

# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN THE E-LEARNING PROCESS AND THE IMPACT ON THEIR GRADES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

**Nurul Fadilah**

Jurusan Teknik Elektro, Politeknik Negeri Pontianak

Email:

***Abstract:** Nowadays, education is a very important tool in efforts to increase public welfare. Quality education is also a benchmark for the progress of a country. Developed countries are based on a strong educational base. To achieve this requires educators who know the importance of quality education. All this is inseparable from the role of an educator; in this case the teachers to their students in teaching and learning. Therefore, there is a need for an educator to be aware that they serve as a leader in class, a mentor, protector, guide and a peer for their students. Furthermore, in the globalization era which concern of the improvement in information and technologies, it may leads to promote new method of teaching and learning, especially in higher education. A new trend of learning in higher education through technology is providing flexible learning opportunity. Thus, the term of e-learning is introduced as distance learning which concern with technology based learning and online learning. E-learning provides student-centered approach which may lead the students to be more active based on the given instruction. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of e-learning to the students' engagement in language learning by introducing Davitech classroom management system, a new program of learning online at STKIP-PGRI Pontianak. In addition, students' motivation also plays an important role as supporting factor to help the students' interest in learning through computer-mediated communication. Findings of the study indicate positive perception and behavior of the usage of e-learning among the students of STKIP-PGRI Pontianak.*

***Key words:** e-learning, higher education, student engagement, motivation, learning outcomes, technology, computer-mediated communication.*

## **BACKGROUND**

The adoption of technology in education promotes the changing learning and teaching relationship in the educational area. A technology of education creates the perspective of the design of teaching and learning environment. Moreover, technology supports educational resources and learning objects. Meanwhile, there is another factor in terms of successful teaching and learning process, such as the students' capability in language learning.

Students' capability in learning language produces the significance reason and technical support with regard to their engagement in the classroom.

Some researches concerning on student engagement are as fundamental dimension to show student constructing their own language in education. The concept of engagement is a broad phenomenon that emphasis academic and non-academic factors and also social aspects of student experience. It also promotes the comprehension of the relationship between students and

institutions. The institution also plays an important role to create good environment for learning possibilities which affect learning opportunities.

When consider identifying the research question, I focus on the topic I am interested in, the concept of student engagement in relation with e-learning process and the implication of student grades. The importance of knowing more about student engagement may leads me to encourage the students' motivation, building good cooperation in the classroom, treat the students properly and analyze the cultural diversity. On the other hand, in terms of professional development context, the blends of technologies with face-to-face interaction are urgently necessary. It is also important that the institutional to build up the good atmosphere including organizational readiness, sufficient technical resources, motivated faculty, good communication and feedback channels with the students (Tabor, 2007 cited in Stacey & Gerbic, 2008:966).

Student engagement is one of the indicators to support the teaching and learning process through learning instruction and indicated as the meaningful outcome of school improvement activities. Students are engaged when they are highly attracted to their studies and be successful in their learning activities. Meanwhile, student engagement also shows the willingness to participate in learning activities and promotes the desirable approaches. For example, attending the lessons, submitted the assignment on time and following the teachers' instruction in the classroom as a result of behavioral involvement.

On the other hand, another indicator which influences student engagement is learning management systems. Learning

management systems by higher education may leads to structurally change the learning environment within which online learners engage with their studies. This phenomenon also leads to change students' way of learning by associated with learning resources, interaction with teaching staff and other supporting aspects. Douglas & Alemanne (2007) cited in Beer et al (2010:75) explain the appearance of distance learning might leads to support the learning management system without any interference of traditional concept of learning such as face-to-face interaction between the teacher and the students which take part in the classroom. However, there is also a relationship between learning management system in terms of accumulated the specific data on students behaviour towards online students engagement.

There is a significance relation between the student engagements with academic achievement, especially in higher education. The importance of teach English in higher education leads the writer conducts this research. Student engagement concentrates on the extent to which student are engaging in learning activities in higher education connected with high quality learning outcomes.

STKIP (Pre-service teacher and training education program) PGRI Pontianak is one of higher education institution in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, which provides the English program, specifically in teacher's training and education. STKIP PGRI Pontianak has ten study programs such as Mathematics Education, Civic Education, Health and Sport Education, Economics Education, Counseling Guidance Education, Information Technology Education, Geography Education, History

Education, Bahasa Indonesia Education, and English Language Education. There are supporting facilities for instance favorable classroom, libraries, sport centre, learning unit, and language laboratories. This research will focus on English Language Education which is concern with English education including learning activities.

English Language Education is one of the study programs in STKIP PGRI Pontianak. It held on 2009 and having huge numbers of students. In language laboratories, the teaching and learning activities are presenting by using multimedia classroom with internet connection and using Dongle (Davitech) classroom management program which is deal with interactive and interesting activities including learning resources, tasks and lecture notes.

**Research Problem.** This research will focus on what are the supporting factors with regard to student engagement and in relation with e-learning in STKIP PGRI Pontianak and to what extent is e-learning provide the great implication to teaching and learning activities. Therefore, further research will be conducted to investigate the problems.

**Student engagement.** Some studies has been defined various definitions about student engagement. Student engagement is the phenomenon of student participation for effective practices which take place on inside and outside classroom and tend to possible outcomes (Kuh et al 2007, cited in Trowler 2010). Meanwhile, Krause & Coates (2008:43) define as the range to which students are engaging in learning activities to provide high-quality learning outputs. Learning outcomes will occur when the students react positively in the learning activities.

According to Harper & Quaye (2009: 5), engagement is promotes more than involvement or participation as the consequence of feelings and sense making as well as learning activities. Feeling plays an important role in learning activities to support students' action in the classroom. The students will engage with the learning activities by using their feeling and emotion to encourage their motivation.

Bloom (1956) mention three dimensions to student engagement, such as behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement. Behavioural engagement concerns with the students who are engaged behaviourally as a result of the norm in actions and indicated by the students' reaction to the lessons. Emotional engagement associated with how the students react and would address the affective reactions such as interest, pleasure, and sense of belonging. Cognitive engagement focuses on the students savour in their learning activities by recognize the learning target and eager to find out the supporting requirements. The following is some examples of positive and negative engagement as shown on the Table 1.

There are many theories concerning about student engagement and in relation with online learning. Student engagement is very important in teaching and learning activities. Without engagement, teaching and learning cannot run well because engagement shows the students awareness in learning which will improve their learning achievement. According to Coates & Krause (2006:2), student engagement focuses on the broadness to engage in learning activities with regard to improve quality learning outcomes. This statement is appropriate with the definition of engage-

ment, Satin (1985, 1993); Pace (1995); Checkering & Gammon (1987), Hub & Kuhn (2001:3) cited in Coates & Krause (2006:2) define engagement as the students' effort dedicate to educationally meaningful that regarded to expect learning outcomes. The concept of engagement involves the relationship between the students and the institution. The institutions are responsible to produce good learning environments in terms of improve learning opportunities.

Furthermore, student engagement tends to show the natural image of learning process with the implication of significant result. The natural level of learning is depends on how students explore the environment as resources. Moreover, as well as Satin (1985) & Pace (1988) approve that the quality of effort of individual improvement play an important role as a determination to develop in learning. Student engagement elaborates the influence between students' activities and institutional condition. Krause & Coates (2005) believe that when consider about student engagement, it is also importance of analyzing the possibilities identification of the beneficial activities and conditions associated with learning. However, the necessary of identifying the learning process plays an important role to determine the learning approaches as well as the difficulties of identifying those process and contexts.

The final engagement is to collaborate the concept of teaching assistant between the teacher and the students. There is a significant relation in order to address the students' engagement in learning process, such as to assign the student authoritative in learning activities. The teacher also promotes good learning environment, encourage

the student by motivating them for better future.

***E-learning.*** Khan (2003) defines e-learning system is a meaningful learning approach which concern easy accessible, well designed, student-centered, more affordable, efficient, flexible and facilitated learning environment. This approach provides interesting method to present the materials and tasks so that the students feel happy and enjoy to study. Furthermore, the effectiveness of e-learning may influence the students' score as well as learning satisfaction when there are supporting facilities from the institution. E-learning also concern as facilitator in learning interaction, social collaboration in the social and cultural aspects as a result of the sophisticated improvement in globalization era. It may lead to the awareness in using technology in education for the sake of encourage learning opportunity and enhance skills and abilities in learning language.

Meanwhile, another current issue of skill development in education is the relationship between student engagement and technology in terms of using e-learning. The use of e-learning is becoming more widespread in higher education and has the implication on teaching style and student performance. Many researchers have showed the correlation between student engagement and performance with student grades. Davies & Graff (2005) found that there is no significant impact on examination results but the phenomenon of the amount of time spending on e-learning. Furthermore, Arbaugh (2000) argues that the effectiveness of e-learning delivery methods is depending on the student attitude towards e-learning. On the other words, the great learning advantage is

found to have a positive impact on student performance.

Therefore, the design of e-learning should meet the well managed resources to make the lesson accessible, provide helpfulness and respond to the students' needs by create ease of navigation, interesting materials and tasks, provide some interaction games (educational games), written feedback by promote the use of graphics, colours, animation and sounds as well as a stimulus to the students' interest.

**Motivation.** Katz (2002) cited in Maldonado, et al (2011:68) describes the phenomenon of e-learning as web based information and communication using technological tool influence on students' performance, academic achievements, and satisfaction. It also perceived usefulness, easiness and flexibility in learning. As Arbaugh (2000, 2002) cited in Maldonado (2011:68) those aspects are closely related to motivate the students to feel comfortable with the technology.

Motivation also plays an important role whether the students being motivated to learn as a tendency to find the academic activities more meaningful and worthwhile and get the benefits from the courses (Brophy, 2004:249). As a result, the students engage themselves in learning and are more active to the lessons. Furthermore, the students pay more attention; have self confidence in learning carefully based on motivational design instructions. Thus, motivation will influence students' positive behavioural in learning.

There are two kinds of motivation such as extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. According to David et al, 1992; Moon & Kim, 2001 cited in Maldonado et al (2011: 70) explain that both extrinsic and intrinsic

motivation have significant effect on the intention to use information technology systems. The students' motivation also influenced by a number of values related to learning outcomes and may lead to cognitive engagement as a result of learning behaviour.

On the other hand, Shulman (2002) explains the components of the process to identify learning commitment such as engagement and motivation, knowledge and understanding, performance and action, reflection and critique, judgment and design, and also commitment and identity. These aspects support the notion of learning online in terms of applying in educational experiences, especially in higher education.

**Teaching aspect of e-learning.** E-learning introduced new approach in teaching and learning. It contains the benefit of using the computer mediated communication for greater accessible and adaptability. Furthermore, it also provides the instructional contents, the assessment strategies, and digital libraries as important elements in e-learning as the efforts of distance learning. As Seok (2008:725) mentions the dimensions of e-learning such as accessibility, adaptability, and clarity of communication. These dimensions reflected the two main major components in e-learning are cognitive and teaching aspects. Seok (2008:725) explains about some elements which concerns with teaching aspect are as follows: (1) Discussion opportunities which related to the course content; (2) Provide instructional objectives, strategies, and evaluation that are aligned to national standard; (3) Accessible to accurate and relevant content; and Provide detailed syllabus to the students; (5) As benchmarks for completing course requirements on

time; (6) Support individual responses to student work; (7) Provide constructive tasks and exams; (8) Enhance communication among the students; (9) Manages the students' email effectively; (10) Engage the students in the activities aligned with the content; (11) Involve learning activities that require students collaboration; (12) Prepare meaningful explanation and examples that assist the students understanding what is expected in the course; and (13) Guide the students to the additional resources for learning enrichment.

Meanwhile, in this study, e-learning is concern about all internet-based learning atmospheres as the correlation with internet based curriculum and online learning for the courses. Furthermore, the use of Davitech system enhance the learning experience and the majority of interactions between the teacher and the students, among the students, the individuals and the groups, and the groups and the individual.

## **METHOD**

This project uses interview and the participants involved one English teacher and four English Language students in STKIP-PGRI Pontianak. The interview questions contained two sections whether part one distributed to a teacher and part two concerned to the students. The questions were related to the usage of e-learning in teaching learning process as the instruments to measure the effectiveness of e-learning to the courses.

## **FINDINGS**

The data had been collected through interview. The researcher will interview four students and one teacher. The questions should emphasis on the students'

engagement with e-learning in learning language. The interview was conducted face to face in the classroom or in appropriate place within the university area. It will take 30 minutes for each participant. The interview will be recorded. The result of the interview from the recording will be transcribed and present to the students in order to have them revise his/her opinion or comments.

From the result, it is clearly stated that group A tend to prefer e-learning as an effective alternative method of learning because it saves time and can be obtained. Meanwhile, others still consider e-learning as a learning method which is less effective and the method of face-to-face is still believed to have the potential for learning is more easily understood. It is surprisingly that that e-learning is found to be the less favoured because of the limited facilities provided by the institute as it is needed by the students to support the learning activities every day. Therefore, the data will be processed and analyzed based on aspects of student engagement in the example of all things related to students' motivation on e-learning.

Furthermore, there are some factors which influence the students' engagement in e-learning using Davitech classroom management are as follows:

However, from the interview results, not all the components above are shown form the students. Some students still find it difficult to use e-learning and tend to prefer conventional classroom environment. In addition, the students have good perception of e-learning approach as long as the system may help them to learn English carefully and support to achieve learning objectives.

**Table 1. Some examples of positive and negative engagement**

	<b>Positive engagement</b>	<b>Positive engagement</b>	<b>Negative engagement</b>
Behavioural	Attends lectures, participates with enthusiasm	Skips lectures without excuse	Boycotts, pickets or disrupts lectures
Emotional	Interest	Boredom	Rejection
Cognitive	Meets or exceeds assignment requirements	Assignment late, rushed or absent	Redefines parameters for assignment

*Taken from Trowler (2010, p.6)*

**Table 2.**

<b>No</b>	<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Supporting components</b>
1	E-teacher's role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, maintain, implement, support and update the course content</li> <li>• Facilitate the students' perception of the values for different learning communities</li> <li>• Able to share the knowledge effectively to the students</li> <li>• Motivate the students' and stimulate their intellectual curiosity to the course</li> <li>• Promotes the knowledge of the facilitates mechanism, navigation skills and internet efficacy</li> </ul>
2	E-learning content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the cultural approaches using English and cultural norm of learning community</li> <li>• Promote problem solving skills and critical thinking</li> <li>• Facilitate the students by applying student-centered learning and give learner's autonomy</li> </ul>
3	Digital library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide appropriate feedback to the assessments</li> <li>• Easily and accessible with other institutional web pages</li> <li>• Provide an up-front tutorial</li> <li>• Integrated with the institution's online courses</li> <li>• Provide self-accessing to the students</li> <li>• Provide personal assistance</li> </ul>
4	Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide written feedback</li> <li>• Peer assessment</li> <li>• Self assessment</li> <li>• Performance assessment</li> </ul>
5	Transaction distance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the quality dialogue or interaction by using chat, video call, skype, etc</li> <li>• Using appropriate medium or program to develop learning experience</li> </ul>
6	Computer mediated communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute the materials</li> <li>• Correspondence between the teacher and the students</li> <li>• Sending and receiving the tasks and exams</li> <li>• File management instruments</li> <li>• 24 hours network access</li> <li>• Accessible online library</li> </ul>
7	Communicational immediacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering trust between the teacher and the students</li> <li>• Improving the quality of communication</li> <li>• Verbal immediacy addressed by specific behaviour such as asking and answering questions using polite expressions</li> </ul>

*Adapted from Seok (2008)*

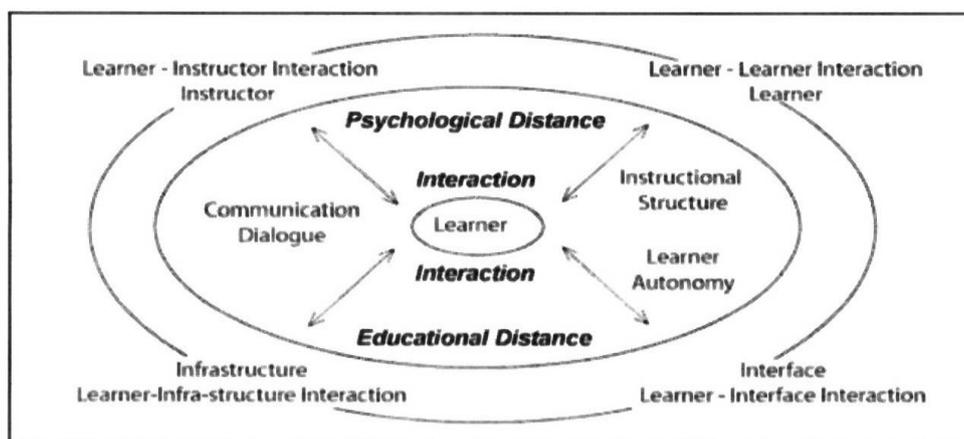
## DISCUSSION

One of the findings of this study, that there are some factors influenced the students' engagement in learning English, especially in motivation. The students are highly motivated in learning English through e-learning and they engage with the course. As a result, they have got good score for all the subjects who used e-learning.

Davitech is a new multimedia program introduced by STKIP-PGRI Pontianak to support teaching and learning activities. It provides some component as the classroom management system on the right side such as teacher broadcast, student broadcast, audio teaching, screen recorder, remote control, monitor, file collect distributor, exam, digital video, and URL application filter. Meanwhile, on the down

side are some important elements to control the students' activities for instance to lock the students' monitor and to chat with the student personally. Each component has different function. Both of the teacher and the students get connected each other and implement the learning activities online, even also sometimes take place in the classroom but still get connection at any favourable place outside classroom.

The adoption of Davitech promotes positive responds from the students. It well managed the course as essential components in presenting the learning resources including all the useful activities. The students involve the engagement by pay more attention to the lesson, doing the tasks correctly, and correspondence with the teacher using chat facilities and email.



**Figure 2.** Interactions and the distance of e-Learning environments

### *Figure 2. Interactions and the distance of e-Learning environments*

Meanwhile, there is also different interaction in e-learning which introduced communication among the teacher and the students. Chen (2011) cited on Seok (2008: 734) explains about the importance of

learning environment with the outcomes. E-learning environment plays an important role in terms of the interactions among the students, infrastructure (facilities) and

interface. Therefore, it was shown on figure 2.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research is conducted to measure the correlation between student engagements with e-learning in higher institution in Indonesia. There are many higher institutions in Indonesia which applied e-learning as a new method in language learning, one of them is STKIP PGRI Pontianak, West Kalimantan. This research is conducted to evaluate the significant correlation between student engagements with e-learning as a result of the time allocation in using e-learning. Meanwhile, the possibilities of using e-learning in learning English language impact the student's grade. E-learning as a medium to encourage the academic performance provides sophisticated learning resources to approaches learning objectives. Therefore, e-learning promotes the effectiveness in teaching and learning English language by providing teaching materials, practical exercises, use of web based information sources and the access to lecture notes.

However, it is also important to take into consideration about the notion of courses' engagement with the technologies in terms of having successful learning outcomes by keep thinking about the theories of knowledge in teaching (through online), providing appropriate learning objectives, the setting of e-learning to be implemented, considering about the norm, cultures and values which may occur in the real condition, students' learning styles and concerning with curriculum documents from the institution.

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