

# **Students' Perceptions of the HyFlex Learning Model from Ukraine and Japan: A Realistic Future for University Language Learning?**

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Recent developments in technology have constantly provided educators and educational institutions with a variety of ways to deliver language classes to their students. Models such as blended learning are centred on the concept of the instructor making the key decisions on how online learning activities are incorporated into a course. However, in the last decade an innovative blended model has emerged which aims to provide a more student-centred flexible learning environment. Termed HyFlex learning, this model allows students to decide how they participate in class: physically in a classroom, remotely via videoconferencing software, or through engagement with the course materials after the allotted class time has ended.

With the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic on education still far-reaching, the small-scale study outlined in this paper explores the attitudes of students towards online learning, building to a focus on the HyFlex learning model. The research presented is based upon initial findings from two universities, one in Hiroshima, Japan and the other in Kyiv, Ukraine. The survey found that in both countries 70% of students expressed a positive attitude towards participating in a language-learning course based upon a HyFlex model.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **What is HyFlex?**

The model that was developed at San Francisco State University aimed to create a learning environment that, for the first time, allowed students the possibility to switch between face-to-face and online learning, and from synchronous to asynchronous learning. Indeed, the term 'HyFlex' is a portmanteau of 'hybrid' and 'flexible'. Therefore, the HyFlex model is a course format in which the instructional approach combines face-to-face and online learning – both synchronously and asynchronously. At the centre of this model is the principle that learning is equivalent for all participants, no matter how they engage with the course (Kelly, 2020). Under the San Francisco State University scheme, students were given the authority, within an agreed upon parameter, to decide how they would participate for each class or activity. The aim of the programme was to ensure students were not penalised if they transitioned back and forth between face-to-face and online participation in their class.

Blended learning emerged earlier than the HyFlex model. Most blended learning differs from HyFlex

because the teacher rather than the students decides on the way in which material is learned. Sands (2002) outlines an approach that combines a classroom and online learning format, but one that is ultimately still under the complete control of the instructor, who decides which activity will be face-to-face or online. Orey (2002) describes a format in which course participants were made up of both face-to-face and online students, both groups undertaking the class simultaneously. The online participants were always online because their geographical location precluded them from attending the class face-to-face. Rasmussen (2003) also outlined a blended learning environment that mixed face-to-face and online learning, yet once more there was no flexibility in how the students participated in the class. Once again, like Orey (2002), the class participants were unable to change back and forth between face-to-face and online participation.

Later studies on blended learning followed the same pattern of ‘fixed location’ student participation. Either the student attended the class face-to-face or online, with virtually no option to migrate between the two choices. The first step towards what became the HyFlex learning model could be seen in what has been termed ‘blended online learning’. This approach, outlined by Power (2008), blended asynchronous and synchronous instructional modes for online students. This allowed for the possibility that students be given control as to how they participated in a course – synchronously or asynchronously. The HyFlex approach, suggests Beatty (2019), should follow a format that allows for a student-directed, multi-modal learning experience that provides students, regardless of their location, with autonomy, flexibility and, hopefully, a seamless engagement with the course.

### **How Does HyFlex Operate?**

The Hyflex model is centred upon the need for a course to reconceptualise the learning format so that students can engage with the instructor, course materials, and other students. Importantly, Smith et al. (2008) argue that the HyFlex model adopted by an educational institution needs to provide a learning environment in which the student can study across modes of delivery, and that at any time this allows them to engage with the learning process without compromising their learning experience.

However, and as with all learning models, it is one thing to design a theoretical concept that you believe is useful, but the implementation process is the hardest to get right. As the German playwright Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1808) famously wrote, “All theory, dear friend, is grey, but the golden tree of actual life springs ever green”. Adhering to Goethe’s belief, it is necessary to base life in such a way that it reflects the reality of the situation and not one that is lost in the midst of theoretical confusion. Pricop (2020) identifies four areas that any educational institution needs to understand before adopting a Hyflex learning model:

1. Identify the pedagogical skills needed for your online courses.
2. Be prepared from a technological perspective.
3. Guide and help teachers to adjust to online teaching.
4. Prepare your students.

The most important of these, argues Pricop, is the first one because it is essential that course instructors make their online presence obvious to the class participants in a way that will constantly motivate them.

Clearly adopting a technology that allows both students and instructor to be able to fully participate in the course and fulfil all necessary communication is vitally important for a HyFlex learning model to succeed, but the course must still, at its core, involve the necessary pedagogical skills.

Columbia University in New York has also highlighted four key aspects to any successful HyFlex learning model (Marquart et al., 2018):

1. Logistical concerns, such as student messaging, student registration, classroom setup and technology requirements must be addressed prior to any HyFlex course commencing.
2. Designing activities and classroom materials that fully engage both online and on-campus students, including during small-group breakout activities, group presentations, and whole-class discussions.
3. Building one cohesive community to incorporate synchronous and asynchronous approaches.
4. Managing the technology in the physical classroom so as to replicate the learning environment that is experienced by those students participating in face-to-face classes.

The Columbia University approach follows a similar framework to the ideas highlighted by Pricop (2020), but crucially places greater importance on the need for face-to-face students to not be placed in a disadvantageous position by the technology being used by off-campus attendees.

Perhaps the clearest description of how a HyFlex learning model should operate is provided by Beatty (2019), one of the key architects of the HyFlex learning programme at San Francisco State University:

Learner Choice — The course provides alternative participation modes that are meaningful and allow students to choose the mode of engagement that works best for them.

Equivalence — The modes, though not equal, provide equivalent learning outcomes.

Reusability — Artifacts from learning activities in each mode are captured and can be reused in other modes.

Accessibility — Students are equipped with the technological resources and skills to equally access all participation modes.

The three templates identified in this section of what constitutes a successful HyFlex model are all centred around similar core aspects which argue that the most important factor must be that there should be negligible difference in the learning process of the participants. Students attending the class face-to-face must not be disadvantaged or distracted by those attending remotely or asynchronously. The reverse situation is also vitally important. Ultimately, a successful HyFlex model will follow core pedagogical principles and provide an equal learning status quo for all participants of the course.

### **Why Has HyFlex Grown in Significance?**

The flexibility of the HyFlex learning model allows for a range of uncertainties surrounding the learning process, such as financial concerns, travel issues and technological engagement, to be successfully navigated (Bower et al., 2014). Furthermore, a HyFlex model could allow for educational institutions to develop course programmes that minimize disruption for students with mental, physical, or economic issues

that could otherwise impact negatively on their learning process. A HyFlex learning model, therefore, could provide a long-term framework that if developed strategically might provide support for a diverse student community.

### **Potential Negatives of HyFlex Learning**

The potential positives of the HyFlex model have been explored in the earlier segments of this section, but it would be irresponsible to not highlight and analyse some potential drawbacks. Brown and Tenbergen (2021), in their study on a HyFlex learning model conducted at the State University of New York at Oswego in 2020, found that student participants identified the following issues as significant:

1. Seeing what was physically written on the whiteboard in the classroom.
2. Following along with presentation slides.
3. Hearing what other participants of the class communicated.
4. When studying remotely, feeling excluded from face-to-face class activities.

The problems identified by Brown and Tenbergen (2021) centre on issues relating to the use of technology in a HyFlex model. Yet other, non-technology-based ones, have also been identified as having the potential to cause disruption. Gannon (2020), who conducted a study into the effectiveness of a HyFlex learning model at Grand View University in Iowa, argues that the type of class and number of participants are also a significant factor. He concluded that courses with a small number of students, combined with a course that promotes active student engagement, are ill-fitting to the HyFlex model. This is due to some students accessing the materials asynchronously, and therefore being impeded in comparison with face-to-face students, resulting in them being unable to participate fully in the course.

Potential problems surrounding the implementation of a HyFlex model are not just limited to student-centred concerns. Maloney and Kim (2020) have argued that instructors could also be negatively impacted through the increase in pre- and post- lesson workload. For example, asynchronous online instruction could add additional work for the course instructor through the need to learn the necessary technology skills required for a HyFlex-based course to be of sufficient quality.

As with all types of learning models, significant training is required for both instructors and students to be comfortable with the required technological demands of a HyFlex learning-based class. Additionally, HyFlex needs to be considered as an ongoing trend in learning. Even after the world has moved on from the restrictions of COVID-19, educational institutions need to maximize the learning needs of their students and create an environment where any HyFlex course allows participants to have equal learning opportunities. With restrictions imposed by the need to combat the COVID-19 pandemic still in operation at many educational institutions across the globe, alternative learning formats that were largely introduced as an initial response could be in place for far longer than first anticipated. Instructors and learners need to be prepared to move away from language learning courses being built upon traditional learning models, whether face-to-face or via videoconferencing software, that still largely function on real-time interaction between participants.

## **METHOD**

Building upon previous research the authors had conducted on the impact of videoconferencing software on students during COVID-19 (Selwood & Nykytchenko, 2021), the aim of this study is to gauge student reaction to the use of a HyFlex learning model as part of a language learning curriculum.

The data gathered come from two different locations: a university in Japan and a university in Ukraine. This is partly opportunistic, with the researchers gathering data from their own classes. However, it also allows the authors to conduct some small-scale comparative research on online learning and to explore similarities and differences between settings. This is important because universities are increasingly connecting with each other online, and at least a small minority of students are taking courses at different universities through online means, particularly so in the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, with the risk of other disruptions to courses from a variety of factors such as extreme weather, the need for educational institutions to provide a variety of ways to deliver courses including online learning formats is becoming increasingly important.

### **Courses and Participants**

The research in this study was based around English language learning courses at two universities, one in Ukraine and one in Japan. The former involved 62 native Ukrainian-speaking students from the Kyiv National Linguistic University, a public university located on one campus in Kyiv. Their English communication and translation writing course was conducted through a 17-week semester with 80-minute classes held once a week. The students' semester, starting in early September, initially began as face-to-face classes, before moving completely online after only a few weeks. The instructor judged the students to have demonstrated mid-to-high level ability, but in contrast showed mid-to-low level motivation, especially after the classes moved totally online.

The second university in the study was Hiroshima University, a national university based across three campuses in Hiroshima Prefecture. In total, 67 students were involved in the research. Their general English writing course was conducted across two eight-week terms in one semester, with 90-minute classes held once a week. Their semester began in early October and for the duration of the course, all classes were held synchronously via videoconferencing software. The instructor judged the Japanese students to have displayed mid-level ability and a mid to high level of motivation.

### **Student Log-on Locations and Software**

At both universities, the students participated in the online lessons from either their homes or a location on campus. In Ukraine, the videoconferencing software used for the course was Microsoft Teams, as this was mandated by the Kyiv National Linguistic University. In comparison, the videoconferencing software used at Hiroshima University was Zoom, as the author felt that this software platform best met the requirements for the course.

### **Data Collection**

The participants in the research presented in this paper were asked to complete an anonymous online survey. Google Forms, a free survey creation platform, was used to create this survey, and it was chosen

because both authors could easily access the form to edit or analyse the data. Additionally, Google Forms allows for a range of languages to be used, thus allowing for a situation where the students can read a question in their native language. Finally, the Google Forms format is automatically adapted for access via a tablet device, specifically a smartphone. In creating a survey that could be completed easily via a hand-held device, the authors hoped to provide the students with a variety of convenient ways in which to access and answer the questions.

## **Research Questions**

In order for HyFlex to be successful, students need to be comfortable with online options and so the research in this paper explores student reactions to their existing online videoconferencing courses. A further issue concerns what kind of balance there should be between online videoconferencing and classroom learning. Finally, there is the issue of how students feel about a full HyFlex course. To explore these issues a survey questionnaire was constructed, based on the following research questions:

1. What are students' experiences of their existing online videoconferencing classes?
2. What are students' opinions on the best balance between classroom learning and videoconferencing learning?
3. What are students' views on possible future HyFlex courses?

## **The Survey**

The survey presented to the students consisted of 11 main questions, some of which required supplementary responses. The questions were either multiple-choice or open-ended. In this respect the data were collected and analysed by adopting quantitative and qualitative research methods. By limiting the number of questions, the authors were hoping to encourage students to respond.

The quantitative method adopted in the research enabled a statistical approach to the use of the HyFlex model as a future learning platform for language-learning courses. A qualitative analysis (Mayring, 2015) was used to gauge the students' views on (a) their preference on future learning models, (b) their attitude towards participating in a fully implemented HyFlex learning model, and (c) their experience of online learning using videoconferencing software.

The survey consisted of two versions with the same content but with translation of the English questions in Japanese or Ukrainian for two of the more complex questions. Crucially, the two versions allowed for a direct comparison and analysis between the Ukrainian group and the Japanese group. The Japanese survey version was released on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021, with the Ukrainian one being released a week later, on November 15<sup>th</sup>. The deadline for both surveys was December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The difference between the two release dates was because the university in Ukraine did not want any impact on a major course assignment deadline. The survey was not compulsory, but students were asked to complete the form if they were willing to do so. The total number of students who responded across the two universities was 128, with 67 students from Japan and 61 from Ukraine.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, each of the main research questions is addressed. For the quantitative data, percentages have been used. With the data from an open question such as 6A, in which the students could provide any explanation, the software programme Word Frequency 2 was used to analyse and calculate the frequency of the words used in the answers.

### 1. What are Students' Experiences of Their Existing Online Videoconferencing Classes?

For question 4 (Table 1) in the survey, students were asked to rate their online learning experience using videoconferencing software. 73.1% ( $n=49$ ) of Japanese students answered that they felt their online learning experience was either 'fantastic' or 'good'. Ukrainian students were also enthusiastic but less so; 61.9% ( $n=38$ ) described their online learning experience as positive. When comparing students who felt that online learning was 'OK', 38.1% ( $n=23$ ) of Ukrainian respondents chose this option, compared with only 19.3% ( $n=13$ ) of Japanese students. Finally, 7.7% ( $n=5$ ) of Japanese students expressed dissatisfaction with online learning, while in comparison, no Ukrainian students provided a negative reaction.

**TABLE 1. Opinion of Learning through Videoconferencing**

Q4: Rate your online learning experience using videoconferencing software.			
ANSWER	JAPAN ( $n=67$ )	UKRAINE ( $n=61$ )	TOTAL ( $n=128$ )
Fantastic	34.6% ( $n=23$ )	14.3% ( $n=9$ )	25% ( $n=32$ )
Good	38.5% ( $n=26$ )	47.6% ( $n=29$ )	43% ( $n=55$ )
OK	19.2% ( $n=13$ )	38.1% ( $n=23$ )	28.1% ( $n=36$ )
Not Enjoyable	7.7% ( $n=5$ )	0%	3.9% ( $n=5$ )
Awful	0% ( $n=0$ )	0%	0% ( $n=0$ )

Clearly, a majority of students are positive about learning via videoconferencing, a good sign for a potential HyFlex course, which would have this option as a major component. However, it should be noted that in this case the students were all online at the same time, and a HyFlex course may involve some loss of group cohesion when some students are physically in a classroom and some are online.

### 2. What are Students' Opinions on the Best Balance between Classroom Learning and Videoconferencing Learning?

Survey question 5 (Table 2) offered students from both countries a varied choice of course blends, ranging from totally face-to-face traditional classroom format to 100% online utilising videoconferencing software. The answers from this question also showed a greater division regarding opinions between Japan and Ukraine. The first option of completely face-to-face and in-person showed the closest similarity between the two student groups; 3.8% ( $n=2$ ) of Japanese students' respondents and 4.8% ( $n=3$ ) of Ukrainian students preferred this option for their language-learning courses. The next choice of 75% classroom / 25% online learning was also more favoured by Ukrainian students, 14.3% ( $n=9$ ) compared to just over half of that figure in Japan (7.7% [ $n=5$ ]). When offered the choice between 25% classroom / 75% online, again the Ukrainian

students expressed more favourability than their Japanese counterparts. 33.3% ( $n=20$ ) of Ukrainian students selected this, whereas only 8% ( $n=6$ ) of Japanese students did. Finally, the last option showed the greatest disparity between the two countries. When offered ‘100% online’ as an option, only 14.3% ( $n=9$ ) of Ukrainian students selected this choice. In comparison, a sizeable majority of Japanese students, 60.6% ( $n=41$ ), expressed a favourability towards participating in classes conducted 100% online and using videoconferencing software.

**TABLE 2. Preferred Balance between Videoconferencing and the Classroom**

Q5: Which is your preference for permanent English language learning class? (For example, in a 16-week course semester; 75% classroom = 12 classes where you attend in person & 25% online = 4 classes attend online via a computer)			
Classroom / Online	JAPAN ( $n=67$ )	UKRAINE ( $n=61$ )	TOTAL ( $n=128$ )
100% Classroom	3.8% ( $n=2$ )	4.8% ( $n=3$ )	3.9% ( $n=5$ )
75%-25%	7.7% ( $n=5$ )	14.3% ( $n=9$ )	10.9% ( $n=14$ )
50%-50%	19.3% ( $n=13$ )	33.3% ( $n=20$ )	25.7% ( $n=33$ )
25%-75%	8.7% ( $n=6$ )	33.3 ( $n=20$ )	20.3% ( $n=26$ )
100% Online	60.5% ( $n=41$ )	14.3% ( $n=9$ )	39.2% ( $n=50$ )

While this question does not address the full optionality of the HyFlex model, the results reveal that very few students show a preference for a completely classroom-based course, and there is clearly a desire for online engagement in both countries. The desire by so many students in the Japanese group for fully online learning is an important statistic, which could be explored further. Even in the Ukrainian group the distribution is weighted more towards online rather than classroom learning, which raises questions concerning students’ desire for a return to traditional classrooms.

### 3. What are Students’ Views on Possible Future HyFlex Courses?

Question 6 (Table 3) focused on students’ reaction to the potential implementation of a HyFlex learning model as a template for their courses. This question was, the authors accept, a hypothetical one for the students because the courses in both Japan and Ukraine had not been taught using the HyFlex model. However, it is important to evaluate students’ attitudes towards the model and consider what student concerns need to be addressed if the model is to be implemented. For example, an impediment to the switch to online learning by many educational institutions during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 was the lack of preparation time for such a monumental change in the learning process. In more stable times, a more planned and staged approach to change would clearly be preferable. By asking students to reflect on their opinions before such a model is implemented, we hope to gain some insight that could provide the basis for wider research.

Question 6 asked the respondents the following question: A HyFlex class is when some students join the class live online (via a computer / mobile device), some attend in person in a classroom, and others watch a recording of the class later. In the future, would this style of class be OK with you?



Both the Japanese and Ukrainian students were overwhelmingly in favour of such a learning model. The student responses from both countries were very similar: In Japan 69.2% ( $n=47$ ) answered they would be in favour of participating in such a model, whilst in comparison 71.4% ( $n=43$ ) of Ukrainian students responded favourably. There was a small difference between Japan and Ukraine of those students who replied ‘no’ to the question. In the Ukrainian case, only 14.3% ( $n=9$ ) did not want to participate in such a learning model, whilst in Japan the figure was 23.1% ( $n=15$ ).

When the students were asked in an open question to expand on their reasons for their responses (Table 4), there was also an overlap in the explanations provided. In Japan, the most written response, with 30% ( $n=14$ ), was to extoll the idea of freedom of access to the class and the allowance that this could provide for the pace of learning that would best suit the individual student. This was followed by ‘convenience’ with 18% ( $n=8$ ). The ability to re-watch the class in a student’s own time had 15% ( $n=7$ ), and the opportunity to join the class from different locations recorded 14% ( $n=6$ ). In comparison, the Ukrainian students responded that ‘convenience’ with 34% ( $n=15$ ) was highest, followed by the ability to combine study and work with 24% ( $n=10$ ), and ‘flexibility’ with 14% ( $n=7$ ). Additionally, Ukrainian students highlighted that the appeal of HyFlex included the newness of the model and the potential in reduction of commuting time.

The reasons provided by students who expressed negative responses to the use of a HyFlex learning model were also similar in both countries. In Ukraine, the overwhelmingly most popular response was ‘traditional learning is better’ with 55.5% ( $n=5$ ). This was followed by two responses given similar weight, ‘face-to-face learning’ and ‘difficult to use’, both 22% ( $n=2$ ). The Japanese students also placed emphasis on face-to-face learning and preference for a traditional classroom-based format. The former received 29% ( $n=4$ ) and the latter 20% ( $n=3$ ). However, the most popular response amongst Japanese students for their opposition towards using a HyFlex model was ‘technical problems’; 30% ( $n=14$ ) explained that this was their biggest concern.

**TABLE 3. Opinion on Possible Future HyFlex Courses**

Q6: HyFlex class is when some students join the class live online (via a computer / mobile device), some attend in person in a classroom, and others watch a recording of the class later. In the future, would this style of class be OK with you?			
Classroom / Online	JAPAN ( $n=67$ )	UKRAINE ( $n=61$ )	TOTAL ( $n=128$ )
Yes	69.2% ( $n=47$ )	71.4% ( $n=43$ )	70.3% ( $n=90$ )
No	23.1% ( $n=15$ )	14.3% ( $n=9$ )	18.7% ( $n=24$ )
Don’t Know	7.7% ( $n=5$ )	14.3% ( $n=9$ )	11% ( $n=14$ )

**TABLE 4. Qualitative Responses about Future HyFlex Courses**

Q6A: Give explanation to your answer for Question 6. [UKRAINE]	
If 'yes', why? [Most repeated answers] (n=43)	
34% (n=15)	Convenience
24% (n=10)	Can combine studying work (full-time or part-time)
14% (n=7)	Flexible
9% (n=4)	Interesting / Something different
6% (n=2)	Less commuting time
13% (n=5)	Other
If 'no', why? [Most repeated answers] (n=9)	
55.5% (n=5)	Traditional learning is better
22% (n=2)	Face-to-face learning is easier
22% (n=2)	Difficult for me to use
0.5% (n=1)	Other

Q6A: Give explanation to your answer for Question 6. [JAPAN]	
If 'yes', why? [Most repeated answers] (n=47)	
30% (n=14)	Freedom how to study / at my own pace
18% (n=8)	Convenience
15% (n=7)	Re-watch recorded classes later
14% (n=6)	Can join class from different locations
23% (n=0)	Other
If 'no', why? [Most repeated answers] (n=15)	
46% (n=7)	Avoid technical problems
29% (n=4)	Don't meet classmates
20% (n=3)	Traditional is fair for everyone
5% (n=1)	Other

## IMPLICATIONS

A number of implications emerge from this small-scale study. A large majority of participants enjoyed taking their classes through videoconferencing. When asked to state their preferences for courses combining both face-to-face classes and videoconferencing, surprisingly, 60 percent of the Japanese participants expressed a preference for 100 percent videoconferencing. Although this is only a small-scale study, it is a result that needs further investigation. The implication from the data is that the Japanese students prefer their language writing classes to be online. In the Japanese case, most language teachers had been teaching since the start of the pandemic, and this may have affected the result, so that learning with an instructor experienced in teaching through videoconferencing was seen very positively. With the Ukrainian participants, there was

clearly a desire to have a combination of face-to face classes and videoconferencing classes with a majority favouring 50 percent or more classes being conducted through videoconferencing. It should be noted that in these cases students were commenting based on their experiences of a teacher or institution making the decision on whether to teach online or in a classroom. However, the data imply that, for the students in the study, the desire is for, at minimum, a hybrid approach to language courses rather than a return to traditional classroom-only courses.

The key aspect of HyFlex is that it allows the students to choose how they study. The results of the survey show that the majority of participants would in principle be OK with HyFlex. However, it is also worth noting that in the Japanese case, almost a quarter of the students were opposed to a HyFlex course, compared to one in seven for the Ukrainian group, and this indicates that care needs to be taken to ensure that students are comfortable with the new approach. If HyFlex is to be successful, it may need to be done through a set of stages that allow students and teachers to become familiar with the problems of the model and to solve them over time. It should also be noted that the courses taught by the authors focused mainly on written language, which may be better suited to the self-study aspect of HyFlex.

## CONCLUSION

This article has explored student attitudes towards online learning that they have experienced, and it has investigated student responses to the hypothetical situation of future HyFlex courses. With the hypothetical situation for HyFlex, the authors accept the limitations that this imposes on the findings in the research. What may seem attractive in foresight, in this case a language learning course based upon a HyFlex learning model, may well be regarded far less positively in hindsight after a semester of implementation. However, as Beatty (2020), one of the key architects of the HyFlex learning model, observes, “A well-designed HyFlex class, with effective alternative participation modes that all lead to the same learning outcomes, can provide meaningful learning opportunities for all students”. A HyFlex model could reduce barriers to enrolment and enable more students to achieve their educational goals, but it must provide equitable access to course content and learning engagement.

The results detailed in this research are the initial findings of what, it is hoped, will be a longer-term study that includes a wider variety of participants. These preliminary findings do offer encouragement for proponents of a HyFlex learning model. In both Ukraine and Japan, around 70% of the students were open to participating in such a learning model. Perhaps more importantly, when asked to provide a broader explanation as to their views, ‘convenience’ was one of the most popular answers given. For educators, providing learners with convenient and flexible learning models would appear to be a sensible goal. With the COVID-19 pandemic still not over as 2021 reaches its end, further exploration of the potential positives and negatives of such a learning model is needed.

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## APPENDIX. Japanese Version of Questionnaire

<p>What type of computer do you use for online class? *</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Laptop</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Desktop</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Tablet</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Smartphone</p> <hr/> <p>What is your computer software operating system? *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Apple</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Linux</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Microsoft</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Other</p> <hr/> <p>Rate your online class experience? *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Fantastic</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Good</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> OK</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Not enjoyable</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Awful</p>	<p>If Fantastic / Good - say why?</p> <p>Your answer _____</p> <hr/> <p>If OK - say why?</p> <p>Your answer _____</p> <hr/> <p>If Not enjoyable / Awful - say why?</p> <p>Your answer _____</p> <hr/> <p>Which is your preference for permanent English language learning class? (For example: in a 16 week course semester. 75% classroom = 12 classes where you attend in person &amp; 25% online = 4 classes attend online via a computer). 英語学習用の常設クラスとして、どちらを希望しますか？ 例：16週のコースセメスターの場合、クラスルーム75%＝対面での受講が12クラス、オンライン25%＝パソコンを使ったオンラインでの受講が4クラス。 *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 100% traditional classroom</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 75% classroom / 25% online classes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 50% classroom / 50% online classes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 75% online classes / 25% traditional classes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 100% online classes</p>
<p>A HyFlex class is when some students join the class live online (via a computer / mobile-device), some attend in person in a classroom, and others watch a recording of the class later. In the future, would this style of class be OK with you? HyFlexクラスとは、ある人はオンライン（パソコン／携帯端末）でライブ参加し、ある人は教室で直接参加し、ある人は後で授業の録画を見るというものです。 *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Don't Know</p> <hr/> <p>If yes - why?</p> <p>Your answer _____</p> <hr/> <p>If no - why?</p> <p>Your answer _____</p> <hr/> <p>If don't know - why?</p> <p>Your answer _____</p>	<p>What is better about learning English online? *</p> <p>Your answer _____</p> <hr/> <p>What is worse about learning English online? *</p> <p>Your answer _____</p> <hr/> <p>What have online classes taught you about yourself?</p> <p>Your answer _____</p> <hr/> <p>What is your gender? *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Female</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Male</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say</p>
<p>What is your favourite English word? *</p> <p>Your answer _____</p>	

## ABSTRACT

### **Students' Perceptions of the Hyflex Learning Model from Ukraine and Japan: A Realistic Future for University Language Learning?**

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New developments in technology have challenged educators and educational institutions to implement changes that will continue to improve the delivery of language learning classes to their learners. Although traditional face-to-face modes of delivery still dominate the language-learning process, new ways to deliver content within a course structure are constantly being investigated. Since the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century one learning template that has gained traction as providing the potential for an innovative and flexible approach is the HyFlex learning model. This format allows learners and instructors to choose how they participate in a course, either synchronously or asynchronously. The HyFlex learning model creates a learning template where students who cannot attend face-to-face or scheduled classes, can still participate fully in the course, including interaction with their peers. Additionally, with the enduring effects of a global pandemic still having far reaching and long-term effects on the educational process, this study aimed to explore student attitudes towards language learning with a particular focus on the HyFlex learning model. The research presented is based upon initial findings from two universities, one in Hiroshima, Japan and the other in Kyiv, Ukraine. The survey found that students in both countries were open to participation in a HyFlex learning model.

## 要 約

### ウクライナと日本の「Hyflex Learning Model」に対する学生の認識。 大学での言語学習に現実的な未来はあるのか？

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テクノロジーの新たな発展により、教育者や教育機関は、言語学習クラスが学習者にどのように提供されるかを改善する機会を常に得ています。この10年で、革新的でより柔軟なオンライン／トラディショナルな学習環境が生まれました。Hyflex learning と呼ばれるこのモデルでは、各生徒がクラスへの参加方法を、同期または非同期のいずれかを選択することができます。新型コロナウイルス感染症の世界的な大流行による教育への影響がいまだに続いている中、本研究では、特に Hyflex 学習モデルに焦点を当てて、オンライン学習に対する学生の態度を探ることを目的としています。今回の研究は、日本の広島とウクライナのキエフにある2つの大学で行われた調査結果に基づいています。調査の結果、両国の学生は Hyflex 学習モデルへの参加に肯定的な態度を示しました。