

## An Exploration of High School Students' Attitudes Towards Online English Language Learning

Soeurn Chenda<sup>1</sup>, Ly Sovann<sup>2</sup>, Nhean Voithna<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Tourism, Faculty of Business Administration and Tourism, National University of Battambang, 020704, Battambang, Cambodia

<sup>2,3</sup>Department of English, Institution of Foreign Languages, National University of Battambang, 020704, Battambang, Cambodia

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### ABSTRACT

*The attitude of students in language learning is progressively considered key success of language learning. However, high school students at the research setting find it challenging to study online. Therefore, students' attitude towards online learning is very crucial to explore. To fulfill this study, the researcher created two main research objectives including the exploration of high school students' attitudes toward learning the English language online, and the challenges of high school students while learning online. A quantitative method design was established to gather data. 236 high school students were requested to complete questionnaires. This study discovered that most students had 17 items positive attitude towards learning English in online classes and 4 items with low agreement showing that online classes are not fun, and not easy to achieve high scores, and not relevant to gender causing EFL learners' anxiety. In addition, students had a positive attitude towards 9 items of the usefulness of online learning to improve their skills and knowledge. They also showed a positive attitude toward online classes in the improvement of their four 21st-century competencies. Moreover, they agreed that online classes are accessible and convenient. However, they also faced some challenges in their learning such as spending much money on internet service, no internet connection, complicated online tools, no smart devices, and difficult to form activities. Based on the result, internet connection, online teaching and learning, and orientation should be provided and trained to students before implementing the programs.*

### Corresponding Author:

Soeurn Chenda,

Email: [soeurn.chenda@nubb.edu.kh](mailto:soeurn.chenda@nubb.edu.kh)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Ministry of Education Youth and Sports allowed both schools' general education and higher education to start teaching and learning online meanwhile Covid19 pandemic interfered with face-to-face learning in the classroom. MoEYS (2020) announced the promotion of online learning and teaching or e-learning to all levels of educational institutions to reduce challenges in face-to-face meetings; they are allowed to continue online learning and teaching with self-preparation on schedule, assessment of online learning ensuring the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment. This seems to be very rushed for both teachers and students to turn to a new learning environment and experiences. Ministry of Education Youth and Sports also tried very hard to handle these challenges as mentioned in (Moeys, 2020) the Department of Information Technology organized a training from 28 to 30 of December 2020 on utilizing e-learning with the School Information System (SIS) in Hun Sen Sereypheap High School in Takhmao, Kandal Province as the first high school in Cambodia. This system functions as enrollment management, students' background, score record, attendance monitoring,

teaching and learning schedule, and others. MoEYS and Metfone company are installing this system at 150 high schools which are target schools of the SEIP project. However, high schools before equipping this system are facing many challenges and difficulties. Students have a problem with internet connection that causes difficulties and poor interaction in online learning. Teachers have limited competence in using online teaching tools. Moreover, there are many absentees when teaching online. Students are the key focus of learning and teaching. Thus, it is very crucial to study the attitudes of the students towards learning English via online. The study on high school students' attitudes towards learning the English language via online without training or orienting on utilizing online learning tools, is very vital to clearly understand whether they are positive or negative.

### ***Definition of Attitude and Its Significance***

Al-efeshat and Baniabdelrahman (2020) said that attitudes refer to people's views towards definite themes and they can be positive or negative. In this study they focused on the educators' and learners' views towards consuming songs and music in teaching and learning English. Adding to this, attitude and motivation are vital features in foreign language acquisition, and learners with positive attitudes and high motivation lean towards attaining higher language proficiency than those with negative attitudes and low motivation (Dörnyei, 2005). The definition of attitude provided (Senturk, 2019) defined that attitude has obtained important devotion in the education field. It has been confirmed that attitudes are the chunks of learning that bring significant parts of second language pedagogy. Moreover, Brown (2000) declared that second language learners' advantage from positive attitudes and that negative attitudes might lead to reduced motivation and, in all likelihood, because of reduced input and interaction, the ineffective achievement of proficiency; the students are usually motivated to study the language for their professional needs. (Simsek, 2008 as cited in Shahsavari and Tan, 2012) shows that Students' attitudes toward online classes are a significant component that can influence their performance. Learners' motivation gains from positive attitudes to learning and continue to have input in specific circumstances, while resisting learning results from negative attitudes (Duda and Garrett, 2008 as cited in Shahsavari and Tan, 2012). Significantly, attitude also promotes learner autonomy as addressed in (Tran, 2020) that which participants were cognitively conscious of the significance of Learner Autonomy (LA) in learning English vocabulary, but affectively and behaviorally they presented low interest in LA in learning English vocabulary. Even if students were well conscious of the significance of LA in English vocabulary learning, they had low interest (affective and behavioral attitudes) in English vocabulary learning. In addition, the findings presented that students were well conscious of the significance of LA in English vocabulary learning. Hence, it is recommended that teachers should motivate students and display them how to independently learn vocabulary by learning vocabulary, listening to English songs and, watching English captioned movies. Moreover, students should be encouraged to create plans, set goals and prepare their learning in addition to self-evaluate learning English vocabulary.

### ***Attitude of Students on Learning English Online***

According to Akbarov, et al., (2018), current education has to go progressively with the universal development in several areas of human activity, with Information and communication technologies (ICT) feast through almost all parts of recent society (international relations, economy, health service, leisure time, education, etc.). This research also studied the relationship between the enrolment of online courses and blended learning. It looked that participation in English online courses did not indicate positive attitudes toward blended learning. In other words, digital learning (without using the classic, traditional method) was not thoroughly related to blended learning (according to students' opinions) illustrating Turkish EFL students had positive attitudes towards learning a foreign language meanwhile they want it in their lives and for their career. Balaman (2020) stated that students developed their self-efficacy and got a positive stance for the use of technology in their learning resulting in helpful information for those who are willing to generate a teaching environment that encounters the needs and expectations of 21st-century students. Knowles and Kerkman (2007) showed the comparison of pre-and post-course on the students' attitude related to interaction missing other students and obtaining more information through an online course. Commonly, On the last week of the course, students' attitudes regarding online learning were more positive than in the first week of the course. In addition, the study found that this online course offered an enough amount of interaction from student to instructor, a high amount of interaction from students to material, and a low interaction from student to student.

Erdem Aydin (2012) indicated on the study that In Open and Distance Learning, students have generally good attitudes regarding online communication. It also revealed that there is a substantial difference between male and female students on the aspects of miscommunication, 'social connection,' and 'comfort' of online communication. Because of the widespread use of the Internet and Web technologies, as well as economic considerations, educators are being forced to employ these communication platforms more than ever before.

Students can use online learning resources to not only access a variety of learning resources, but also to improve their engagement with one another and with instructors.

Fredericksen (2018) stated that there are 68% broadly viewed by online learning leaders at community colleges in the United States online learning having the responsibility to support all kinds of courses strictly looking at distance education. Estimated that three-quarters of the institutions have used their online learning initiatives as a catalyst for organizational changes. Their top three strategic goals for online learning are to enhance student retention, promote instructional innovation, and grow institutional enrolments above existing levels. The top three priorities or issues for these institutions are faculty development and training, providing student support, and strategic planning for online learning at their institution.

### ***Attitudes on Online Learning Based on Gender, Performance, and Level***

Chung, et al., (2020) females are shown to be more ready than male students with degree programs and are more ready than students with diploma programs they show better satisfaction in online learning from degree students and female students plus better learning experiences compared to diploma students and male students. More than fifty percent of the participants revealed that if they have a choice, they do not need to remain with online learning in the future. Most participants preferred online learning through pre-recorded lectures uploaded to Google Classroom and YouTube. Türkarslan and Akdemir (2019) found out that students' attitudes towards English courses didn't change concerning gender, grade level, and having a spoken English family member. Seeing the attitudes' sub-dimensions finding out that the attitudes of female students were more positive than the male students related to the general aspects and importance of the course; the male students' attitudes were more positive than the female students concerning subject interestingness and the teaching styles of teachers, thus it was found that attitudes of students towards the general aspects and importance of the course, subject interestingness and teaching styles of teachers did not change regarding grade levels. Miller, et al., (2020) illustrated that undergraduate students' online learning experiences were not the same as graduate students. meaning that weak abilities in using technology are needed to get support. Banafshi, et al., (2020) revealed a study on two groups that consisted of a substantial difference between the participants' performance after getting the treatment program illustrating that the participants of the online classroom performed better than their peers in the traditional classroom in terms of vocabulary learning.

### ***Challenges of Online Learning***

Kuama (2016) suggested that students who have low English proficiency lack skills in online learning and self-directed learning experiences and students might not be ready to learn English online; however, the researcher suggested five main important points as follows:

1. Students encounter both technical and individual problems which are the main challenges in online learning, assisting students to overcome these two challenges would raise their satisfaction with the new learning mode and promote motivation for online learning. Moreover, solving technological problems, adequate and effective Internet access, and a whole day of Internet connection are also required.
2. Online course design and content interest and practice are quite vital. Adequate lessons and exercise explanations are also needed. In addition, learning task design and content must be assessed and revised promptly.
3. Training on Online language learning strategies (OLLS) should be done before the beginning of the course and the whole course to increase students' motivation to learn online. Additionally, orientation on interesting and motivating when the start of the course must be employed. Moreover, the increase in the interaction between teachers and students must be done to motivate students to take responsibility and control their learning online.
4. The willingness of students to online learning should be measured before the beginning of the course. Students who have low English proficiency need to prepare themselves to solve the changing learning mode. The measurement would include students' preference and style of learning, confidence, comfort, and competency are measurements that would be counted in using the Internet and computers, capacity to engage in learning of self-directed, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation plus attitude with positivity towards online learning.
5. To employ an online course, students who learn English online require assistance. The Online course model needs to be proposed by the researcher as a guide.

Casanova and Price (2018) stated that the ownership process and impact are time-consuming, as universities consist of complex systems and communication between different stakeholders which face difficulties in reasoning for why a lot of online learning initiatives miss achieving sustainability, as plans can be weakening when they meet obstacles. Complete adoption is only attained when the institution is devoted and able to take

ownership within both itself and its stakeholders. Additionally, the study from Istifci (2017) illustrated that Internet technologies have unavoidably developed as fragments of professional, academic, personal, and profitable life. Especially, the consumption of Internet technologies in education feast in current years. Addressing the development of Internet technologies, traditional education has been supported with online learning and traditional methods have been moved to online platforms meanwhile consuming online technologies in foreign/second language learning marks learning positively, empowering students to meet authentic visual and interactive resources and to listen to native utterers. Language learning has also been affected by the newest technological developments, and teaching has prolonged the limitations of classroom teaching. The students in this study preferred face-to-face learning for interaction with their classmates and teachers, whereas they preferred online learning when they required immediate feedback and to study at their own pace. Through these issues, this research was conducted to seek out two significant purposes:

- 1) What are the general attitudes of high school students towards online learning in the English language?
- 2) What challenges do high school students face during their online learning?

The results of this study will bring some beneficial information relevant to Online Learning in English language teaching. Some issues of using these devices perceptions and attitudes will be raised to discuss successful practice to substitute English language learning inside and outside the classroom. This study will also reveal the essential results to stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport, policymakers, teachers, parents, students, and other researchers. To the Ministry of Education Youths and Sport, the results will be used to develop educational systems in teaching; especially, developing teacher trainers' competencies in using Mobile technologies in teaching and learning. To the policymakers, designing educational policy by adding mobile devices in language teaching and learning. Online -learning is the first way to assist teachers and learners with global education policy and revolutionizing change situations. Teachers will employ the results devices as useful tools inside and outside of the classroom effectively. Online -learning is a helpful way to deal with teaching situations by designing lesson plans and activities through using this device. Parents will be mindful of the significance of m-learning which enables their children with a supportable future and lifelong learning so they can prepare themselves to help their children and teachers fulfill the learning. Students will be informed of the significance of the usefulness of m-learning to perform their role in learning to pursue lifelong learning and a sustainable future. Other researchers will be able to use the results as a secondary source continuing their research about m-learning devices as tools for improvement in their study.

## 2. METHOD

High school students in Kors Kror Lor High School, Kors Kror Lor District in Battambang Province were chosen as the sample for this research. (Creswell, 2012, p. 206) states that the researcher had to identify a sampling strategy to reserve its use. A purposeful convenience sampling strategy was used to select these samples. The overall population refers to students who were learning at Kaskralar High School. Total students were 650 with 355 males. In quantitative research, more participants generate more accuracies. Based on Sample Fraction  $\frac{1}{2}$  was at least expected to reach in real situations of data collection. Participants voluntarily joined this study and were free to deny participation. However, 236 participants were involved in this study because students attended the online class were around 400 based on the information from the research site.

Shahsavari and Tan (2012) stated that questionnaires were the most normally used as research instruments to assess attitudes of students toward online courses. There are two main objectives comprising: 1) to explore the general attitudes of high school students towards learning the English language online, and 2) to explore the challenges of high school students while learning online. The way how questionnaire was designed has been addressed in the part of research design in questionnaires. This survey questionnaire was designed based on the study of previous researches regarding the research topic for collecting data. Five rating scales of Likert scales were used for this research. These five-Likert scales are; 1) "Don't know", 2) "Strongly agree", 3) "Agree", 4) "Disagree", and 5) "Strongly disagree". Rating scales enable the participants to select one among several options representing the agreement level or idea of each item which can take on several forms and have a diverse number of response categories (Muilis, 2010). Likert scales are scales for summing based on a participant's answers on each item in questionnaires to provide their total score on attitude and value (Johns, 2010). Joins (2010) mentioned that Likert scales provide advantages though scores on the scale are seen as placing respondents in authoritarianism's purpose rather than generating the exact and comparable scores on attitude. The data were implied and analysed through Excel, and SPSS with Descriptive Statistics with Frequency. The data was divided using simple statistical tools such as frequency, and percentage. They were presented in descriptive techniques so, that they could be well interpreted and explained for this research finding.

## 2.1 Reliability

The reliability of the data collection was shown, using the Statistical Package for the Social Science Program (SPSS) version 26.0. Cronbach's alpha was created to measure internal consistency scale tests (Sharma, 2016). The researchers utilized Cronbach's Alpha to determine the internal consistency of the data reliability in this study. Table 1 and Table 2 emphasize the data collected reliability.

**Table 1.** The construct of the Reliability consistency

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Implication</i>
$a \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > a \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > a \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > a \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > a \geq 0.5$	Poor
$0.5 > a$	Unacceptable

**Table 2.** Results of Reliability Statistics

<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</i>	<i>N of Items</i>
.958	.959	66

Table 2 highlights the coefficient measurement of Cronbach's alpha range was 0.959 which shows excellent consistency reliability. This result reveals that the questionnaire items were appropriate for the research objectives and conducted.

## 2.2 Validity

The two specialists, English teachers, and experts in Teaching English and Education, were selected, from the teaching staff at the National University of Battambang (NUBB) to examine the validity of the questionnaire items. The comments were provided, and they needed to be considered. The experts also supported that the questionnaire items are valid and reliable for investigating the researcher's goals.

## 3. RESULT(S) AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Rural Kors Krorlor High School students' attitudes towards learning English via online

This section was used to interpret five subcategories of Rural Kors Krorlor High School students' attitudes towards learning English online such as attitudes of students on learning English online, the usefulness of online learning in improving skills and knowledge, 21st-century competencies improvement, accessibilities and conveniences of online learning and barriers/challenges of online learning, that found as the following:

**Table 3.** Attitudes of students on learning English online

<i>Statements/Items</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
1) Online learning helps me learn new ideas.	80.1%	11.1%
2) It provides self-independent learning.	69.1%	20.8%
3) Online learning is a good tool for discussion.	66.1%	25.5 %
4) Online learning provides more opportunities.	65.2%	21.2%
5) I can minimize hesitation to learn and participate in online classes.	62.3%	26.7%
6) It reduces anxiety about learning English.	62.3%	26.3%
7) An online course is an interesting way of learning English.	62%	26%
8) Online class increases confidence in learning English.	60.6 %	27.5 %
9) It increases interest in learning the English language.	60%	26.2 %
10) My learning background motivates online learning.	57.6%	29.2%
11) Online class promotes the willingness to learn the English language.	56.4 %	31.3 %
12) Online learning reduces stress in learning English.	56.3%	31%
13) Online learning motivates me to learn more.	56%	36.4
14) I understand how to learn online.	55.5%	22%
15) It is convenient to discuss when learning online.	53 %	38 %
16) I feel relaxed while learning online.	51.7%	37.3%

17) Online learning reduces the fear of failing exams.	51 %	37.2 %
18) It is fun to learn English online.	44.5%	38.6%
19) Online class makes me more enjoyable.	43%	45.3%
20) I achieve higher scores in online classes.	42.3%	40.7%
21) I think gender causes EFL learners' anxiety when learning online.	24.2%	57.6%

As stated in Table 3, It clearly showed the highest percentage that learners with (80.1%) agreed that online learning helps them learn new ideas. The second highest percentage of respondents (69.1%) stated that online learning provides them with self-independent learning while the third highest percentage of respondents mentioned that online learning plays as a good tool for discussion. In addition, the fourth highest percentage of respondents (65.2%) agreed that online learning provides them with more opportunities. There are (62.3%) of participants approved that they can minimize hesitation to learn and participate in online classes while the same percentage of respondents accepted that online learning reduces anxiety about learning English. There are (62%) of respondents stated that online class increases interests in learning English language. Additionally, there are (60.6%) agreed that online class increase confidence while (60%) of others agreed that online learning increases English language learning interests. There are (57.6%) of respondents agreed that their learning background motivates them to learn online and (56.4%) agreed that online class promotes willingness to learn English. Moreover, there are (56.3%) of students mentioned that online learning reduces stress and (56%) of total respondents agreed that online learning motivates them to learn more. Meanwhile, there are (55.5%) understood how to learn English online and (53%) felt convenient to discuss in the online class. Furthermore, there are (51.7%) felt relaxed with online learning, and (51%) felt that online learning reduces the fear of failing exams. Four items scored lower than (50%) comprising fun to learn online with (44.5%), enjoy learning online (43%), (42.3%) agreed that they achieved higher scores from online classes, and the lowest percentage of respondents (24.2%) agreeing that gender causes EFL learners' anxiety in online learning. Thus, most of the students have positive attitudes towards online learning.

The results from respondents in Table 2 illustrated the usefulness of online learning for improving Skills and Knowledge. The items for measuring the usefulness of online learning include online learning develops reading, speaking, listening, and writing. Additionally, items for measuring the usefulness of knowledge are lexical and grammatical knowledge.

**Table 4.** Usefulness of Online Learning in improving Skills and knowledge

<i>Statements / Items</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>
22) Online learning develops my listening.	80.1%	13.9%
23) Online learning develops my vocabulary.	70.7%	22%
24) Online learning improves my overall English language proficiency.	69%	21.2%
25) Online learning develops my reading.	64%	28.4%
26) It improves my typing skills.	63.1%	20.7%
27) Online learning develops my speaking.	62.7%	28.4%
28) Online learning develops my writing.	62.3%	31.4%
29) It develops my technological skills.	61.9%	19.5%
30) Online class helps me improve my grammatical knowledge.	54.2%	32.2%

As can be seen in Table 4, there are (80.1%) of participants agreed that online learning develops their listening skills while the second highest percentage of respondents (70.7%) agreed that this class develops their lexical knowledge. In addition, there are (69%) of students confirmed that online learning improves their overall English language proficiency, and (64%) of them agreed that online learning develops their reading. Moreover, there are (63.1%) of them stated that online learning improves their typing skills and (62.7%) agree that online learning develops their speaking. Similarly, there are 62.3%) of learners agreed that online class advances their writing. There are (61.9%) of respondents say it develops their technological skills and (54.2%) of them said that online class helps them improve their grammatical knowledge. As stated in the table, most of respondents have a positive attitude towards the improvement of online learning skills and knowledge.

This table shows the information of respondents on online learning towards 21st-century competencies improvement. Four C competencies of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are used to measure with the following items including collaboration, creativities, critical thinking, and communication.

**Table 5.** 21st century competencies improvement

<i>Statement / Items</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
31) Online learning improves collaboration.	74.2%	17.4%
32) Online learning improves creativity.	70.7%	15.2%
33) Online learning improves communication.	69.1%	21.2%
34) Online learning improves critical thinking.	59.3%	24.1%

As can be seen in Table 5, there are (74.2%) of students agreed that online learning improves collaboration while there are (70.7%) of respondents accepted that online learning improves their creativity. In addition, (69.1%) of them stated that online learning improves communication while the lowest percentage of respondents (59.3%) approved that online learning improves their critical thinking. Therefore, most students have positive attitude towards the improvement of online learning on four competencies of 21st century skills.

This table shows the results of students' attitudes on the accessibilities and Conveniences of online learning. There are several items for measuring students' attitudes such as: downloading teaching materials, free travel and safety, storing documents, recording video, flexibility of learning, updating course information, exchanging ideas, debating with friends, chatting in chat box, reducing expenses, doing assignments, setting schedule, counting learning times, asking questions, doing exam, integrating learning activities, expressing opinions, and participating in class. The table shows the percentage of respondents from high to low with a detailed description below the table.

**Table 6.** Accessibilities and Conveniences of Online Learning

<i>Statements / Items</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
35) I can download teaching materials in my online class.	88.2%	5.9%
36) It provides free travel and safety.	87.7%	7.7%
37) I can store soft documents in my online class.	84.3%	9.7%
38) I can record video of my teaching while learning online.	81%	20%
39) I can learn anytime and anywhere.	80.9%	14.4%
40) It helps me update my course information.	79.3%	11.9%
41) I can exchange ideas with my friends.	78.8%	14.8%
42) I can debate with my friends in online classes.	78.4%	16.1%
43) I can write in the chat box to ask questions after class.	78%	11.8%
44) It reduces spending on buying learning materials.	77.5%	16.5%
45) I can do assignments in the online classroom.	76.7%	16.1%
46) It is easy for me to set a learning schedule in my online class.	71.2%	17.4%
47) It counts actual learning time correctly.	71.2%	19.5%
48) I can write in the chat box to ask questions during learning.	69.9%	19.1%
49) I can do exams online.	68.3%	20.3%
50) It helps teachers integrate learning activities in online classes.	66.9%	14.5%
51) I can get more feedback in online classes.	64.8%	22.4%
52) I express my opinions more freely in online classes than in face-to-face discussions.	59.3%	31.8%
53) It is convenient for class participation.	57.2%	28.4%

As stated in Table 6, (88.2%) of respondents supported that they could download teaching materials from their online class. There are (87.7%) of them who agreed that online learning provided free travel and safety. In addition, there are (84.3%) accepted that they could store soft documents in their online class while there are (81%) stated that they could record videos of their learning activities. (80.9%) of respondents agreed that they could learn online anytime and anywhere. There are (79.3%) of them agreed that online helps them update their course information while there are (78.8%) of them who confirmed that they could exchange ideas with their friends. Additionally, (78.4%) of them agreed that they could debate with their friends in online classes while (78%) of respondents agreed that they could write in the chat box to ask questions after class. Moreover, there are (77.5%) of them stated that online classes reduced spending on buying learning materials. There are (76.7%) who stated that they could do assignments in their online class. There are (71.2%) of respondents agreed that online learning makes it easy for them to set learning schedules in their online classes while the same percentage of respondents counted actual learning time correctly by online class. Moreover, (69.9%) stated that they could ask questions during learning by chatting in the chat box. A bit lower than this, there are (68.3%) of respondents agreed that they could do exams online. Some (66.9%) agreed that online classes helped

the teacher integrate learning activities while (64.8%) of respondents stated that they could get more feedback in online classes. Some (59.3%) showed that they could express their opinions more freely in online classes than in face-to-face discussions. Lastly, (57.2%) of respondents agreed that online learning is convenient for class participation. Based on the detailed description above, most of the students have a positive attitude towards the accessibility and Convenience of online learning.

Table 7 displays the results of students' online learning barriers and challenges. There are several items for evaluating students' barriers and challenges comprising: privacy and security problems, some functions in online tools, the affordability of having a smartphone and laptop for learning English, internet connection, payment for internet service, not familiarity with the current online learning platform, hard to form work groups, hard to formwork pairs, difficulty in accessing lessons, difficulty in contacting teachers and classmates, demotivating in learning, cheating in exams. The table shows the frequency and percentage of respondents on the barriers and challenges with a detailed description below the table.

**Table 7.** Barriers/Challenges of Online Learning

<i>Statements / Items</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
54) I spend a lot of money on internet services for learning online.	78.4%	15.7%
55) The Internet connection in my area is not appropriate.	78.4%	15.2%
56) Some functions in online tools are complicated.	74.5%	14.8%
57) I don't have a laptop for learning English online.	73.3%	18.6%
58) I'm not familiar with the current online learning platform.	69.9%	19.5%
59) It is hard to form the group work.	65.7%	23.3%
60) It is difficult to access to the lesson.	64.4%	25.8%
61) It is hard to form the pair work.	61.4%	29.2%
62) It is difficult to contact teachers and classmates.	61.4%	28%
63) It is easy for students to cheat on exams.	59.3%	28.4%
64) I don't have a smartphone for learning online.	57.7%	34.7%
65) I'm concerned about privacy and security problems	48.7	34.3
66) Online learning demotivates me in learning English.	38.1%	47.8%

According to Table 7, it can be seen that (78.4%) of respondents agreed that they spend lots of money on internet service to learn online; and others (78.4%) agreed that the internet connection is not appropriate in their area. (74.5%) of students approved with the statement that some functions in online tools are complicated to learn while (73.3%) do not have a laptop for learning the English language online. Thus, (69.9%) of the respondents also agreed that they are not familiar with the current online platform. A little bit lower percentage of them (65.7%) agreed that they have difficulty in forming the group while learning online. Moreover, (64.4%) of students agreed that they have difficulty accessing online lessons; and hardly forming pair work has been faced by (61.4%) of the respondents and the same percentage (61.4%), agreed that it is difficult to contact teachers even classmates while learning English online. In addition, they agreed that it is really easy for them to cheat on exams in online classes which is turned into (59.3%) while (57.7%) of students do not have smartphones for learning online. Next, there are (48.7%) of respondents agreed that they are concerned about privacy and security problems during online learning. Lastly, the lowest percentage of their agreement showed that online learning demotivates them in learning English (38.1%) percent. As stated in the description above, most students are barriers and challenged by the cost of internet service, connecting to the internet, and some complicated functions in online tools. We can see that just a small number of respondents think that learning English online demotivates them in learning.

### **3.2 What are the general attitudes of high school students toward learning English language online?**

Findings generated from the analysis of quantitative data are discussed in this section. There are 53 items used for exploring the general attitudes of the students. Among these items, 21 were used to find out the attitudes of students on learning English in the online class, 10 items were used to explore the usefulness of online classes in improving skills and knowledge, 4 items were for searching the level of agreement on 21<sup>st</sup>-century competencies improvement, and 19 items more for examining their attitude on accessibilities and conveniences of online learning. Based on the findings in Chapter 4, students have a positive attitude on 17 items with more than 50% agreeing online learning helps them learn new words, provides self-confidence,



good tools for discussion, and opportunities, maximizes hesitation, reduces anxiety, becomes an interesting way of learning, increase confidence, interest, background of learning, willingness, stress, motivation, discussion and reduced fear of failing exams. However, 4 items received low responses meaning that students thought learning online is not fun and make them enjoyable. Moreover, they may not get higher scores in online classes. Most of the students do not think that gender is the cause of anxiety when learning online. Similarly, Erdem Aydin (2012) indicated in the study that students have in common positive attitudes to online communication and it has a significant difference in 'miscommunication', 'social connection', and 'ease' online communication dimensions between the female and the male students. In addition, Knowles and Kerkman (2007) showed the comparison of pre-and post-course on the students' attitude related to interaction missing other students, and obtaining a lot of information over an online course with a more positive attitude. Fredericksen (2018) stated that online learning has the responsibility to support all kinds of courses strictly looking at distance education enhancing student retention, promoting instructional innovation, and growing institutional enrollments above existing levels.

Interestingly, the negative response from participants on gender does not cause anxiety when learning online while Türkarslan and Akdemir (2019) found that students' attitudes towards English courses did not change to gender, grade level, and having a spoken English family member. However, males and females show different attitudes based on the degree of learning. Chung, et al., (2020) said that females are illustrated to be more ready than males, students with degree programs are better prepared than students with diploma programs they show better satisfaction in online learning is from degree students and female students plus better learning experiences compared to diploma students and male students. Türkarslan and Akdemir (2019) stated that attitudes of female students were more positive than the male students related to the general aspects and importance of the course; the male students' attitudes were more positive than the female students related to subject interestingness and the teaching styles of teachers.

Research question 1 also focuses on the 9 items of the usefulness of online classes in improving skills and knowledge rank from more than 50% to 80.1% agreeing that online learning helps them improve listening, vocabulary, language proficiency, reading, typing, speaking, writing, technological skills and grammatical knowledge.

All participants agreed that online learning also provides the improvement on 4 competencies 21<sup>st</sup> century such as collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking. The received percentages of agreeing are ranked between 50.3% to 74.2% among these competencies.

19 items illustrate the percentages of agreeing between 57.2% to 88.2% in the results of students' attitudes on accessibilities and Conveniences of online learning which covered downloading teaching materials, free travel, and safety, storing documents, recording video, the flexibility of learning, updating course information, exchanging ideas, debating with friends, chatting in the chat box, reducing expenses, doing assignments, setting schedules, counting learning times, asking questions, doing exams, integrating learning activities, expressing opinions, and participating in class.

### ***3.3 What are the challenges of high school students in learning the English language online?***

The researcher used 13 items to examine the attitude of high school students on challenges they may face in their online classes. Students agreed to 11 statements rating from (57.7%) to the highest percentage of (78.4%). These items are comprised of spending a lot of money on the internet, the complicated online tools, no smart devices, not being familiar with online learning platforms, hard to create online activities, difficulty to access to the lessons, difficulty contacting teachers and classmates, and easy for students cheating during exams. However, most of them did not agree that they had concerns with their privacy and security in online classes. There are (38.1%) of the students agreed that online learning demotivates them in learning English. Kuama (2016) suggested that students who have low English proficiency will also have low skills in online learning and self-directed learning experiences which means they might not be prepared or not ready to learn English online; however, the researcher suggested five main important points as follow (1) students faced two main challenges comprising technical and individual problems. Thus we have to care about their satisfaction, technological problems, and an internet connection, (2) The design of online courses and content interest and practice are very important which require teachers to prepare learning tasks, design, and contents that are accessible and revisable timely (3) The training of online language learning strategies should be done before the starting of online class which required to have sufficient orientation on their interest and motivation (4) the readiness of students for learning online by measuring their English proficiency, preference, learning style, confidence, comfortability, motivation and attitude towards the positivity on online learning. In addition, Casanova and Price (2018) stated that the ownership process and impact are time-consuming, the educational institution consists of complex systems and communication between different stakeholders which face

difficulties in reasoning why a lot of online learning initiatives miss achieving sustainability; thus, they completely adopt the tool as the only attaining when the institution is devoted and able to take ownership within both itself and stakeholders. For example, it is time-consuming to own the ownership of Zoon or Microsoft Teams in Cambodian schools. The same to the result of this study, Istifci (2017) illustrated that Internet technologies have unavoidably developed as a fragment of professional, academic, personal, and profitable life. The consumption of Internet technologies in education has feasted in recent years. Similarly, Chung, Subramaniam, and Dass (2020) stated that internet connectivity is the main challenge for degree students, and difficult to understand the subject content as well as for diploma students.

Even though the whole process of research followed the clear research design underlying the concepts of validity and reliability of both quantitative and qualitative research, the study still required more activities to quantitatively explore the attitude of high school students and teachers relevant to teaching and learning the English language in an online class in other places to expand the scope of the study as well as developing on teaching techniques and materials of online teaching and learning for implementing in English language learning of online classroom. The research instruments are considered to be reliable steady and consistent as well as predictable and accurate. However, the findings of this study only represented the attitude of high school students at Kors Krolor High School as the research site. These results cannot be generalized to the attitude of high school students towards learning English in online classes elsewhere.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The results of this research revealed the positive general attitude of high school students on learning English in online classes, and the usefulness of online classes in improving knowledge and skills. They also agreed that learning English in online classes is accessible and convenient. A higher percentage agreed on the benefits of online classes. However, they replied that online classes do not cause anxiety in learning and it does on relevant to gender. They raised some points on challenges in online classes including spending a lot of money on the internet, difficulty using online tools, no smart devices, and no internet connection. These challenges are used as base concepts to provide recommendation for this study as well. Teachers have to be trained appropriately in technical, technological, and pedagogical knowledge of online teaching so that they can teach effectively. Teaching and learning activities development to push online learning to be more beneficial for both teachers and students must be considered for various purposes based on the needs of the students to improve students' trust in online learning effectiveness and train students to learn online effectively. Future researchers can conduct more research on students' attitudes toward learning the English language in online classes with specific online platforms to confirm the specification of the study as well as study the action research in online classroom practice to see the real issues and challenges as well as the effective teaching strategies and techniques that will be the useful results for the future online teaching and learning in Cambodia.

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