually represented with images, “we do not experience their expressions the moment they occur; rather, we see them as they were at the time of the picture, which is a curated experience, since students select pictures based on the images they want to share with others”. From the two options mentioned above, the more practical and feasible one is the question-answer feedback type, and here we would add the use of the chat box and the emoticons reactions that may also serve the purpose.
4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Taking into consideration the challenges of organizing and conducting online English classes at the Faculty of Security in Skopje as a novel experience both for the teacher and the learners, the goal of the research was to evaluate the students’ views on the way the online classes are organized and their effectiveness on developing their English language skills.

For this purpose, a questionnaire was designed and distributed to the students via email, in a Google Forms form to be voluntarily and anonymously completed by the first and the second year of the first cycle English language students in the academic year 2020/2021. The questionnaire was returned by 60 students attend the online classes in the spring semester of 2021, namely 34 (56.7%) students from the second semester (first year of studies) and 26 (43.3%) students from the fourth semester (second year of studies). The questionnaire consisted of 16 statements/questions presented in the form of a Likert scale, while the last question (number 17) was descriptive. The students’ answers were collected from 26th March 2021 to 6th April 2021. The data was analyzed statistically in Microsoft Excel and discussed in the section that follows.

5. RESEARCH RESULTS

The first statement from the questionnaire referred to the students’ personal feelings associated with the attendance of the online English language classes. The aim of this statement was to assess their overall interest in the online classes. The students were asked to evaluate, on a 1 to 5 Likert scale (from lowest to highest), the level of their agreement with the statement that they attended the online English Language classes with interest. The results showed that even 38 students (63.3%) strongly agreed with the statement, which means that most of the students are very interested in attending the online English lectures. The high number of students who chose the highest level of agreement with the statement is a very important indicator of the positive effect that the online English Language classes have on maintaining their interest for attending the classes and for acquiring knowledge on the subject.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>19 (31.7%)</td>
<td>38 (63.3%)</td>
<td>60</td>
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</table>

The statements 2-5 addressed the teachers’ approach in designing online classroom materials and their suitability, as perceived from the students’ perspective.

More specifically, the second statement focused on the adequacy of the teachers’ selection of Internet applications used in the virtual classroom. Considering the wide variety of didactic opportunities that the Internet offers to foreign language teachers, the aim of this type of statement was to give directions about the future course of action.

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5 Since the questionnaire was designed and distributed to the students in Macedonian, for labelling the items on the Likert scale we used the Macedonian terms from the book “Методологија на безбедносните науки – аналитички постапки”, книга III, автор, Скопје, 2013. The items were then translated into English, as presented in the paper.
concerning this issue based on the students’ perception of the teacher’s choices. The results showed that 47 students (78.3%) gave strong agreement regarding their adequacy, thus indicating that the internet applications (Kahoot, Padlet, Answer Garden, etc.) used in the online classroom were adequately selected. Obviously, these applications can successfully be used with a didactic purpose in the virtual English language classroom.

The third issue covered by the questionnaire was the planning and the design of the online class activities. A majority of 66.7% of the respondents opted for the highest level of agreement, thus indicating the overall high level of satisfaction among the students with the way the online exercises are designed and organized. This could serve as stimulus for the teacher to continue the acknowledged practice of the design of didactic online exercises and to even upgrade it with inclusion of new applications tailored to the needs of the students at the Faculty of Security.

Another question that received highly positive feedback was the one regarding the correspondence between the designed online exercises and the English Language syllabus. An impressive number of 48 students (80%) stated that they completely agreed that the activities presented online in the virtual English classroom matched the syllabus. The compatibility between the online activities and the syllabus is a prerequisite for successful acquisition of knowledge and the students’ attitudes in this context confirm the teacher’s skills for adequately choosing and adapting materials for online classroom instruction and practice.

The issue of interaction, as an important segment of communicative English teaching, was addressed next in the questionnaire. The results showed that 71.7 % of the students (a total of 43) totally agreed that the online English language activities allowed for a high level of interaction. Taking into consideration the broadness of the term interaction, their answers should be perceived in a general sense, namely, interaction between the students each other as well as interaction between the students and the teacher. The very fact that only one student disagreed is a proof that even though it is quite challenging, interaction in the online English classroom can successfully be achieved using the means that are currently at disposal to the language instructor.

Table 2. The teacher uses adequate internet applications to teach the English Language online classes.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>12 (20%)</td>
<td>47 (78.3%)</td>
<td>60</td>
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</table>

Table 3. The activities in the English Language online classes have been well designed.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>17 (28.3%)</td>
<td>40 (66.7%)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. The activities in the English Language online classes match the syllabus of this subject.

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<th>I completely disagree</th>
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<th>I cannot evaluate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>10 (16.7%)</td>
<td>48 (80%)</td>
<td>60</td>
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Table 5. The activities in the English Language online classes allow for a high level of interactivity.

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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>5 (8.3%)</td>
<td>11 (18.3%)</td>
<td>43 (71.7%)</td>
<td>60</td>
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</table>

The next question focused on the students’ perception regarding the usefulness of the online activities they were engaged in during their English classes for the acquisition of new content. Thus, 40 students (66.7%) expressed their highest level of agreement that implementing the online exercises helped them practice and learn well the new contents presented in the online lectures. The results actually show that they were given adequate practice of what had previously been taught during the lecture based on the content encompassed by the English Language syllabus, which is another indicator of the helpfulness of these complementary online didactic materials.

Table 6. The activities in the English Language online classes help me consolidate the knowledge I have gained from online lectures.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>18 (30%)</td>
<td>40 (66.7%)</td>
<td>60</td>
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As previously noted, the online English classes at the Faculty of Security are mainly centered around the communicative language teaching approach, whose aim is to develop communicatively competent learners able to use the language in various functional contexts. Bearing this in mind, it was of utmost importance to assess the students’ views on this issue. The results showed that 36 students (60%) completely agreed that the offered online activities helped them improve their communicative skills in English, which means that the goal of the subject was achieved to a high level.

Table 7. The activities in the English Language online classes help me improve my English communication skills.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3 (5%)</td>
<td>20 (33.3%)</td>
<td>36 (60%)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
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</table>

An important aspect of a typical communicative classroom is teamwork. With that in mind, we were curious to assess the students’ views on their skills to work in a group. This was the only question that received a score lower than 50% for total agreement, with 45% (27 students) of the respondents having chosen this option. However, this was the option that received the largest number of answers, and if we add the 20 students (33.3%) who agreed with this statement, we get a total of 47 students (78.3%) who agreed that the online activities helped them improve their ability to work as team members. The obtained answers regarding this question show that compared to other segments, group work practice might be given more emphasis in the future, if online instruction remains an option at the Faculty of Security.
Table 8. The activities in the English Language online classes help me improve my teamwork skills.

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<tr>
<td>Statements</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>4 (6.7%)</td>
<td>9 (15%)</td>
<td>20 (33.3%)</td>
<td>27 (45%)</td>
<td>60</td>
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Statements 9-12 refer to the assessments of the students’ perceptions regarding the enhancement of their receptive skills (reading and listening) and productive skills (writing and speaking).

As far as their reading skills are concerned, a high number of 37 students (61.7%) completely agreed that the online exercises helped them read better in English. This shows that the practice of presenting reading texts on the screen can be very effective, beside the reading practice using traditional printed texts. It is interesting to note that none of the students expressed any kind of disagreement with the statement, and only 6 students (10%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

Being able to write in English is an important productive skill for English language learners. During the online English classes, the students practice this skill by writing on the virtual whiteboard, typing in the videoconferencing application chat box, doing homework, preparing PowerPoint presentations, writing emails, etc. The effectiveness of these types of practice was evaluated in the next question (number 10) where the students were asked to choose the level of their agreement with the statement that the online English activities helped them improve their writing skills in English. According to the obtained answers, 32 students (53.3%) strongly agreed with the statement, which obviously indicates that the online classroom can serve as a convenient medium for enhancing their writing skills.

As far as their listening skills are concerned, 37 students (61.7%) completely agreed that the online classes helped them become better listeners in English. One possible reason for this high score might be the wide variety of security-related multimedia resources the internet offers to the English language instructor, used with the students attending the online English classes at the Faculty of Security.

The students’ perception towards the acquisition of English speaking skills are presented in Table 12. The results showed that 68.3% (41 students) expressed highest level of agreement regarding the enhancement of the productive skill of speaking, as a result of the attendance of the online English classes. The answers regarding statements 9-12 clearly point to the effectiveness of online English instruction for achieving higher proficiency level of both receptive and productive skills among the students. Therefore, as far as online foreign language instruction is concerned, the obtained results can be viewed as highly encouraging.
Table 9. The activities in the English Language online classes help me improve my English reading skills.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6 (10%)</td>
<td>17 (28.3%)</td>
<td>37 (61.7%)</td>
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Table 10. The activities in the English Language online classes help me improve my English writing skills.

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<tr>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11 (18.3%)</td>
<td>16 (26.7%)</td>
<td>32 (53.3%)</td>
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Table 11. The activities in the English Language online classes help me improve my English listening skills.

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<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>6 (10%)</td>
<td>16 (26.7%)</td>
<td>37 (61.7%)</td>
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Table 12. The activities in the English Language online classes help me improve my English speaking skills.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3 (5%)</td>
<td>15 (25%)</td>
<td>41 (68.3%)</td>
<td>60</td>
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Another aspect analyzed in the paper was the students’ attitudes towards the acquisition of grammar knowledge. This aspect was particularly important for the author, considering the traditional assumptions about the general lack of enthusiasm and motivation of foreign language learners to acquire grammar contents. Therefore, teaching grammar online and motivating students for engagement in grammar-based activities without being able to grasp their face-to-face reactions during the presentation of new grammar topics becomes even more challenging for the language instructor. As far as the target group is concerned, the provided answers confirmed the opposite, with a solid number of 38 students (63.3%) totally agreeing that the online activities helped them improve their grammar skills in English. The very fact that only two students (3.4%) expressed disagreement or total disagreement with the statement indicates that even grammar contents can successfully be taught and learnt in an online environment.

Table 13. The activities in the English Language online classes help me improve my English grammar skills.

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<tr>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>18 (30%)</td>
<td>38 (63.3%)</td>
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Taking into consideration the specificity of the English Language course at the Faculty of Security as an ESP (English for Specific Purposes) course, centered around specific, security-related vocabulary, the author was particularly interested in the students’ views with reference to their lexical knowledge in the mentioned area. An impressive
number of 42 students (70%) totally agreed that the online tasks contributed to the enrichment of their vocabulary from the field of security, which leads to the conclusion that fostering knowledge of vocabulary pertaining to a specific field via online language instruction is an attainable goal.

Table 14. The activities in the English Language online classes help me enlarge my English vocabulary in the area of security.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (1.7%)</td>
<td>16 (26.7%)</td>
<td>42 (70%)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The still unresolved dilemma as to whether online classes can be equally successful as traditional ones encouraged the author to assess the views of the target group of students on this issue, with reference to the English language course conducted online at the Faculty of Security. The obtained results correspond to the answers to the previous questions, since 53.3% (32 students) totally agreed that they could acquire new knowledge via online classes equally well as via traditional classes with physical attendance. Although this question got the highest percentage of respondents who expressed certain degree of disagreement (a total of 8 students, 13.3%) compared to the previous questions, and 8 students (13.3%) neither agreed nor disagreed, the fact that a total number of 44 students (73.3%) agreed with the given statement to a certain degree clearly indicates students’ positive attitude to online instruction as an alternative to traditional classroom instruction.

Table 15. I can acquire new English language knowledge equally well in English Language online classes as in physically attended classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I completely disagree</th>
<th>I disagree</th>
<th>I cannot evaluate</th>
<th>I agree</th>
<th>I completely agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 (3.3%)</td>
<td>6 (10%)</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
<td>12 (20%)</td>
<td>32 (53.3%)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, the students were asked whether certain aspects of the English classes conducted online could be changed. According to the obtained answers, a majority of 49 students (81.7%) would not change anything in the way the English classes at the Faculty of Security were implemented.

Table 16. Do you think certain aspects related to the English Language online classes should change?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 (18.3%)</td>
<td>49 (81.7%)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining group of 11 students (18.3%) stated that certain changes could be done, and that group of students were asked to give their suggestions by descriptively answering the last question, number 17: “If you answered “YES” to the previous question, please specify your proposals for aspects that should change.”

Although all 11 students were given that option, only four of them gave descriptive answers, while one student responded with an emoticon, and another one with punctuation marks. Since one of the students did not suggest anything but expressed his/her appraisal for the teacher and the way the online classes were organized, that answer
was not taken into consideration. One of the remaining students suggested more exercises, while another one suggested greater control over group work, since in a group of, for instance eight students, it usually comes down to only three students collaborating. The third student who answered this question suggested more exercises based on interaction, considering the fact that the English language can best be learned through conversation.

6. CONCLUSION

From the research results presented above, a conclusion can be drawn that the students from the Faculty of Security in Skopje expressed positive attitude towards the online English language classes. Their affirmative perception refers both to the way the online classroom contents are selected, organized and presented to the students, as well as their effectiveness regarding the enhancement of the students’ receptive and productive skills and their ability to work interactively and develop their communicative competence as the main tenet of communicative language teaching. The research results show that during the Covid-19 pandemic, the English Language instruction at the Faculty of Security has been transferred to the virtual classroom successfully, contributing to students’ interest in acquiring English language knowledge and improving their English proficiency levels in various segments that lie at the core of communicative language teaching.

The research results presented in the paper may serve as the basis for researching the students’ attitudes towards the online teaching practices in other subjects as well, so that conclusions can be drawn regarding the implementation and the effectiveness of online instruction at the Faculty of Security in Skopje during the Covid-19 pandemic in general.
7. REFERENCES

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