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# The Views of International University Students About Online Education

Ismail Karakus<sup>1</sup>, Sena Karakus<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Mersin University, Mersin Turkey

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Education, Psychological Counseling and Guidance, Mersin University, Mersin, Turkey

Correspondence: Ismail Karakus, Mersin University Faculty of Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Mersin, Turkey. Tel: 0506 939 88 90-. E-mail: karakus8090@hotmail.com

## Abstract

Currently, international university students are working hard to cope with many problems in socio-cultural, psychological and economic terms. Particularly after Covid-19 epidemic experienced by the whole world in early 2020, they have started to face greater problems. Therefore, in this study, the aim is to examine the opinions of international university students taking Turkish online lessons about course practices and learning-teaching processes. Qualitative research design was used in this study, and the data were collected through focus group interviews. Participants of the study consist of 18 international university students enrolled in a state university in the academic year of 2020-2021 and receiving Turkish language education at B2 level. While some of the international university students expressed positive opinions regarding the economical and comfortable online education process, some of them expressed negative opinions; namely the lack of communication, the difficulties experienced in online exams and the language learning process and the inefficiency of education. Most of the students stated that the online education process has both positive and negative aspects. As the advantages of this educational process, students pointed out facilitating academic processes easily, managing time, being healthy and saving money. On the other hand, it was highlighted that there are technical, personal, educational, health and language difficulties in the online education process. As solution suggestions for these difficulties, the participants made suggestions on eliminating the problems in technical and physical conditions, including more motivational activities and improving the educational process.

**Keywords:** International University Student, Online Education, Focus Group Interview

## 1. Introduction

International university students decide to study in different countries in order to get to know different cultures and societies, to benefit from better educational opportunities and to have better living conditions. During this process, they may encounter many problems such as social, cultural (Tchoh & Mertan 2018; Koçak, 2020), psychological (Xiong & Zhou, 2018) and economic (Ghanbary, 2017) etc. Students, who are already working hard to cope with such problems, have faced with bigger problems due to the covid-19 epidemic experienced by the

whole world in early 2020. The epidemic has affected higher education institutions as well as all areas of life (Taşçı, 2021). As the education process has become digital all over the world, one of the important areas that have experienced a fundamental transformation in higher education (Bilecen, 2020). This situation brought many challenges to higher education/universities in the context of teaching, learning and research methods (Mok, Xiong, Ke, & Cheung, 2021). Due to travel restrictions and the lockdown of universities due to the epidemic, many international students had to stay in their own countries and continue their education with the online learning process. Thus, this digital transformation process in education has also revealed many inadequacies and inequalities in education systems (Taşçı, 2021).

Throughout this process, students experienced difficulties in many issues such as technical equipment required for online education, access to digital tools and digital content that supports learning (Choudaha, 2017; Schleicher, 2020). However, nowadays, when online education and applications have become the new normal, it is very important for the students to have digital tools (desktop / laptop computers or smart phones) in terms of functionality and sustainability of education. They need to access to lessons via the internet and develop existing digital interactions; in other words, digital tools encourage students to use the online learning process effectively (Radha, Mahalakshmi, Kumar and Saravanakumar, 2020). Filius et al. (2019) stated that students' access to tools such as computers, tablets or smartphones is essential for an effective online education.

Furthermore, in order to end up this process efficiently and effectively, both teachers and students should have some basic competencies in addition to the basic technical equipment / materials. Trainers are expected to follow up-to-date software and applications, develop content, solve software and hardware problems, use digital tools functionally and guide students about these digital tools (Hauck & Stickler, 2006 & Sun, 2011). In a related study, it was put forward that the proficiency of the instructor to use technology effectively affected the online experiences of the students (Cole, Shelley, & Swartz, 2014). It was also put forward in another study that students, who had digital competencies, provided their interpersonal relationships in digital environments and directed to collaborative work (Raaper & Brown, 2020). Therefore, it is possible to assert the idea that there are many positive or negative changes brought about by online education.

There are various cited advantages of online education. To begin with, teaching can be carried out regardless of time and place that may provide the opportunity to repeat the lessons to the user. In addition, students will have access to rich content, which may provide personalized learning and eliminate the costs of formal education (Barış & Çankaya, 2016). As the disadvantages of online education, it can be said that students may have limitations in using the online learning process effectively. Some students may not have enough technological skills. Also, some may experience physical problems such as waist, back, neck and eye pain, be unmotivated. Moreover, they may not have concentration, and they may face with serious anxiety and psychological problems (Firang, 2020). The important thing here is to try to understand whether the benefits of international university students in online learning processes are more than their harms (Karkar-Esperat, 2018).

As with all university students, international university students have had to cope with many variables such as providing technical equipment, having digital competencies and accessing to effective online environment in this difficult process. It is necessary to evaluate the need to create an effective and productive online learning environment in this context in a multifaceted way. For this reason, it has been decided to carry out this study in order to better understand international university students, to see the problems they may experience, to find solutions for them, to provide better learning environments and to contribute to all stakeholders working in the field in order to conduct the distance education process in a more effective manner.

There are studies in the literature on online education of international students during the epidemic process. In these studies, the perceptions of international university students regarding online learning (Demuyakor, 2020); online learning experiences during the Covid-19 outbreak (Ferdvez, Supiastutik, Angin, 2020), multilingual communication experiences (Li, Xie, Ai, & Li, 2020); the views on their use of information and communication technologies (Adiyaman & Adiyaman, 2020); challenges and learning experiences in online classrooms (Karkar-Esperat, 2018); the Covid-19 outbreak and higher education along with international mobility and social protection

of students (Bilecen, 2020) have been dealt with. Despite these studies, it is not known exactly to what extent international university students are satisfied with online education arrangements in the online learning process, and it is stated as a topic that needs investigation (Bilecen, 2020). A study in a similar vein, Adiyaman and Adiyaman (2020) emphasized that there are very few studies on the use of information and communication (ICT) technologies in international university students' language learning. Based on the fact that digital technologies are indispensable parts of life for today's students (Li, 2019) in an effective online course management, and considering that communication / interaction, process (teaching) management, behaviors, rules, time management and motivation are important for efficient learning processes (Polat, 2016), it is thought that conducting this study will shed light onto the literature.

Since international students did not have basic academic and welfare, and they experienced lack of technical equipment during the epidemic period, they had problems related to the basic academic and welfare support they needed (Bettinger & Loeb, 2013). Hence, they experienced feelings of stress, hopelessness, loneliness, anxiety and pessimism, causing them to be psychologically adversely affected by this process. (Gallagher, Doherty, & Obonyo, 2020). Based on these reasons, this study was carried out with the aim of trying to understand international university students. Another aim is to learn their attitudes and views towards online language teaching to reveal their problems and offer solutions in the light of the literature. It is expected that the results of the above-mentioned aims will contribute to the literature.

For distance online language teaching, it has already been underlined in the studies that it can cause some problems in terms of using digital tools, active participation of students, the interaction between students and time management (İnan, 2021). Another underlined point is that the complex structure of language teaching might be very difficult to learn through distance learning (Hurd, 2006). This study based on these problems might give a different perspective to the problems. In this context, the main aim is to examine the opinions of international university students taking distance online Turkish lessons about course practices and learning-teaching processes. For this purpose, answers were sought for the following problems:

1. What are the views of international university students about online education?
2. What are the views of international university students about the advantages / positive aspects of online education?
3. What are the views of international university students about the difficulties they faced in the online education process?
4. What are the suggestions of international university students for using online education more beneficially and efficiently?

## **2. Method**

The Method section describes in detail how the study was conducted, including conceptual and operational

### *2.1. Research Model*

Qualitative research design was used in this study. The reason for choosing qualitative research design is that the aim is to understand the views of international university students about online education. Qualitative research designs allow an in-depth analysis related to the subject for definition, analysis, interpretation and understanding (Merriam, 2013). In this respect, the views of international higher education students about the concept of online education, their difficulties and solution suggestions were attempted to be revealed and interpreted in this study.

### *2.2. Participants*

The participants of the study consist of 18 international university students enrolled in a state university in the academic year of 2020-2021 and receiving Turkish language education at B2 level. The working group was formed by using "convenience sampling," one of the purposeful sampling methods. This sampling type is a sampling method that is easily accessible in the immediate environment, and thus the research is carried out with people

who want to participate in the study voluntarily (Erkuş, 2009). The convenience sampling method accelerates the research in terms of time, and it is a useful method (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013).

Once the sample was arranged in the study, two groups were formed from the students who were going to be interviewed in the focus group. These two different study groups were separated using the maximum variation sampling method. In the maximum variation sampling method, the aim is to reflect the diversity of the participants in the study group at the maximum level (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Based on this method, attention is attached to ensure that the study group was heterogeneous in terms of gender and nationality variables, and variation was made. The first group consists of 10 students and the second group consists of 8 students.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Participants in the First Group

| Code           | Gender | Nationality |
|----------------|--------|-------------|
| Participant 1  | Male   | Iraq        |
| Participant 2  | Female | Syria       |
| Participant 3  | Female | Syria       |
| Participant 4  | Female | Kazakhstan  |
| Participant 5  | Male   | Palestine   |
| Participant 6  | Female | Uzbekistan  |
| Participant 7  | Male   | Uzbekistan  |
| Participant 8  | Male   | Uzbekistan  |
| Participant 9  | Male   | Uzbekistan  |
| Participant 10 | Male   | Iraq        |

As it is illustrated in Table 1, the participants in the first group are 10 students, 6 of them are male and 4 of them are female. When nationalities are examined, it can be said that there are students from Iraq, Syria, Kazakhstan, Palestine and Uzbekistan.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Participants in the Second Group

| Code           | Gender | Nationality  |
|----------------|--------|--------------|
| Participant 11 | Male   | Syria        |
| Participant 12 | Male   | Indonesia    |
| Participant 13 | Male   | Ivory Coast  |
| Participant 14 | Female | Saudi Arabia |
| Participant 15 | Male   | Syria        |
| Participant 16 | Female | Georgia      |
| Participant 17 | Female | Pakistan     |
| Participant 18 | Male   | Syria        |

In line with Table 2, it is possible to state that the participants in the second group are from different countries such as Syria, Georgia, Pakistan, Ivory Coast, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia. There are 8 students; 5 of them are male, and 3 of them are female.

Focus group discussion is the process of obtaining information and generating ideas between a leader and a group. This discussion utilizes from the influence of group dynamics. The purpose of the focus group interviews is to examine the perspective of the working group on the subject determined by the researcher (such as their experiences, tendencies, thoughts, perceptions, feelings) to reach multidimensional qualitative information (Bowling, 2002). The reason for choosing this method is that international university students can use the online education process they have received and explain the difficulties they experience with the group by helping each other linguistically, rather than simply expressing their opinion on the subject.

### 2.3. Data Collection

During the data collection phase, the literature was reviewed by the researchers, and the questions were prepared with the content of the interview. The questions were finalized by taking the opinions of the Turkish Education field expert for the linguistic examination of the interview questions, and two scholars, who are experts in the field of Education Programs and Instruction, examined the questions in terms of the meaning, content and educational evaluation.

For the focus group interview, the researcher attended the lectures of international students at the university and explained the purpose and subject of the research to the students firstly. Later, volunteer students were divided into two groups by the researcher to ensure maximum diversity. The students were informed that the interviews would be recorded, and they were asked for permission. Each interview conducted through the online platform lasted between 60-75 minutes. In the initial phase of the interview, the purpose of the research was mentioned again, and the participants were asked to introduce themselves briefly. During the interviews, the questions prepared in the interview form were asked, and additional explanations were made when it was thought that the questions were not understood because the participants were international students. Via this method, in-depth information was obtained from individuals. In addition, special attention was attached to create an intimate conversation environment, where all students could freely express their opinions about the questions, to ensure group interaction at a high level. At the end of the interviews, the important points were summarized, and the session was ended by thanking the participants.

In the focus group discussion, the following questions were asked and discussed with the participants:

1. What are your thoughts on online education?
2. What are the advantages (positive aspects) of online education?
3. What are the difficulties you have in online education?
4. What are your suggestions for using online education more usefully and efficiently?

### 2.4. Data Analysis

In the first stage of the analysis of qualitative data, which was carried out in two stages through focus group interviews, the audio and video recordings obtained from the interviews were watched twice, and a written draft was created. Codifications were made in order to keep the identity information of the participants confidential.

In the second stage of the analysis, the data were evaluated using the descriptive analysis method. With the descriptive analysis method, the data are organized and interpreted according to the predetermined themes. Data can be organized according to research questions or presented according to themes. As it is widely known, descriptive analysis consists of four stages: framing, processing the data according to themes, defining the finding / giving and interpreting direct quotations (Glesne, 2013).

In this study, a framework was created for analysis on the basis of the literature on the concept of online education, and themes were organized according to research questions. In order to reflect the views of international university students on this subject, definitions have been made and interpreted through direct quotations in the study. Since the results of the focus group interviews are not for generalizing things, there is no need to quantify them with frequency, percentage and test tables (Fern, 2001). The reason is that the opinions of the individuals and the differences regarding these opinions are seen as important rather than quantification in the interviews (Çokluk, Yılmaz, & Oğuz, 2011). Hence, this study was carried out in the light of this information. Findings were formed by combining the results of two different focus groups.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Findings about the First Sub-Problem

In the first sub-problem of the study, the opinions of international university students about online education were investigated. As a result of the descriptive analysis, the opinions of the students are divided into positive and negative themes about online education. The theme and Codes obtained from this research question are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Theme and Codes for the First Sub-Problem

| Themes                 | Codes  |
|------------------------|--|
| Positive point of view | Being economic (time and money)<br>Being comfortable (environment and transportation)                                |
| Negative point of view | Communication problems<br>Difficulties of online exam<br>Problems regarding online language learning<br>Inefficiency |

Examples of direct quotes regarding both positive and negative opinions are as follows:

Participant 2: "Face to face is an easier system. For example, writing is more difficult for online exams. Sometimes, we have more difficulty in writing and sometimes we stop to solve questions" (negative- online exam difficulties)

Participant 5: "In my opinion, it was a very good alternative in our situation, in our case it is definitely better than not learning at all." (positive- different point of view)

Participant 7: "It has a good side and a bad side. The good news is that we just sit at home, we are with our family, we don't spend money for the vehicle, it's free. We eat the meal our mother cooked. We do not cook it ourselves like in Turkey. I think it would be better if we did the downside in the classroom. I think we understood better whether we talked to each other in the classroom or not. I think we would have the opportunity to ask questions and chat a lot when we were in the classroom. "(Being positive-comfortable, financially economical / negative-communication deficiencies)

Participant 8: "I think it is both good and bad. The good side is sitting at home. The bad side is that we cannot get a qualified education, so it is not very efficient. Face-to-face conversation would be much better. "(Positive-comfort in terms of space / Negative- inefficiency)

Participant 10: "I think it changes. For example, primary school, middle school and high school have very bad distance education systems, but it's very bad for language, for teaching. For our language learning experience, we could have met Turkish friends on campus, and we could speak Turkish every day. It would be better this way. Now, only my teacher is speaking. On the other hand, it has a very good side for university because I can manage my time. After I take part in a lesson, I can do something else." (Negative- difficulties in language learning, communication deficiencies / Positive- economy, time)

Participant 13: "In general, distance education is not easy and not nice for me. Sir, I am a social person, so I love direct communication in other words face to face. Online education drives people apart and reduces contact and communication. "(Negative- communication problems and deficiencies)

Participant 14: "Education process is going well, yes, it has difficulties. Because we are already learning languages, meeting people would be much easier if we were face to face. " (negative- language learning difficulties, communication deficiencies)

Participant 18: "I think it's better than not learning anything. It enables us to look at the education process differently. "(positive- different point of view)

Much as most of the students expressed negative opinions about online education, Participant 5 and Participant 18 stated that online education offered students a different perspective. Therefore, it was a good alternative to education in this process.

### 3.2. Findings Regarding the Second Sub-Problem

In the second sub-problem of the study, international university students were asked about the advantages / positive aspects of online education. The theme and Codes obtained from this research question are exhibited in Table 4.

Table 4: Themes and Codes for the Second Sub-Problem

| Themes             | Codes   |
|--------------------|---|
| Academic processes | Repeatability<br>Learning a new method  |
| Time management    | Preparation time for the lesson<br>Taking time to rest<br>Ability to run more than one job<br>Time allocated for transportation |
| Health             | Physical health<br>Emotional health   |
| Economic issues    | Not requiring classroom environment<br>Monetary dimension   |

Though the international university students who participated in the focus group interviews have different cultural characteristics and nationalities, their views on the advantages of online education are similar. Direct quotations and Codes from student views on this subject are as follows:

Participant 1: "I think online education is also good for our physical health." (physical health)

Participant 2: "It is very good that the lesson is repeatable." (repeatability)

Participant 3: "It is getting healthier for the Corona period." (physical health)

Participant 7: "As I said, teacher, we are not spending money. I also agree with what my other friends said. "(financially economical)

Participant 10: "Time management. It is a very good thing for people who are already working, so we can continue online education. "(ability to run more than one job)

Participant 11: "Due to the fact that we could not go to school during this period, we would not be able to learn anything, but we can continue our education even online. Therefore, it has been a good alternative in terms of education, we can continue our lessons even in bad conditions. During the break, I can run other things at home. " (learning a new method, running more than one job)

Participant 12: "To highlight, we can watch the lecture records over and over and understand the parts we do not understand by repeating them." (repeatability)

Participant 13: "We can both study and follow the lesson, we can do more than one job in the same time period." (ability to run more than one job)

Participant 14: "When the lesson is over, I can sleep (laughing). Time spent on the road is not a problem, and this gives the opportunity to rest immediately. " (taking time to rest - time for transportation)

Participant 16: "I can both listen and go on the road, so I can attend classes wherever I want. There is no obligation to be in any classroom, I can take classes anywhere. "(no need for classroom environment)

Participant 17: "It also prevents wasting time to go to class. Pre-class preparations are not composed of too many tasks. We can only sit in front of the computer , open the program and connect to the lesson. We don't have to go long distances. "(course preparation time and time allocated for transportation)

Participant 18: "In this way, we learned a new teaching method. If such a problem like Covid 19 happens again in the future, we will be used to such a lesson type, and we can continue this way. " (learning a new method)

### 3.3. Findings Regarding the Third Sub-Problem

In the third sub-problem of the study, the aim was to understand the difficulties experienced by international university students in the online education process. As a result of the analysis, the themes "technical problems, personal / educational problems, difficulties in language learning and health problems" were obtained. The themes and codes obtained from the students' answers are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5: Theme and Codes for the Third Sub-Problem

| Themes                             | Codes  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Technical problems                 | Power outages<br>Internet problem  |
| Personal / Educational problems    | Inability to focus / concentration problems<br>Inefficiency<br>Non-conformities in physical conditions |
| Difficulties in learning languages | Difficulties in the writing process<br>Difficulties in the speaking process                            |
| Health problems                    | Physical health problems<br>Mental / emotional problems  |

The direct quotations and Codes taken from the answers given by the students regarding the themes and Codes in Table 5 are given below:

Participant 1: "Depression is difficult because every day I am at home on the computer. I can never get out."  
(mental / emotional problems)

Participant 3: "The writing process is difficult." (difficulties in the writing process)

Participant 4: "The biggest problem is speaking in the exam. There are internet problems in the system. " (Internet problems, difficulties in the speaking process)

Participant 6: "Internet problems." (internet problem)

Participant 7: "The Internet is the one I have the most problems with." (internet problem)

Participant 8: "Not very efficient." (inefficiency)

Participant 9: "The most common problem in online education is the internet problem." (internet problem)

Participant 10: "Internet problem was the biggest problem in exams, and we got low scores." (internet problem)

Participant 11: "People cannot get away from troubles and emotional problems at home. That's why, I can't focus."  
(emotional problems, inability to focus / concentration problems)

Participant 12: "It is very difficult to arrange a space at home. Because of Covid-19, we are only sitting at home, we are very bored at home, but we have to continue the education process at home. This negatively affects my concentration in class. " (incompatibilities in physical conditions, inability to focus / concentration problems)

Participant 13: "It is very difficult for me to always sit passively in the same place all the time. My home environment is not suitable. Then, I try to convince myself to feel that my room is like a different environment. I try to feel as if I were going to school. I'm trying to attend classes in a different place from home."  
(incompatibilities in physical conditions)

Participant 14: "The difficulties are many. Power outages sometimes cause a lot of problems. I live in Saudi Arabia, sometimes the electricity can be cut off, and education is disrupted this way. " (power outages)

Participant 15: "I have physical problems, I have eye problems on account of looking at the computer." (physical health problems)

Participant 16: "I haven't had a big problem, but the power outage scares me especially during exam times. This also worries me. At the same time, I can experience neck pain as a physical problem due to inactivity. " (power outages, physical health problems)

Participant 17: "Home is a resting place, not a place to learn. I am having difficulties in terms of physical conditions. "(incompatibilities in physical conditions)

It can be inferred that the biggest problem experienced by the majority of students in the online education process is technical problems. Among them, power outages and internet problems were also particularly emphasized by the students.

### 3.4. Findings Regarding the Fourth Sub-Problem

In the fourth sub-problem of the research, a question regarding the suggestions for using online education more beneficially and efficiently has been posed. According to the descriptive analysis results, the students expressed

their opinions on the themes of "solving technical problems, suggestions about the educational process, activities that increase motivation". The themes and codes obtained from the students' answers are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6: Themes and Codes for the Fourth Sub-Problem

| Themes  | Codes  |
|---|--|
| Elimination of technical and physical problems    | Good and fast internet<br>Having a good computer<br>Organizing the physical environment  |
| Recommendations regarding the educational process | Preparing for the lesson<br>Mindfulness / concentration<br>Active participation in the lesson<br>Arranging the course hours<br>Homework<br>Giving feedback |
| Motivation increasing activities                  | Speaking activities<br>Writing activities<br>Discussion activities<br>Watching movies and videos   |

The direct quotations from the participants regarding the themes and codes given in Table 6:

Participant 2: "Schools need to provide the necessary conditions technically. The students do not attend and follow the class. For this, attendance might be taken every minute (laughing). Students should actively participate in the lesson to make it more efficient. "(Elimination of technical problems, active participation in the lesson)

Participant4: "Different activities can be done to increase motivation."

Participant 5: "Watching movies or videos and talking about it." (watching movies and videos)

Participant6: "It is necessary to talk a lot. Speaking activities are useful for language teaching. For example, it may be useful to give a topic and write on it. " (speaking activities, writing activities)

Participant7: "There should be discussions. If we participate in the discussion, the lessons are more fruitful. We should increase the speaking activities by focusing on the topics of discussion, and we should chat continuously. " (speaking activities, discussion activities)

Participant 8: "It's good to learn with a computer. However, lessons should not be conducted by eating something. It is important not to eat or drink. In addition, I think lessons should last for 7 days a week, instead of 6 hours every day, it would be more efficient to have 4 hours and 7 days. "(Having a good computer, organizing the lesson hours)

Participant 9: "You can send a text and assign homework, and giving feedback on it can be much more effective." (assigning and giving feedback)

Participant 10: "I think the most important thing is to have a good internet, even a v at home. Technically, the internet provided by the computer needs to be fast. The room we are in needs to be like a study room; we should not attend the lesson in a bad environment like a desk or classroom environment. " (A good and fast internet, regulation of the physical environment)

Participant 12: "In my opinion, preparing for the lesson prior to it starts makes the lesson fruitful. That way, it can be more effective. We need to check the Internet to see if it's running fast. " (preparation for the lesson, good and fast internet)

Participant15: "There may be some communication barriers in online education, we can have a more effective process by turning on the cameras and participating in the lesson. Some friends might feel embarrassed in online education. During this process, not being embarrassed and trying to express ourselves will help you spend the process more efficiently. We can improve our speaking skills by continuously talking, trying to speak, and practicing. We may also conduct conversation activities among ourselves in this way. "(active participation in the lesson, speaking activities)

Participant16: "We need to concentrate, and our attention might be distracted immediately in online education. That's why, you have to listen very carefully. In addition, one should not be afraid of making mistakes. Even if it is wrong, we can learn the right one. Therefore, we need to practice often and express this to our teacher. The fact

that the teachers give feedback in this way will make the process go better. “(being careful / providing concentration, active participation in the lesson, giving feedback)

Participant 18: “To begin with, you should not be afraid of online education. You should attend the class and think that it will be easy. It might go on very well if you are careful. Being careful means that it can be useful and efficient. “(mindfulness / concentration, active participation in the lesson)

In line with the abovementioned direct quotations, it might be possible to assert the idea that international university students offer more activities to make the lessons more practical. However, they also express the need to solve technical problems and have digital tools in this process.

#### 4. Discussion

Based on the fact that not many international university students have experience in taking online courses (Karkar-Esperat, 2018), 18 students from different countries participated in the study, which was conducted to examine their experiences / views on online education. In the data collected through the focus group interviews, very important information was obtained for the effective and efficient processing of the online education process carried out with international university students. For the case of this study, it is expected that examining the experiences / opinions of international university students regarding online education might shed light onto the literature.

International university students stated that online education has both positive and negative aspects. Participants stated that the online learning process is very economical in terms of time and finance, and there is no space limitation which is another important advantage. Er and Demir (2019) also stated that online education offers wide opportunities in terms of economy while minimizing problems related to time and space. Students also reported that they had a lack of communication in the online education process, and the lessons were inefficient in this respect.

The lecturer or teacher needs to pay much attention to ensure more interaction with students and among students in the online education process. In addition, the participants emphasized the negative aspects of online education by stating that they had difficulties especially while learning a language. However, the literature has revealed that online education makes learning a language easier, rather than making it difficult. In particular, there are studies that have highlighted that online learning environments are motivating and fun in that they offer materials that facilitate learning in four basic skill areas (reading, listening, speaking, writing) (language applications, word learning activities, etc.), and they are suitable for the use of various learning methods to encourage student autonomy. It is stated by studies that it positively affects foreign language learning due to the abovementioned reasons (Pleines, C. 2020; Li, 2019; Cacheiro-Gonzalez ve Medina-Rivilla, 2019; Liang-Yi ve Chin-Chung, 2017). In another study about today's case, Schulze and Scholz (2018) stated that there is a tendency to teach more language lessons online.

On the other hand, students also reported that online education has very important advantages. Online education has many features such as being able to be watched again, having a lot of time to rest, not needing to have a physical space and materials such as the classroom environment, and allowing a different and alternative learning process. Zhang et al. (2020) and Bilecen (2020) revealed that broadcasting the lectures in both live and archived form is an advantage for students, and online education is a good alternative in the coronavirus process. Also, Attardi, Choi, Barnett, Rogers (2016) stated that it is important to follow the lessons asynchronously. In another study, Watermeyer, Crick, Knight, and Goodall (2020) stated that transition to online education will be beneficial for students even though it is compulsory. In addition, Brown (2020) revealed that social networks, in particular, can create effective support for learning and stronger opportunities to overcome difficult problems.

Participants also noted the difficulties they faced in online education. They stated that they faced technical problems such as power cuts and internet access. Henaku et al. (2020) stated students faced technical problems such as computer, tablet and internet access. The students stated that they could not personally focus on the lesson and were not motivated. In terms of language learning, they stated that they had difficulties in speaking and writing

in online education. Students can overcome this problem by using language learning websites, mobile language applications, communication tools (Whatsapp, Instagram, Messenger, Skype, etc.) , digital tools and applications such as Google Translate. A study in a similar vein, Adıyaman and Adıyaman (2020) also stated that speaking tools such as Whatsapp and Facebook might be practiced. In that way, students might communicate with their friends in the languages they learn, and these applications might contribute to language learning processes. In other words, online education stands out as it provides students with multiple learning opportunities in digital environments. However, students also stated that online education causes health problems, both physical, mental and emotional. Çaykuş and Çaykuş (2020), Firang (2020), Kaya (2020), Sarı and Nayır (2020) also mentioned similar results in their studies.

International university students have made some suggestions to conduct online education effectively and efficiently. Participants stated that technical needs such as computer, tablet and internet access, which are the basic needs for online education, should be dealt with at first. Tamrat and Teferra (2020) also stated that students experience connection and repetitive power cuts during their access to the internet, and such technical problems should be eliminated in order to have an efficient online education. The students stated that teachers should carry out activities that increase their motivation, ensure active participation in the lesson, support the extracurricular learning process with homework and provide feedback at the same time. They stated that the process should be supported by watching movies / videos about motivational activities, focusing on discussion activities, speaking and writing activities. In another study, Karkar-Esperat (2018) concluded that students lack motivation in online education and have problems in terms of feedback. Furthermore, Kung (2017) stated that ensuring active participation of students, giving frequent feedback to students and creating diversity in terms of activities are important in the online learning process. Pattenaude and Caldwell (2020) also stated that a good online education should prioritize motivation.

While some of the international university students expressed positive opinions regarding the economy and comfort of online education process, some of them stated negative opinions, citing the lack of communication, the difficulties experienced in online exams and the language learning process and the inefficiency of education. Most of the students stated that the online education process has both positive and negative aspects. Features such as facilitating academic processes and time management, being a healthy, economical and good alternative method that can be performed in the Covid-19 process have been expressed as advantages of this educational process. It was stated that there are technical, personal, educational, health and language difficulties in the online education process. As solution suggestions for these difficulties, the participants made suggestions on eliminating the problems in technical and physical conditions, including more motivational activities and improving the educational process.

As a result, in this difficult epidemic period, it may be beneficial to conduct consultation studies in Turkey. Universities, non-governmental organizations and all stakeholders related to education should provide support so that international university students have a healthy adaptation to online education with an academic, social, psychological and economical support. Support centers can be established only for international university students to meet the basic equipment they may need in their online education processes and to find solutions to possible problems they may experience. In this respect, effective and fast solutions might be found for students' problems.

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