

Activating Educational Technology and Smart Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

**تفعيل تكنولوجيا التعليم
وبيئات التعلم والتعليم الذكية
في مرحلة التعليم الجامعي**

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Introduction

It is well-known in academia that technology has a great impact on learning especially in higher education institutions. The idea that technology improves the whole learning process and the quality of learning environment in higher education is widely accepted, however, its implementation is still limited and blurred by traditional methods of teaching which are biased to face-to-face teaching due to the lack of required resources and proper environment.

Within this framework, and following its experience of e-learning during the Covid-19 pandemic all through the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021, the Department of English at the Faculty of Arts, University of Tripoli, intends to hold its first academic conference which would focus on the application of the concepts of educational technology and on methods of e-learning at the university level to keep pace with the educational process in the regional and international universities.

We aspire that this conference would identify the problems and offer the solutions that would bridge the gap between the different methods and technologies of e-learning at the university by forming a scientific community involving scholars from different fields of knowledge to work on the following two issues:

- To what extent can “e-learning,” as a teaching strategy in higher education, be adopted as a decision not an option?
- Can “blended education,” which mixes the traditional and the electronic, be the solution for all the specialties of the university to keep pace with the requirements and challenges and ensure the continuity of the study and the quality of its outputs regardless of the hindrances and obstacles?

In answering the two previous questions, we hope to reach the most important objective of the conference; which is activating the e-learning system in higher education to improve all the components of the educational process, benefit from educational technology and its strengths, address the weaknesses that impede the progress of the educational process, and pave the way for the latter to meet the local and international quality standards.



Objectives of the Conference:

- Consolidating and disseminating the e-learning culture.
- Enhancing confidence in e-learning outputs by highlighting the importance of using educational technology in higher education to improve the learners' performance.
- Strengthening scientific cooperation between scholars interested in issues of educational technology, e-learning, and blended learning, in order to build effective partnerships between the University of Tripoli and the relevant authorities related to technology, information and communication to provide smart learning and teaching environments.
- Pinpointing the experiences of other universities in employing educational technology methods in different disciplines from the undergraduate and higher levels in order to come up with a clear vision that establishes a central entity for e-learning in higher education institutions represented by technical cadres in each scientific department to ensure the availability and continuity of smart learning and education environments.
- Identifying the international, Arab, and local experiences in e-learning that would be of much help in establishing a local program benefiting from previous experiences.

Conference Tracks:

- Teaching and learning technology: intellectual approaches and practical applications.
- The psychological, physiological, and social effects of e-learning on student and faculty.
- E-learning: Teaching and assessment strategies.
- E-learning: Content creation and methods of availability
- Fee or Free: Online Learning Policies and regulations.

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Keynote Lecture

The Digital Education: Does Technology Alone Suffice?

■ Prof. Mohsen HAML I

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The phenomenon of digital education is a fantastic one, a sudden thunderstorm, as one chose to portray it. Fantastic when you see a teacher, as I did in 2008 in Geneva, monitoring a test sent to his students in one of the American higher institutions. It was a miraculous occurrence for the non-tech savvy me at that time. Digital education, as you know, requires a digital literacy on the part of students and teachers alike.

E-Learning

E-Learning, which grew as an alternative to offline or traditional face-to-face classroom learning, is also called online learning, remote learning, virtual learning, mobile learning, digital learning, or distance education with slight differences of course. It relies on the internet and other technologies such as closed circuits, cables, broadband lines, satellites, and audio-video conferencing, to mention only these. Almost all taught programmes and degrees (BAs, MAs, and PhDs) involve online or hybrid or blended courses and use specially-created applications, such as Canvas, to manage their online courses (teaching, control, assessment, and so forth). Most universities in the west have designed their own e-learning applications connecting instructors and students. Such applications allow the students to view course materials, participate in discussions, submit assignments, and know their grades.

Hybrid, Blended, and Flipped Courses

But the classroom environment has not come to a dead-end yet. The student



does not need to come to the campus as some online courses are designated on the class schedule, yet assignments and proctored exams are taken offline, that is in the traditional way. These are called blended courses. Hybrid and blended are often used interchangeably, though they are not identical. In a hybrid course, students “can choose to physically attend the classes partly or completely or follow them on screen from any location also partly or completely” (Karin Oost, 2021). Blended learning, on the other hand, is fully online and fully physical; there is no compromise on the face-to-face presence in class. Flipped learning is a blended course in which students are assigned lecture materials and presentations to be viewed at home (Jason A. Smart, 2010). Apart from online courses, done in various forms, some classes require labs, field trips, and other activities that a computer cannot offer. And though the student is sometimes given the choice to take an exam from a distance, it is a risky option as an unexpected internet cut or restriction may bring about a failure in the exam.

Class Attendance

Class attendance is essential whether the course is online, offline, or blended. Attendance in online classes means logging on to the course on the first day of class, participating in discussions, submitting assignments, and having reliable technology (computer or mobile device) and Internet connection. Failing to log in may drive the instructor to withdraw the student from the class.

The Teacher’s Role: “Sage on the Stage” or “Guide on the Side”

It is important to notice that the digital teaching or learning process has not yet discussed the role of the teachers in this rising technology in higher education. The teacher is no longer “the sage on the stage,” as it were, but rather “the guide on the side (Guri-Rosenblit, 2018).” But teachers lack a digital literacy and a well-designed training. As “little attention [is] paid to the crucial role of teachers in online settings,” the adoption of the online technology in higher education is so far “restricted and moderate” (Guri-Rosenblit, 2018).

Giving e-learning the precedence over e-teaching is considered a wrong procedure. E-teaching must be the prerequisite for e-learning and the teacher

must never be left “on the side.” In an online setting, the role of the teacher is of course different from the traditional role in a classroom environment. But teachers do not possess enough digital literacy and have to be equipped with the adequate tools (S. Wineburg et al., 2016).

Students’ experience with internet and social media does not mean that they are savvy in the use of technology related to e-learning let alone evaluating information encountered on social media sources. Studies show that most of them are unwilling to cultivate a mastery of digital skills and study through the electronic media. It is believed that as access to information is one thing and knowledge construction is another, students still need guidance or tutoring to construct knowledge. As the assistance of an expert is thus essential, e-teaching must be given an equal focus to manage e-learning appropriately (Andrade, 2015).

As self-study in the now growing world of digital education is the students’ major obstacle, a digital literacy for teachers is therefore recommended. Professors find themselves facing a long list of responsibilities in this new learning pattern ranging from (1) providing syllabi, instructional resources, communication tools, and learning strategies; to (2) monitoring and assessing learning and grades; to (3) identifying and resolving instructional, interpersonal, and technical problems; and to (4) creating “a learning community in which learners feel safe and connected.” Digital literacy for teachers means, in short, the “ability to navigate, critically evaluate, and make sense of the wealth of information available through digital technologies” (Guri-Rosenblit, 2018).

Universities not investing enough in the digital literacy of their academic faculty may find themselves bypassed by the world’s new teaching trend and their students almost on the margins. Digital literacy itself will continue to advance as technology develops.

Reluctant Academics

But academics are not all on the same line of thought when it comes to online teaching. Online applications at universities are seen used just add-on functions (additions) to classroom teaching. The academic reasons for this reluctance are: (1) the feeling that the traditional role of the professor/



academic is challenged; the professor's course is kind of seen slipping from among his fingers and relegated to administrative professionals to send to students online; for a course to be taught online, academics are henceforth required to collaborate with instructional designers, computer experts, graphic personnel, and editors; (2) teaching online is time-consuming; more time, more "academic sweat," has to be devoted to the preparation of an online course than that required for a face-to-face classroom; online teaching is deemed a "stressor" that leads to "burnout symptoms" (Guri-Rosenblit, 2018); (3) the feeling that they are technologically less competent than their students; a lack of confidence that affects the teaching process; (4) intellectual property; the feeling that they are losing their property rights over courses involving original ideas.

Academics will certainly have to join forces with the technology experts, graphic designers, and editors to prepare online courses. But universities have to lower their teaching load and offer to guarantee their property rights.

Does Technology Alone Suffice?

A lot of research has been done on this subject to insist that technology alone is not enough to guarantee a successful education. Technology is a means to an end, not the end itself. It is not correct to assume that more technology is better. The teaching environment, the teacher's competence, and the nature of the teaching material are also basic factors contributing to learning. And not everything can be taught with the help of technology. Presentation and teaching being two different things, not everything requires technology to be taught. Moving from the slides to the board is sometimes a blessing to the learner. A teacher working his way through a problem on the blackboard or whiteboard in front of his students is a very effective experience.

Very seducing is the apparent comfort technology offers, but in reality it is not so simple. Technology has either to equate good teaching or not getting involved in it at all. As students are expecting some form of technology to be used in class, it is fundamental to carefully consider what effective technology to use. Sometimes a talk or a presentation without slides, without technology, could lure the audience and be the best ever attended.

As far as this conference is concerned, 11 participants discuss e-learning intellectual approaches and the obstacles faced when teaching some form of online or blended course during Covid-19 pandemic, 7 focus on the psychological and social effects of e-learning on students and faculty, 7 present the various online teaching and assessment strategies, and 9 devote their papers to content creation. Four out of the five conference tracks are thus well covered.

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There is only one paper debating “Online Learning Policies and Regulations,” which is the conference last track. There is, of course, some form of regulation in this country concerning distance or blended learning. And there are references to this experience cited here and there occasionally in some of the papers. It is interesting to admit that the regulations in question highlight, among other things, the importance of reporting on student attendance and participation in the courses; not only logging into an online class, but demonstrating participation and contribution to an online discussion. The institution has also to verify the student identification: that it is the same person who registers for the course and completes it. This is guaranteed when the student is offered an individual secure password and asked to take a proctored exam (taken, that is, from a remote location).

Needless to insist that the online learning policies touch the faculty members and their copyright material. This means that the institution must apply measures to protect the teachers’ intellectual material against unauthorized access.



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I

**Teaching and Learning
Technology:**

**Intellectual Approaches
and Practical Applications**

Virtual Teaching at Libyan Universities in the Time of Covid-19

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Abstract

During the Pandemic, when mostly everything in the world went locked, it was a critical time for many groups of people to leave their jobs. Among those groups were teachers and students of schools and universities. In many parts of the world, the solution was to use the Internet for teaching through some applications as Zoom, Google Meet, Telegram and others. Countries like Libya had then some problems with this kind of applications as they depend on the continuous availability of the Internet service and electric power. Actually, the problem was not limited to these two elements but there were also other factors like the unavailability of PCs and laptops at hand and of course lack of the necessary knowledge for using them, and the lack of knowledge for using the applications. Using these applications saves time and effort for both teachers and students. Benefits of using these techniques are that they are easily accessible, and they are very effective. Virtual classes can be organized at any time. The materials to be studied can be sent to the students through emails. Both students and their teachers can save effort and no need to travel and then no need to carry a lot of materials with them. On the other hand, there are some difficulties and problems for using those applications, like: poor network, stoppage of the internet service at unexpected time intervals especially in some parts of the world like Libya. Due to the absence of technical training, students and teachers may not

have the necessary knowledge of using those applications effectively. Some students may not suffer the feeling of shyness when they participate in online classes. Students can learn attentively in virtual classes. It may happen that the instructors cannot control their virtual classes as same as in face-to-face classes. As a part of teaching and learning activity, teachers may like to assign some tasks that can be sent back to them for assessment. They can benefit from other applications as Google Classroom in which the students can send their papers and tasks to the teacher. The Libyan experience during the Pandemic necessitates having continuous training programs for using these techniques for both teachers and students.



الملخص

خلال فترة الجائحة، عندما تم إغلاق كل شيء في العالم، كان الوقت حرجًا لمجموعات كثيرة من الناس لترك وظائفهم. وكان من بين تلك المجموعات مدرسو وطلاب المدارس والجامعات. في أجزاء كثيرة من العالم، كان الحل هو استخدام الإنترنت للتدريس من خلال بعض التطبيقات مثل زوم Zoom و جوجل ميت Google Meet و تلجرام Telegram، وغيرها. واجهت دول، مثل ليبيا، بعد ذلك بعض المشكلات مع هذا النوع من التطبيقات لأنها تعتمد على التوافر المستمر لخدمة الإنترنت والطاقة الكهربائية.

في الواقع، لم تقتصر المشكلة على هذين العنصرين ولكن كانت هناك أيضًا عوامل أخرى مثل عدم توفر أجهزة الحاسوب الشخصية وأجهزة الحاسوب المحمولة (اللاب توب) في متناول اليد وبالطبع نقص المعرفة اللازمة لاستخدامها بفاعلية، ونقص المعرفة لاستخدام التطبيقات. توفر هذه التطبيقات الوقت والجهد لكل من المعلمين والطلاب. خلاف ذلك، فقد خضعوا لاستراحة طويلة. فوائد استخدام هذه التقنيات هي: سهولة الوصول إليها، كما أنها فعالة للغاية. يمكن تنظيم الفصول الافتراضية في أي وقت. كما يمكن إرسال المواد المراد دراستها إلى الطلاب عبر البريد الإلكتروني. يمكن لكل من الطلاب ومعلميهم توفير الجهد وعدم الحاجة إلى السفر ومن ثم عدم الحاجة إلى حمل الكثير من المواد. من ناحية أخرى، هناك بعض الصعوبات والمشكلات لاستخدام تلك التطبيقات، مثل: ضعف الشبكة، توقف خدمة الإنترنت في فترات زمنية غير متوقعة. نظرًا لغياب التدريب الفني، قد لا يكون لدى الطلاب والمعلمين



المعرفة اللازمة لاستخدام هذه التطبيقات. قد لا يعاني بعض الطلاب من الشعور بالخجل عند مشاركتهم في دروس عبر الإنترنت. يمكن للطلاب التعلم باهتمام في الفصول الافتراضية. قد يحدث أن المدرسين لا يستطيعون التحكم في فصولهم الافتراضية كما هو الحال في الفصول الدراسية وجهاً لوجه. وكجزء من نشاط التدريس والتعلم، قد يرغب المعلمون في تعيين بعض المهام التي يمكن إرسالها إليهم للتقييم. يمكنهم الاستفادة من التطبيقات الأخرى مثل Google Classroom حيث يمكن للطلاب إرسال أوراقهم ومهامهم إلى المعلم. تتطلب التجربة الليبية أثناء الجائحة وجود برامج تدريب مستمرة لاستخدام هذه التقنيات لكل من المعلمين والطلاب.

1. Introduction

Since the mid of March 2020, and by the force of the decision of the Ministry of Higher Education. Then, most activities around the world have stopped including the final test of Fall 2021/2022.

How the different parts and countries of the world responded to crisis took different forms: advanced states, they shifted to e-learning and they managed to continue lessons through the different available tools such as Zoom, Meet, etc. On the other hand, including Libya, everything has gone to rest waiting for the eradication of Covid.

The point was that as universities in the world have to play a different role in the pandemic, this role was mostly absent in the 3rd World.

“In 2020, individuals, businesses and higher education institutions across the world experienced one of the most difficult, uncertain and unstable periods since World War Two” (Fumasoli, 2022). She says that the situation in 2020 after the pandemic was similar to the situation after World War Two. It was uncertain and unstable.

In fact, the leaders of the universities in the world acted differently according to the capabilities and facilities available for them. For this reason, the reaction in weak countries like Libya was useless and with no positive action. The students stopped coming to their classes for long months. So, their school years start and end at different times which are scheduled. The pandemic uncovered that our countries cannot face such a crisis. In other regions of the world, universities lead a major role against Covid-19.

2. Consequences of Corona on the World

Till now, the world is still destabilized in the field of education except in some parts like Europe and USA. Countries like Libya still suffer the consequences of the pandemic. The academic year is still not stabilized. Dates of the educational process have been changed a lot. Some universities were engaged doing final exams in the month of August, 2022 which was always considered the month of summer vacation for the academic staffs of universities and of course the students. The “leaders of higher education institutions, policy-makers and other stakeholders to reflect on them and to be better prepared to address them” (Mohamedbhai, 2020).

Most of Libyan and Arabic universities had no other way except to cease the process of education in general, as a part of the general measure taken against Corona currently and in the last two years (Mohamedbhai, 2020).

3. What did Corona do and how it Affected the World?

Corona has given good opportunities to different countries to enhance their education digitally and to digitalize their resources in order to be more ready for future online learning and teaching (The European University Association, 2020).

Impacts of Covid-19 on Online Learning

The pandemic has affected the world negatively in all fields of life. One of the biggest fields is education in all its categories. Schools and universities closed or locked and millions of students stayed at home. «According to the World Economic Forum, more than 1.2 billion children in 186 countries have been affected by school closures due to the pandemic» (University of Central Florida, 2022).

4. Situation in African Universities

Different situations were there in Africa during the pandemic. For governments, they had no other option except to lock down all educational institutions and to use the Information and communication technology (ICT) and make to communication with students easy and to provide them with the necessary services.

In fact, there are many problems that encounter the new situation of the pandemic, but it can be a good step for the future. Universities can prepare for having their own lectures and other teaching operations available on the



Internet. This needs a lot of work that may take some time and technical effort provided that the necessary equipment and materials are also available.

It seems that our universities have not heard of open sources provided by some international organisations and universities. These resources may not cost anything except downloading them. There could be only the issue of language in which these materials are given in.

The other problem is that these programs executed by some universities are limited to some courses and they may be limited to some members of their staffs.

In fact, the gap is too much large between us and the advanced world. In Libya, only few universities that were able to have some programs to work and have lectures during the pandemic, e.g. Zawia University.

The researcher thinks that there were some psychological issues for changing from face-to-face teaching to online teaching. When you teach directly, you feel the warmth and naturality of that relationship between the teacher and his/her students.

The pandemic has given a good lesson for all, it is that you have to prepare for converting to a new era of teaching and learning, and that you have to prepare yourself technically for that.

It seems that the easiest thing to start with is to prepare some slides on Microsoft PowerPoint for presenting the main points of a lecture. There could be some pictures and tables that help explaining the material. Actually, some students think that the content of that presentation is an alternative for that in their book.

5. Recent Situation in Libyan Universities

Covid-19 has uncovered the real situation of many developing or underdeveloped countries including Libya that have no real preparation or the necessary background for unplanned emergencies like Covid-19 that let no one rethink of what to do for the new situation. In fact, this situation will continue for years even after the end of this pandemic.

The world may find itself once more urged to take similar procedures against any hazardous situation.

The pandemic has affected many sectors in the world, but it seems that

the worst effects took place in the field of education in general. Millions of students stayed at home for long interval of time doing nothing. They stopped having lessons or lectures, meeting their teachers or even having any academic activities or any actions related to their educational activities.

The education sector in some countries has started losing the amount of trust given by the public sectors along with bad consequences.

Libya was forced to close its schools and universities since the mid of March 2020 for some months. Later, different starts and ends took place which reflect the bad situation of the institutions. The big lockdown was to avoid having the pandemic spread and positive cases among the members of the whole society.

Here, I will give an example of Al-Asmariya Islamic University where I work. It never happened that we, the teaching staff, at the Faculty of Arts in Al-Asmariya University or in other faculties that we have to work for preparing any electronic material for teaching. The whole issue needs some real special training on how to use computer, how to use Google, how to use YouTube, how to use Microsoft Word, and how to use Microsoft PowerPoint.

Later, you have to have some training on how to use Zoom, Google Meet, or Telegram, etc. for having meetings with your group of colleagues and students.

In fact, different free resources are available at the Internet websites. You need only to decide on what you want to download and what to share with your audience.

In fact, there were no real training programs for the staff. It is your own responsibility to acquire and develop your skills.

It happened that through years ago, I had some chances to learn some applications. Actually, this year, I had a good chance to apply my knowledge of using some application, like Zoom, Meet and Telegram to communicate with remote classes. It may need to pay some fees for some of them so that it can be used with a large number of students.

6. The Effect of the Pandemic on Academic Affairs

The pandemic has taken different demonstrations. The most effective was the decisions and bulletins taken by the Ministry of Education (49.9%)



which took different forms like suspending study for many times, forbidding activities and gatherings in educational institutions. Actually, the ministry had no clear strategy towards the pandemic. In total, things were not clear for the ministry, as well as for academic staff which made the situation very bad. In the second rank was anxiety of the spread of infection and pandemic (i.e. 27.4%). The situation was unstable in Libya long with the weakness of readiness and the inability to fight the pandemic (Busnina, and AlBazzar).

7. Training

The word is easy to say or to write but to make reality is somehow difficult. It needs a great will to change and to make something different. It also needs much continuous work and cooperation. It needs a real leadership that can make change. Decisions are not enough. Work is enough. Sometime, there are no training staffs available at the institution, but then a small decision can be made qualifications.

The problem here is that not all students and even some teachers have the same services of computer and Internet as well as the qualifications needed for that. That will make some problems among the target audience.

Although, this was the situation, the researcher will not be too much optimal to expect having better services in the near future.

8. Teacher Training in the time of Corona

The researcher thinks that many students have no good connection to any Internet provider due to different reasons, and even some of them may not have their own laptops. Some of them belong to poor families that cannot afford paying for their sons and daughters who are students. It is necessary to possess this type of service. However, the only fact is that the students and their universities were not able to compensate for their face-to-face lectures and lessons (Amnesty).

9. Preparation of Trainers and Lecturers for Working Online

One of the main problems that may face local universities in the time of crisis is that they need to work ideally. The work is to be planned to be achieved in three ways:

1. The technicians have to prepare the material part ready. This includes computers, communications, etc.

2. The educational part: The lecturers and teachers who an essential part of the process and they have to be trained so that they present the material in a way that enables the students have the same amount of exposure.
3. The designers of how to present the lectures

10. Teacher Training in the Time of Coronavirus: An Experience from Central Asia

In the shade of the crisis, the whole world found itself enforced to work actively to overcome that urgent situation. So, being engaged in online education, training of teachers and lecturers. “Educators worldwide have been forced to actively adopt new remote learning formats” (Amnesty, 2021). They have to work according to different standards and formats. They work under pressure so they can prepare the required material in a short time with a lot of effort. The point is that the world had had to prepare materials online that are enough to replace face-to-face trainings, lessons and lectures.

Anyhow, the matter is not that you prepare the necessary material for teaching and training, but the main question is that what level of quality is presented in that material (Ibid, 2021). For both school students and university students, the loss was great for that they have been forced to leave their schools and universities and stayed at home without being able to have any type of learning online.

11. Some Merits of Online Teaching

Online teaching differs from face-to-face teaching in that:

1. It saves time for both the teacher and students.
2. The teacher can make the lesson directly available on his own site so that the students can check it at their own suitable times.
3. The teacher can send them the material in the form of files.
4. Students can have access to the material at any time.
5. For exercises, there can be some examples given in the virtual class.
6. Using other facilities on the Internet, it is possible for both teachers and students to send their own messages and feedback through emails and other channels as Messenger, WhatsApp, etc.



All these points and others may not be achieved ideally but the performance can be gradually enhanced.

12. Benefits of Online Learning

The schools and universities of the public sector could have some cooperation in order to manage the situation then, and they can have planned for serious work in the field of making online lessons and lectures with cooperation with each other. They could benefit from the experience available at the members of the private sector if there was.

1. Teachers can learn from each other how to deal with technology for producing webinars of limited time.
2. Students themselves can also benefit knowing how to deal with these products of their school or university. They also can have online meetings with their teachers or colleagues for discussing about their lessons or any other topics.
3. Participants can save their own time when dealing with these electronic classes.

Whatever the experience of the Pandemic through the years 2019 thru 2022 was, it can be said that the world has now some good lessons for all; those who managed to work online directly with no delay and the others who have no previous experience.

My own benefit is that I found myself following some lectures online in 2020, 2021 and 2022. I also had two remote classes from which I attained some direct particular experience (Amnesty, 2021).

13. What can Private Sector Provide to Their Society in the Time of Pandemic

It may take place in the near future that students leave them to private universities where different advanced services can be provided besides online libraries and other modern technological laboratories.

There, the students can acquire different skills along with their specialisations which enable them to work in the market for specific jobs.

Private universities can support and finance research and of course that touches the students directly and reflects on the knowledge and experience, which provide a good amount of the market trust and they can keep themselves

away from unemployment.

Turning to online education enables the students to have larger chances to introduce themselves abroad and to have chances for work in different countries. It is to invest in knowledge.

Countries like Libya has to pay more attention for training and digitalizing education and to spread the culture of using Internet and electronic platforms, specially open sources, for more knowledge and to overcome the problems and troubles concerning getting access to references and books. This can be considered as a positive point for Corona.

14. Importance of Switching to E-learning

The world has started testing E-learning since some decades. Reports are saying that there is an expectation that “the global e-learning market to double, from \$253 billion now to \$522 billion in 2027” (Keiffenheim, 2022).

The researcher thinks that switching to the age of e-learning is not only through words and just long talks about, but it can be achieved through real budgeting and continuous training in labs at universities and training centers.

Now, there are still in the world who have never touched a keyboard and of course, they do not know how to use all related technologies and applications. This includes academics who still depend on traditional way and methods in doing their own jobs like typewriting their exam papers and so on.

Many universities pretend to have signed agreements with international organisations for cooperation but they later withdraw and fail to continue for they do not have the necessary human resources for those programs and agreements.

Of course, this type of learning opens new doors in front of people who do not want to join higher academic institutions, through YouTubes and other applications. Some universities in the world have prepared their courses and installed them on the Internet and they are now freely available users.

Maybe, the unique problem is to break the barrier, or phobia, against using technology. In fact, using this type of learning is an investment in the future. People can learn the skills they want to learn, which can be classified in the category of the *know-how* not in the *know-why*. Many similar TV programs were produced in the late decades of the 20th century.



15. Blended Learning or Face-to-Face and Online Learning

There is also blended learning and teaching where traditional learning and online learning meet together. “Blended learning (a mixture of face-to-face and online learning)” (Mohamedbhai, 2020). In order to increase access and improve learning, hardly any had intentions for their face-to-face delivery to be completely replaced.

16. The Libyan Project for Electronic Learning

The Libyan Project for e-learning was started in 2007 with a cost of more than LD 28m. The project has not been completed till now. After the break out of the pandemic, The Ministry of Education has thought of using the electronic education.

The idea of applying e-education was also proposed by the University of Zawia which made good efforts in this field while other universities kept using the traditional way of teaching and learning.

It was launched in 2009, but it was stopped due to the events of February Revolution in 2011. In 2013, it was reactivated. The project aims at connecting the different institutions of higher education through a software made by Global Education. It also aimed to cover developing the courses and supplying the universities with computers and info systems for students and libraries. Unfortunately, it seems that the project has been stopped for a reason or another (AlMisrati and Mabruk, p. 437, 2020).

17. Recommendations

The crisis of Corona has shown how most of the countries in the world are weak especially those belonging to the developing and underdeveloped countries including Libya. In fact, their educational system is tough and very weak that it cannot withstand any kind of knocking.

Too big losses were recorded and millions of young people have been unemployed in a way or another.

Some of them may rethink of being a student in a very weak educational system. It may cause a lot of dropping out. But the local market has nor real chances for jobs that can rspnd to their needs.

1. Educational institutions have to rethink of the educational systems they follow. They have to pay much attention for training both academic staff and students for online courses.

2. They have to convert lectures and lessons into a digital form with the help of their technicians or other technical corporations.
3. Universities have to make open access to their academic and scholar websites so that students can get an easy access to the sources on the internet.
4. Actually, switching to e-learning cannot be done by just pressing a button, it needs a very well qualified and trained staff for that.
5. Staffs of academics to choose what courses to be available online.
6. And to choose the type of the material to read for the learners.
7. Topics like those in traditional school coursebooks cannot work well for the job.

One of the advantages of e-learning is that it allows people at different ages and wherever they are to learn what they want or need. The world will change soon and the gap between nations and countries will be wider.

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The Obstacles Facing Online Classes at the Department of English of the Faculty of Arts, University of Tripoli

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Abstract

The transition to online learning occurred quickly during the Covid-19 (social distancing policy). During this time, the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Tripoli, has switched to online classes. Telegram application was chosen as a teaching tool for delivering courses related to translation studies and English literature. As both students and lectures are unfamiliar with it, the program ran into a number of obstacles. Therefore, the success of teaching and learning remotely based on the existence of a proper environment devoid of any challenges. The aims of this paper are to investigate the barriers that facing the teachers and undergraduate students in the Department of English, and to list possible procedures that might be used by all institutional stakeholders to alleviate these obstacles. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher, relied on both lecturers and undergraduate students as participants, Data were gathered through online discussion group observation, online interaction, opinion poll (students only), and interviews of both instructors and students. The findings revealed that 12 out of 17 of the staff teachers disapprove the implementation of online classes due to certain obstacles related to the faculty support, infrastructure and majority of the students were not interested nor motivated, which impact on the learning outcomes accordingly. However, they recommended blended learning as a first step towards online classes. Furthermore, the rest of the staff (5 of 17), approved the shift to online learning and the program ran smoothly without any troubles. Additionally,



data analysis concerns the students has showed high level of dissatisfaction among the students towards online courses due to some barriers, as poor internet speed and connectivity lack of smart devices, frequent power outages, lack a suitable learning environment and time management. Based on the findings, the author provided some steps to improve online learning implementations. The author concluded that there were challenges to online classes in the English department. Even though the majority of the lecturers and students experienced some of the mentioned issues, there was one instructor or student who preferred online learning to traditional face-to-face learning.

To effectively embrace new online solutions after COVID-19, however, certain steps must be taken. More importantly, this will necessitate faculty preparation to ensure the design and delivery of high-quality online courses, as well as services to provide the support required for students' success when learning remotely. In short, the e-learning program was not new to the department of English; it dates back to 2010, when the University of Tripoli implemented e-learning in many faculties, including the Faculty of Arts.

Regrettably, the program ended in 2017 due to the same challenges mentioned in the current paper. However, we do not want the current online program to end before it begins. As a result, the researcher suggests the following steps to improve online classes in our department:

- Integrating blended learning to face-to-face classes.
- Flipped learning is a step towards online learning.
- The need for faculty training and support for both lecturers and students.
- Redesigning the curriculum of IT to suit the new era of learning.

Key words: Obstacles, online learning, undergraduate students, Telegram application.



■ الملخص

كنتيجة لجائحة كورونا وسياسة التباعد الاجتماعي انتقلت عملية التعليم والتعلم عبر الشبكة العنكبوتية بسرعة. وفي هذا الوقت، تحول قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية الآداب، جامعة طرابلس، إلى الفصول الدراسية عبر الإنترنت. وتم اختيار تطبيق تليجرام (كمنصة) أداة

تعليمية لتقديم المحاضرات المتعلقة بدراسات الترجمة والأدب الإنجليزي ونظرا لأن كل من الطلاب والاساتذة ليسوا على دراية به ، فقد واجه البرنامج عددا من العقبات. لذلك فإن نجاح التعليم والتعلم عن بعد يقوم على وجود بيئة مناسبة خالية من أي تحديات. تهدف هذه الورقة التحقيق في المشاكل التي تواجه المحاضرين والطلاب الجامعيين في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية واقتراح بعض الإجراءات الممكنة التي يمكن استخدامها من قبل جميع الجهات المسؤولة للتخفيف من هذه العقبات. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، اعتمدت الباحثة على كل من المحاضرين وطلاب المرحلة الجامعية كعينة الدراسة، وتم جمع البيانات من خلال (مراقبة مجموعة المناقشة، والتفاعل عبر القنوات، واستطلاع الرأي (للطلاب فقط)، وإجراء المقابلات لكلا من الاساتذة والطلاب). اظهرت النتائج أن 12 من أصل 17 من المحاضرين (اعضاء هيئة التدريس) لا يوافقون على الدراسة عن طريق النت بسبب بعض الاشكاليات والعقبات كالبنية التحتية كما ان غالبية الطلاب لم يكونوا مهتمين أو متحمسين، مما يؤثر على مخرجات التعليم والتعلم. واوصى هولاء الاساتذة بالتعلم المدمج كخطوة اولى نحو التعليم الالكتروني و وافق بقية اعضاء هيئة التدريس الخمسة من اصل سبعة عشر على التعليم الالكتروني واكدوا ان عملية التعليم والتعلم سارت بسلاسة عبر الانترنت دون أي مشاكل و. أظهرت تحليل البيانات ان الطلاب كانوا على مستوى عالٍ من عدم الرضا تجاه الدراسة عبر الإنترنت وذلك بسبب بعض الصعوبات ، مثل ضعف سرعة الإنترنت و رداءة خدماتها ونقص الأجهزة الذكية ، وانقطاع التيار الكهربائي المتكرر، وعدم وجود بيئة تعليمية مناسبة وإدارة الوقت و. بناء على النتائج ، قدمت الباحثة بعض الخطوات لتحسين تطبيقات التعليم عبر الإنترنت.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العوائق، التعليم عن طريق الشبكة العنكبوتية، طلاب المرحلة الجامعية، تطبيق التليجرام.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the fact the majority of the higher education all over the world delivered online courses during the Covid-19 (social distancing policy), the problem underlying this paper is that most of under graduate students and lecturers were dissatisfied with E-learning regarding the challenges that they encountered while the classes were delivered at the Department of English of Faculty of Arts, University of Tripoli. What were the primary causes for



these barriers? What procedures should the faculty and university take to improve online courses implementation? The two questions will be answered in this study and its investigations and findings will raise the institutional stakeholders' awareness of the obstacles and barriers to the success of E-learning and to enhance the implementation of online classes in future.

Importance of the Study

This paper will be useful to those who are interested in on line learning, as it will assist them to acquire more knowledge in this concern.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are to investigate the obstacles facing online classes at the department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Tripoli, as well as to list possible solutions that might be used to deal with these obstacles

Questions of the Study

1. What are the barriers facing online classes at the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Tripoli?
2. What procedures should the faculty and university take to improve online courses implementation?

Significance of the Study

This study would be beneficial to the academics and institutional stakeholders in raising their awareness of the obstacles and barriers to the success of E-learning.

Definitions

In this section, the author defines some terms which will be mentioned in the current paper (hereafter).

a)- E-Learning:

E- Learning any courses are delivered and taught through the internet. Moreover, students access course content via the internet, participate in virtual discussion with their teacher and submit the assignments and receive feedback electronically.

b)-Asynchronous and Synchronous Learning Modes

Asynchronous learning occurs in the absence of concurrent interaction, in another word, it allows students to access instructional material at any time, from any place. It includes the following: Emails, video lessons, or webinars that have been already recorded. Whereas, *synchronous* learning refers to a learning mode in which participants interact simultaneously, in an online environment. While the communication can take many forms, such as live streams, zoom meetings, instant messaging, in which the entire class or learning group communicates with each other in real- time, seeing and hearing what is going on and participating in the process simultaneously.

c)- Blended and Flipped learning Modes

Blended learning is formal learning in which a student receives instruction in part through the delivery of content via digital and social media platforms, videos, and chat, with the traditional face-to-face classroom. It is a combination of two modes of Learning as in fig. (1) below.

Flipped Learning is another teaching and learning mode in which the content is provided through videos or another digital learning object that students can access independently before coming to class. Due to the change of the strategy in delivering the course, the lecturer is now able to use class time for tasks that benefit from being completed in a large group or for drawing one-on- one attention.

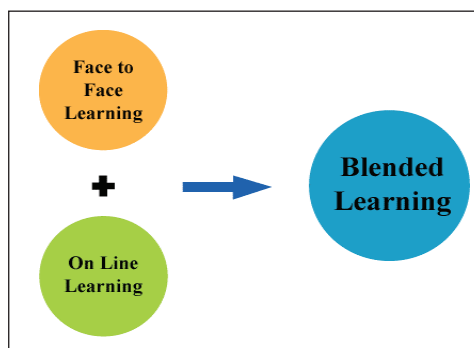


Figure. 1: Showing a combination of two modes of Learning

Introduction

Teaching and learning online is difficult. Technology-based tools are essential for both lecturers and students to succeed. About 20 years ago,



when online classes first started to be developed and made available in higher education, the vast majority of online classes and programs were asynchronous, this mean that teachers did not meet with students synchronously. There were few synchronous courses because of the high cost of video teleconferencing systems and the inability of many computers to handle the high bandwidth and memory requirements to participate in such sessions. Currently, there has been a significant revolution in educational technology and other devices such as, iPhone, Androids, and tablets, can be used to access to the Internet from anywhere. This technological revolution presented an excellent opportunity for higher education. Online learning is a form of education where the learning resources are shared on an online platform for students to use. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way that traditional classes were delivered, as a result, the need for e- learning systems necessitate smart systems that are more focused on students- centered learning. In fact, the shift to online education faced many obstacles and challenges for both educators and students. The next section will show some studies conducted on the challenges of online learning.

Previous Studies

There have been many studies on the difficulties that lectures and students faced when delivering and taking online classes. The researcher reviewed some of these studies to identify the barriers encounter in the learning process, which in turn affect the implementation of online courses in general and student outcomes in particular. First, we start with local studies as follows: Research was conducted by Dr. Nasreddin B. Elzoghbi, University of Tripoli Faculty of Science, the study entitled “*Overcoming the barriers to implement electronic learning in Higher education*”. The work was carried out (2009), the paper aimed to shed light on the role of e- learning in the Libyan education system and how it can be improved, as well as discuss the effectiveness of this system in Libyan higher education, the sample of the study was the University of Tripoli and University of Al-Zawiya. The study revealed that many factors that prevent the implementation of e-learning are related to technology, lack of planning, resistance to change, and lack of personal technical expertise. Another study was carried out by Entisar Alhadi, Sadok Ben Yahia, and Mohamed. Titled, “*Challenges of Applying E-Learning in the Libyan Higher Education System,*” the research was supported by the

University of AlAsmarya Islamic University, Zliten, Libya, the paper tried to find the barriers that may face the implementation of e- Learning in Libya and outlined workable solutions, the findings showed that difficulties obstructed lecturers and students were the absence of financial support, infrastructure, and e-Learning policy. Other studies were carried out internationally on online learning, the main concern of these studies was the challenges of e- learning during the coronavirus, among them, a study by Abaid Ullah, Mahmood Ashraf, “*Challenges of online learning during the COVID19,*” the work aimed to identify the challenges faced by Pakistani students in an online learning environment, to determine whether there is a difference between female and male students in terms of challenges faced during online learning ,and to evaluate the effectiveness of online learning in Pakistan from student’s perspectives. It revealed that all the students faced the same problems as internet connectivity, and poor infrastructure. Moreover, another study was done by Abood H, Al-Ani. (2016), “*Barriers to the adoption of E-Learning in the Arab World*”. The purpose of this paper was to look into the barriers to the spread of e-learning in Arab countries. The findings revealed that the main challenges were the need for face-to face communication between educators and learners, lack of English and computer skills, and absence of technological infrastructure. “*International Graduate Students’ Challenges and Learning Experience in online Classes,*” research was conducted by Tala Michelle, the goal of this case study was to examine the difficulties faced by three international graduate students enrolled in online, asynchronous classes at American public university, the findings indicated that the students struggled with English language proficiency, feeling of isolation, absence of study motivation. Despite the obstacles, e- learning remains an optimistic future for higher education.

E-Learning and teaching in Higher Education during COVID-19

As a result of the pandemic of COVID-19, educational institutions and universities have been forced to drastically alter their teaching methods, hastening the digital transformation of education globally. The most dramatic sudden transition from face -to-face classes into blended or fully e- learning environments. This has unavoidably formed a slew of issues in many countries with special reference to poor or unstable ones, show concern that some learners are unable to access the internet (Mseleku, 2020). According to the International



Association of Universities report (2020b), there are three major obstacles to online and distance education: (1) technical infrastructure and accessibility, (2) distance learning competencies and pedagogies, and (3) the field of study. Today, one can argue that the swift move towards online and distance learning is a necessity. As COVID-19 spreads, more students join online classes and are learning from home. The lockdown has not only altered the methods of teaching and learning but also impact how the members of universities, students, and instructors communicate with each other, consequently, the hardest challenges that may the local and international higher education encounter are, the issue of quality, as many studies were conducted on the quality of online classes compared to the traditional one (Shim & Lee, 2020). According to a survey by Means and Neisler (2020), students' satisfaction and motivation have declined sharply with half of U.S. learners complaining about e-education and showing their dissatisfaction with it. In short, as a result of the fast transition globally to online classes, higher education all over the world faced many barriers such as ill-preparation, poor implementation, lack of technology that facilitate the delivery and receiving courseware, less or non-students' motivation and some staff teachers resisted the involvement in teaching at distance, due to their limited experience, whereas, the others argue that e-learning decrease the students learning outcomes, all these challenges stood against the achievements of the teaching and learning process goals. Hence, for good future online classes, universities and educational institutions should take serious steps to develop the e-learning environments to gain bright results.

Methodology

1- The sample of the study

Online lecturers and undergraduate students were the samples of this study. The total number of teachers was seventeen. All of them taught at both divisions, (English literature and translation studies), one of them refused to be involved in online classes and preferred to face to- face -classes. The students were from the academic years (2020-2021-2022), 4th, 7th, and 8th semesters majoring in translation, the total numbers were (35), the majority were females, and each class had 10 students.

2-Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected and analyzed as follows:

I-Observation

Observing the students via online discussion groups interaction, zoom meetings, live streams, frequent access to the provided channels link, and e-mails. The telegram application as a platform was chosen by the department of English to deliver the courses. The students were given links to join the channels and discussion groups for the intended classes. Figure (2) indicates the means of the observation.

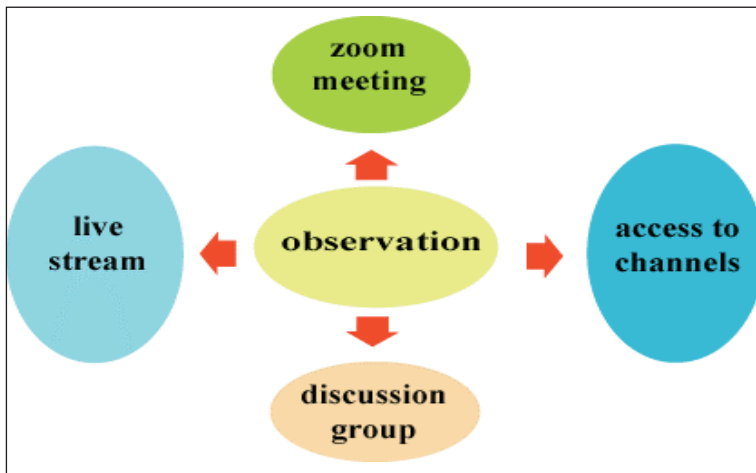


Figure. 2 indicates the means of the observation.

The author observed that students did not attend or interact in online classes due to the following factors:

- Cultural factors among female-students.
- Infrastructure.

Having stated the factors that prevented students from attending and interacting with online classes, we move to discuss the above-mentioned factors. Since students' interaction and participation are vital elements to the success of online classes, then, without a big number of students attending or taking part in an online discussion, the outcomes of the course will be lost. Returning to the first point, (cultural factor) the instructor noticed those female-students due to certain cultural circumstances, used fake names despite being warned not to do so. In this case, they were blocked. They were neither allowed

to access channels nor receive or send e-mails from and to the lecturer. Since access to these channels was restricted to its enrolled students to upload files, send e-mails, attend live sessions, interact and participate in discussion groups. When the class size (10) students, decreased to the maximum (2) students, the teaching and learning process became boring for both lecturer and students.

Another important point that drew the author's attention was, that brilliant and highly motivated students who had a positive attitude towards online classes faced problems during the delivering live classes, (zoom meetings, live streams), related to infrastructure such as internet connectivity, cutting off electricity continuously, which impacted on the learning process. Accordingly, the mode of teaching and learning changed from synchronous into asynchronous learning mode which is not fully online classes. Figure. (3) was taken from the channels to indicate the use of fake names and the lack of attendance of live sessions.

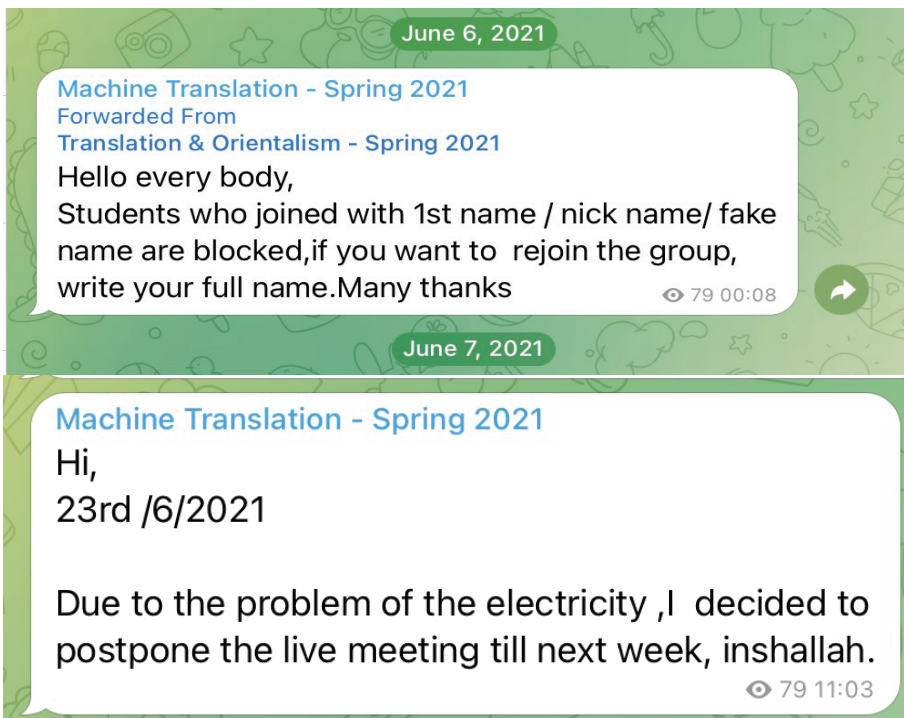


Figure. (3a-b) was taken from channels to indicate the use of fake names and the attendance of live sessions.

II- Students' Opinion Poll:

By the end of each semester, students were asked to express their opinion about e-learning freely. The data was obtained in Arabic from the Students' Opinion Poll, not all the students participated in this section, and they interviewed (20) students. The author read and translated the data into English, and Some quotations from students' opinions are as follows:

- **Four students had the same point of view and expressed their opinions in the following point: (20%)**

Compared to traditional classes, students believe online learning was not useful, and there were fewer explanations. Teachers appeared to be reading from books without providing any context. If learners were in a face-to-face class, the lecturer would instantly be aware of their confusion. Therefore, students think, this is one of online teachings and learning weaknesses (virtual contact).

- **Nine students commented: (45%)**

Some students required more time to prepare adequate answers or to participate in the discussion groups, and others did not participate in classes due to language difficulties. (This was another problem encountered by the students. They preferred not to be involved in live sessions due to language barriers. they unconsciously changed the mode of learning from synchronous into asynchronous).

- **Eight married female- students shared the same opinions on the following point:(40%)**

The good thing was that a married female – student did not have to go to campus, she could study from home while feeding her baby, since the courses were delivered as recorded material. The program was flexible. (They used asynchronous learning mode.)

- **Seven students referred to the lack of proper study environment at home, they commented:(35%)**

The study environment at home influences students' online classes, especially when the classes are delivered live. The size of the family, noises, and children. All these issues made students avoid being part of live classes.



● **Five working students expressed similar opinions as follows:(25%)**

Using recorded material was the most effective thing in online classes, allowing working students to study and keep their jobs. A student could listen to a recorded lecture while he / she was driving or doing his/ her duty. (Again, students were not involved in the synchronous learning mode.)

● **Twelve students commented on the communicating via e-mails:(60%)**

Students were unable to join online classes, because they did not know how to send e-mails requesting access to the channels, or submitting assignments, despite having taken two courses IT at the faculty.

● **The twenty students mentioned the same problems they faced during their study online: (100%).**

The implementation of online classes needs planning and training for lecturers before students. Most of the channels were empty, with no content in them, or if there was a content, the quality was very bad. No one can deny that there were a few channels containing varieties of resources, such as e-books, handouts, videos, live classes and, zoom meetings. These channels were deemed the best among the other platforms. Although there were perfect channels, students encountered the following challenges preventing them from attending live sessions:

- Poor internet speed and connectivity.
- Frequent power outages.
- Lack a suitable learning environment.

It is clear that students were not fully online students regarding their circumstances, they were satisfied with the program when it coped with their issues. However, students faced problems that prevented them from attending(synchronous) online classes, which negatively impacted their attitude towards online learning.

III- Students' interview:

The researcher randomly chose ten of the twenty students who took part in the opinion poll, to investigate the barriers they faced during the study in online classes. Data were collected and analyzed as follows:

Q.1. How did you find studying in online classes as an alternative to traditional classes?

Six students did not like the experience, on the other hand, four students said it was good. The following are their answers:

- It was challenging for me. There were some issues impacted negatively on the learning process.
- It was hard for me to study at home. I used to learn in class, then suddenly I found myself outside classroom, surrounded by stressful circumstances.
- 'It was an interesting experience, I loved it.
- I thought it was fantastic, despite it was not easy for me to be a distant student.
- I was unable to discuss with my class mates the course material.
- It was awful experience. Not because of the program, but the problems that we faced during the study.
- I found it challenging to focus when I was studying the course material on my own.
- I had a hard time paying attention while listening to recorded lectures. It was terrible.
- Attending online classes was a good experience.
- I liked it, I did not have to leave my house, classes came to me.

Q.2. Were you satisfied with online learning?

Students were asked the above question to measure the level of their satisfaction with online classes. Analysis of the answers showed that seven students responded negatively to this question, while three others expressed their Satisfaction with the program. The answers are as follows:

- Yes, I was.
- No, not really, it was not good experience.
- No, I was not satisfied



- No, I was not; taking an online course necessitates a basic knowledge of computers. I did not have computer skills, despite, I took two semesters of IT courses.
- No, I was not satisfied.
- I was not happy. I really prefer real lectures.
- Very satisfied.
- Well, the problem was not about satisfaction, about readiness, we were not ready for online classes. I was not satisfied.
- OK, satisfied.
- I was not happy; I faced many problems.

Q.3. How Peaceful was your home learning environment?

The interviewees answered this question according to their circumstances; there were six negative answers, and the rest were positive. Some quotes are provided below:

- It was not peaceful at all.
- It was hard to find a calm place for me to study in it, especially when I share a room with four sisters.
- It was a very peaceful; my family did their best to make it very suitable learning environment.
- It was ok when I did not find a calm place, I used my car, sometimes we had to.
- It was very perfect.
- No, it was not peaceful.
- It was not an optimal learning environment at all.
- It was a good environment.
- It was not peaceful.
- It was not quiet.

Q.4. Did you encounter any problems with online classes? If it so, what were they?

All students agreed that they faced difficulties. However, they claimed that online courses were ineffective due to network issues and a poor internet connection, as well as no electricity, and stated the followings:

- Of course, many problems, such as electrical power outages, poor internet, and infrastructure. It was a struggle; not because of the online learning itself, but the obstacles that I faced during online classes.
- Yes, I did have problems. There was no or a slow internet connection, or a costly internet service, which prevents me from downloading, attending live lectures, or participating in class discussions. In addition to these, there was the issue of time and electricity. All of these things harmed my studies.
- There were no issues with online learning, but I had trouble downloading the lectures, and attending live sessions due to a poor internet connection, and frequent power cuts.
- Yes, problems related to the internet, I did not have a smart device and continuously cut off power.
- I did face problems. The internet was inadequate for attending or downloading lectures.
- Yes, I faced many problems. I thought that in online classes everything would go smoothly, but I was wrong. Online learning needs high-speed internet, infrastructure, smart devices, and a proper learning environment.
- Yes, I had problems, just like my mates. During the lockdown, I was relieved that I did not have to withdraw or drop the semester; I would continue online, but I encountered challenges such as poor internet, a lack of power, a lack of a learning environment, and time management
- I faced challenges to the poor quality of the internet which made it very difficult to download or attend zoom meetings.

Unsurprisingly, online learning presents some challenges to students as well as numerous benefits. The challenges reported in this paper generally fall into one category: challenges due to a mismatch between students' traditional



learning styles and e-learning. In face-to-face classes, students did not need to worry about the internet, electricity, smart devices, and other tools that facilitate the learning process, whereas, in online, they had to.

III- Interviews:

- Focus group interview, for lecturers only.

The researcher interviewed the instructors to learn about the challenges they encountered during and post lockdown. The interview consisted, of twelve teachers who faced problems, and five instructors approved of online learning and had no problems. Lecturers were asked four questions, and they gave responses as follows:

Q.1- Did you have experience in teaching online before COVID-19.?

All answered negatively, except two said that they have long experience in distance learning programs last for seven years, here are some quotes:

- *Yes, I did. Two participants.*
- *No, I did not. It was the first time.*

Q.2-What did the faculty do to support the staff.? If it was not. What kind of support did you need?

All the responses showed that the faculty did not offer any support. The researcher conveyed their answer as follows:

- It did not do anything We were reluctant to be involved in online classes. faculty training is an essential component of institutional support in the implementation of online learning. We need a training course in teaching online, well-equipped classrooms to facilitate delivering online classes on campus, the internet, access to an e-library, clear plan and policy for e-learning. (All the participants responded).

Q.3-How did you choose the platform.? What other supplementary tools did you use.? How did you communicate with the students?

All of the participants agreed that the department of English chose (Telegram application). They responded:

I used telegram application to upload the course content. The students could join the channel at any time to download the course material (audio –

videos, lectures). 24/7hours per week available. Communicating via e-mails for sending assignments and chat rooms.

The majority of the lecturers unconsciously used asynchronous learning mode which was not fully online classes. Another different answer:

- I used the telegram application as platform to deliver my online classes. It was a good choice. It has multi-functions. First, create a channel to upload the contents, (audio -videos, handouts, power point presentations, e-books, visual- audio videos, and any information related to the course). I used Zoom meetings once a week to give feedback on the lecture. The communication with the learners via e-mails, discussion groups, live streams, and chat rooms.

The instructor used synchronous learning mode. The last participating with deferent mode in teaching:

I like the other colleagues used the telegram application, I upload the lectures, mostly audio-videos. The students were introduced to the course material, then they come to the class. Communicating via e-mails for sending assignments, chat room, and face-to-face.

The above lecturer was among the five who approved online classes, but the way of delivering the classes was not fully online, it was flipped learning.

Q.4- What were the obstacles you faced during online learning.?

In their response to this question, all participants mentioned the following:

- Inadequate training has impeded our transition to online learning.
- Lack of student participation and interaction with lecturers.
- Electricity power outages.
- Poor internet connection prevents students from downloading, interacting, or attending live sessions.
- Lack of motivation. Students were not motivated.

All lecturers faced the same obstacles.

Discussion and Conclusion:

- The purpose of this study was to investigate the obstacles that the

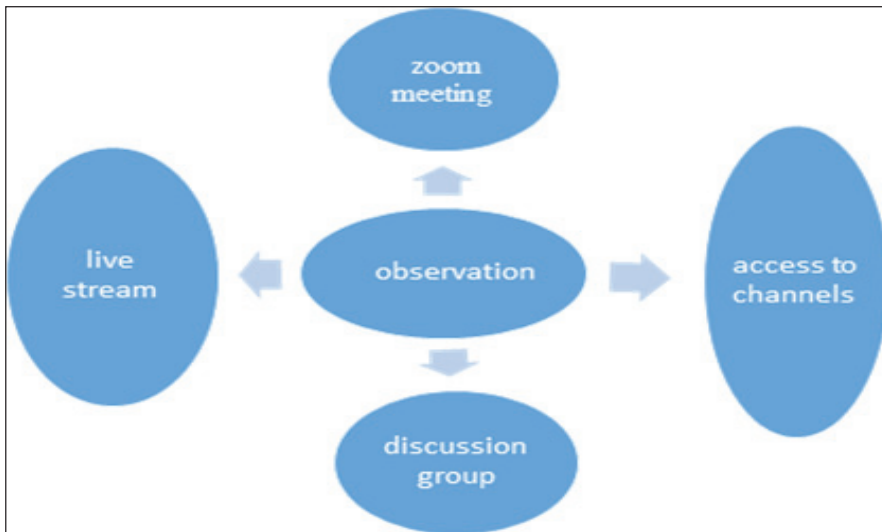


department of English faced when online learning was suddenly shoved upon them at the faculty of Arts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the staff members' efforts to make the online courses run smoothly, were not fully prepared for the abrupt transition to e-learning. The problems encountered by undergraduate students and lecturers during the COVID-19 lockdown were not noticeably different from those encountered by faculties and universities all over the world, and the challenges encountered by students and instructors were quite similar compared to other universities.

- This study focused on the difficulties that students and lecturers encountered while taking online classes. The analysis showed that students did not attend or interact in online classes because of factors such as Cultural factors and Infrastructure. According to opinion polls, 20% of undergraduate students believe that online learning was not useful. Whereas, 45% of students encountered language difficulties. 40% of the learners think that the program was flexible. 35% complained of a lack of a proper study environment at home. 25% of the participants prefer using recorded material in online classes. 60% of the students did not know how to send e-mails. 100% of the sample of the study, agreed that the implementation of online classes needs planning and training for lecturers before students. The study revealed that the lecturers and students faced many barriers during online classes such as Poor internet speed and connectivity, frequent power outages. In addition to the other challenges faced by lecturers are such as programs for the instructors, problems of non-motivated student.
- The author concluded that there were challenges to online classes in the English department. Even though the majority of the lecturers and students experienced some of the mentioned issues, there was one instructor or student who preferred online learning to traditional face-to-face learning.
- To effectively embrace new online solutions after COVID-19, however, certain steps must be taken. More importantly, this will necessitate faculty preparation to ensure the design and delivery of high-quality online courses, as well as services to provide the support required for students' success when learning remotely. In short, the e-learning program was not new to the department of English; it dates back to

2010, when the University of Tripoli implemented e-learning in many faculties, including the Faculty of Arts.

- Regrettably, the program ended in 2017 due to the same challenges mentioned in the current paper. However, we do not want the current online program to end before it begins. As a result, the researcher suggests the following steps to improve online classes in our department:
 1. Integrating blended learning to face-to-face classes.
 2. Flipped learning is a step towards online learning.
 3. The need for faculty training and support for both lecturers and students.
 4. Redesigning the curriculum of IT to suit the new era of learning.



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Are Online Courses a Substitute or a Choice?

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Abstract

This study investigates the positive role of online courses taken by Libyan teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) in improving their teaching skills. Data was collected through studying and interviewing two case studies of Libyan teachers working in diverse settings. In other words, the first case study is a teacher of English language at a public primary school, whereas the second case study is a lecturer of English language and applied linguistics at Al-Merguib University. The two case studies were observed throughout four years starting from 2019 to 2022. Then, they were both interviewed by the researchers. This research revealed that online courses not only improve the two teachers' teaching skills, but also help to reform their teaching identity, performance, practices and critical thinking skills.

Key words: Virtual learning/teaching – E-learning – EFL learning – Teaching Styles





Introduction:

Since learning a language does not only require studying its linguistic forms, it also needs from both teachers and students to be aware of its cultural backgrounds and contexts. (Liddicoat, 2011; Holmes, 2008). Hence, teachers are encouraged continuously to get more training courses about anything new in this field.

In recent years, the role of online courses has been increased not only as a substitute for in campus courses, but also as a choice for many teachers to improve their teaching skills and strategies. Hence, the researchers have decided to conduct this longitudinal study in order to examine their effects on English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' performance.

In Libya, where this study was done, EFL teachers and even university staff members working in the department of English language lack the continuing training courses. Many teachers have showed their interest in joining such training courses to get improved in their career. What is more important is that, teaching new generation requires more variety of teaching techniques, strategies and methods to meet their different learning needs and styles. In other words, if teachers want to succeed in attracting as well as motivate their students, they have to use and integrate new and appropriate teaching methods in their classes.

All this can be achieved via joining online courses. According to Hashimi 2021, online courses can positively solve many demanding issues encountered by EFL teachers. Additionally, Naghmeh and et al 2020 confirmed that online professional developmental courses could help in improving EFL teachers' performance in their classes.

Background:

Teaching English as a foreign language in Libya has undergone different stages and policies. First, Libyan students used to study English as a foreign language (EFL) at grade 7 in the 1990s. Then, in 2005, the Libyan Ministry of Education changed the policy for teaching (EFL) to start in grade 3. This policy continued for one year only, because policy makers believed that it was not successful. Hence, the Libyan Ministry of Education decided to start teaching English at grade 5 in order successfully enable younger students to improve their language skills (Libyan Ministry of Education, 2015).

In recent years, many countries have started to teach English as a foreign

language at early age. The reason for this is that, English has started to have a global trend throughout the world. Additionally, this assumption is affected by the success of younger learners of English who grow up in bilingual contexts where they are exposed to the target language (Enever, 2011). Now, students start to study English language at grade 1.

For Elmergib University, and department of English language at Faculty of Arts, the situation is a little bit different. In other words, there are no major changes in the courses except the last two years, where the department could finally succeed to add courses such as Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), and the translation major was opened as a branch.

Theoretical Framework:

Due to the role of second language acquisition (SLA) theories, we as researchers depend on different theories to support our hypothesis. For this research, as the purpose of this work is to attract the attention of both Libyan EFL teachers and university staff members towards the importance of online courses to improve their teaching skills, the skill acquisition theory is the first option to confirm the role of online courses in enhancing the performance of teachers.

According to Taie (2014), this theory provides the potential opportunities for teachers to implement both explicit and implicit learning in SLA. Also, this theory highlights the role of practice, engagement and performance for students in order for them to get improved in language skills particularly the productive skills.

Additionally, as Richards & Schmidt (2010) asserted “declarative knowledge is conscious knowledge of facts, concepts or ideas that can be stored as propositions. And procedural knowledge refers to unconscious knowledge of how an activity is done”. This all can be successfully done when students get engaged in the class through the appropriate activities given by their teachers. On the other hand, we have considered the theory of scaffolding presented by Vygotsky, which suggested that the role of the teacher is a mediator and a facilitator. (Raymond, 2000).

Finally, Achievement goal theory (AGT) also confirms the importance of such courses. This theory argues that motivation and achievement of students both have relationship to behaviors. In other words, students understand



better when they know why they study the target lessons. (Gopal et al, 2021).

Research Objectives:

This study aims to:

- Investigate the role of online courses on improving teachers' teaching skills.
- Explore if these online courses can work as a choice or as a substitute for EFL teachers.
- Examine the students' performance and engagement with teachers who have taken online courses.

Research Significance:

Online courses, in particular, and the technology in general have started to get more attention in recent years. Additionally, many educational institutions are always offering scholarships for international students to join these courses particularly those whose major is teaching English as a foreign language. This study was conducted after there had been many scholarship opportunities offered to Libyan EFL teachers to take training online courses.

Literature Review:

Online Courses and EFL Learning:

Online learning in general can be defined as “learning carried out from a distance assisted by electronic devices, for instance tablets, smartphones, laptops, and computers which require Internet connection” (Gonzalez et al, 2018).

More importantly, online courses start to be very attractive to this generation; as they feel more comfortable in learning depending on technology as well as they are very motivated to join this digital world. For teachers, they are also interested in teaching their EFL students online. That is because they feel less stressed particularly in terms of time and context constraints. For example, they can decide the time and the place they prefer. (Atmojo et al, 2020)

Online Courses and Teaching Styles:

Through joining online courses, teachers have different opportunities to exchange experience and improve their teaching techniques. (Atmojo et al, 2020). Additionally, there are some courses specifically designed to help EFL teachers to improve their teaching styles by providing particular scenarios

similar to their contexts, and some of them suggest exact activities including ideas presented by other participants in these courses. (Plaisance, 2018).

Further, teachers have the chance to use different teaching methods, which in turn encourage active learning. In particular, courses of methodology and Teaching English for Speakers of Other Countries TESOL programs. (Khan et al, 2017). There is another important point, according to Ghanizadeh and Jahedizadeh (2016), creativity and improving teaching styles can be achieved through continuous training through courses. These courses are actually very rare in Libya; however, they are available online and most of them are sponsored by very well known institutions such as the British Council and the American Embassy. Both are offering many scholarships for Libyan EFL teachers to get trained as well as improved.

Training Courses Effects:

According to many studies, Libyan EFL teachers are required to improve their teaching skills to meet the demanding challenges of today. For example, Abad and Al-Atrash (2019) confirmed that many EFL teachers working in Libyan public high schools lack the training courses to teach the target lessons as suggested by the plan which described in the teacher's book of each study year.

When the researchers asked the teachers about their use of critical thinking skills, they did not have any idea about the activities, which can help them to do that. Additionally, the series of "English For Libya" which has been taught since 2000, and it has been updated through these years require using the communicative teaching methods by EFL teachers. However, most teachers are still using the grammar translation method. (Owen et al, 2018).

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education in Libya has provided a number of training courses to improve their performance in classrooms. The problem is that most teachers are not motivated to attend such courses due to the passive learning atmosphere in such programs. (Shakuna et al, 2016).

What most teachers really need is getting more awareness about the different teaching techniques and styles. This can be effectively achieved through reflective practice and exchanging experience among teachers. (Farrell, 1999).

Digital Literacy and Online Courses:

Digital literacy is defined by Lankshear et al (2015) as "It is something you «have,» or lack, and anyone who lacks it «needs» to get it."



On the other hand, there is a close relationship between digital literacy and online courses. According to Cote and Milliner (2018), many EFL teachers are still digitally illiterate and need more training to implement technology in their classes. Nowadays, English is closely connected to the digital world as it is the lingua franca as well as it is the language of technology social media and digital platforms. (Karijka, 2019).

Instruments:

According to Creswell (2007), there are different data collection methods such as questionnaire, observation, interviews, audio-visual materials and documents. Therefore, the researchers have chosen to collect the data through observing and studying two case studies working in diverse settings throughout 4 years starting from 2019 to 2022. In addition, both case studies have been interviewed after the last year of collecting data.

Participants:

This qualitative study was conducted through observing and interviewing two EFL teachers. The researchers have chosen the participants after distributing questionnaires in many public schools and the English departments at Elmergib University. The two participants have been selected after they confirmed that they joined and completed online courses of training EFL teachers. The first is an EFL teacher working in a public primary school with an experience of 8 years in this career. Whereas the second participant is working as a university lecturer teaching different courses such as Writing, Reading Comprehension and General English at the Faculty of Law. The latter participant has been teaching for 15 years.

Discussion and Results:

In this part, we are going to discuss the data in relation to the aforementioned research objectives. Also, we will divide this section according to time starting with the year 2019 to 2022 and the context.

First context: Public preparatory and primary school:

The participant working in this context will be referred to as Participant “A”, she was teaching grade 7. The researchers had many visits to observe this teacher’s performance inside the classroom. What should be highlighted here is that in the beginning of this study year participant A did not join any online course.

It was very clear that this teacher has a good experience as well as a good level of the language itself. However, the students in her class did not show any motivation in participating with her except three students and they only answered the teacher's questions. Also, we noticed that the teacher was always explaining with the same phrases and tone without any changes according to the target lesson she was explaining.

In other words, and as mentioned before, the role of the teacher here was not simply a facilitator, but she was doing everything in the class such as explaining the grammar rules, writing on the whiteboard, reading from the book and sometimes answering the questions. Further, the teacher was using the same techniques and teaching styles every class without any changes depending on the lesson or the time of the class. That is, it was clear that this participant needs some training courses to get improved in teaching English language.

By the middle of this study year, we noticed that the participant "A" started to use variety of new activities and sometimes modified those activities in the course book. This can be clearly illustrated by using her own experience as examples, and sometimes she insisted to say jokes in English as well as change her tone when speaking.

In the next year (2020), participant "A" started to integrate different teaching techniques and activities. It is worth mentioning that in this year participant "A" was teaching grade 1, and she was very motivated to implement all the new teaching approaches she learned about in online courses she had just finished about critical thinking skills.

This can be clearly exemplified by asking students to describe the pictures in their books. That is, students first began to describe the objects "it is an apple", "it is a banana", "it is a red hat". Then, she asked them to say which one they like? "I like an apple", "I like a banana". Here, the participant "A" confirmed that it is here first time to explicitly know how to teach students the differences between description and interpretation; thus, she could successfully integrate critical thinking skills in her class.

Also, we observed that most students were very motivated to participate and answer any of their teacher's questions. It was interesting that they showed their sadness when the class ended. Regarding the assessment, the teacher had showed us her rubric for students' progress throughout the year



and for all the language skills, and she said that she learned how to prepare such rubrics from the same aforementioned online course.

In 2021, participant “A” was still teaching grade 1, and she improved her teaching styles as she implement new teaching activities and approaches, which encouraged students to physically practice them. They were asked to run in the class when the teacher said run, stop when the teacher asked them to do so, etc. By the end of such exercises, we noticed that the students were very happy and repeated the games themselves. Further, the teacher asserted that they never forgot these words’ meaning or pronunciation. Here, when we say meaning we indicate to the English English meaning without using their L1.

Finally, in 2022, participant “A” was more confident about using technology with the same study year grade 1. She brought her own data show projector and showed the students cartoons which included the target words, phrases or sentences similar to those in their books, but she preferred to use interactive way as well as authentic materials. It was clear that her students got motivated to their classes because in each class their teacher had something new to share with them. After being asked about these activities, she answered “ because I choose to attend online course about integrating technology in EFL class.”

Second context: Department of English Language at Elmerguib University in 2019:

The participant here is going to be referred to as participant “B”. She was teaching courses of General English at the Faculty of Law and Writing for First year students at the Faculty of Arts, department of English language. Unlike participant “B”, we noticed that this participant has shown high level of performance in terms of using different teaching activities and exercises. She was working most the time as a facilitator by helping her students produce the language.

For example, in one of her first classes in the Faculty of Law, most students were not motivated to introduce themselves in speaking and writing exercises. What participant “B” did was really productive as she directly drew an “identity wheel” which is simply a wheel divided into items of name, age, occupation, family, etc.

The student here is required to use these items for himself/herself. After the participant “B” had explained the exercise, most students were very motivated to participate both in speaking and writing. Interestingly, when we asked her

about the exercise, she confirmed that she learned about it from online course she had previously attended about Professional Teacher Development.

Besides, she asserted that this was her first time to use this activity and she was very happy that her students could affectively achieve it. On the other hand, in her classes of Writing, we noticed that she depended on collaborative learning with her students as she was dividing them into groups of five (the total number is 20). She was giving them different pictures and asked them to speak about them or ask questions to each other. She was monitoring them and making sure that they were taking notes. By doing this, she wanted to improve their critical thinking skills. Nevertheless, she encountered some challenges, as most students did not clearly understand the meaning of such skills and how to integrate them in their writing or speaking.

In 2020, Participant “B” was teaching Reading for Second year students. We noticed that she was always using questions throughout the class such as “What about you?”, “How do you like this?”, “Do you have such events in your country/family?” By doing that she tried to get them motivated and she told us she learned how to do this from an online course she attended about integrating critical thinking skills in her class.

Also, she confirmed that using reflective questions can lead to improve the level of comprehension and reading fluency as students could only answer such exercises if they understand the reading passage. What was very interesting is that participant “B” had also designed a rubric for her students based on what she learned in the online course she attended.

In 2021, and while she was teaching the course of Writing, she could succeed to motivate her students having different Facebook groups, telegram channels, WhatsApp groups and Zoom meetings about different topic, exercises related to writing. It was challenging in the beginning; however, the participant “B” said that they did it by the end. Continuing on the same point, it was the first time in the department for the students to experience doing an online test in writing. Importantly, they were excited to have such experience.

In 2022, participant “B”, showed her motivation to integrate critical thinking skills in her classes of Poetry and Literature by relating the target lessons to their equivalents in the Arabic language and culture. This was done by the teacher through using famous paintings, quotations and sometimes



verses from the Arabic language and ask her students to express their own visions using creative and figurative language.

Finally, participant “B” indicated that she learned to design such activities from the online course she attended particularly when she was reflecting to the ideas of the participants in the same course. She told us that they helped her so much especially those who were teaching the same courses.

Interviewing Participants:

The researchers did two semi-structured interview with both participants, and they showed their interest to answer all the questions. Starting with participant “A” who was work in in a public preparatory school. We chose to ask her about general questions about her career such as her experience in teaching English language and she answered that she has been teaching it for 8 years.

When being asked about the type of online courses she attended, she told us that she joined three online courses about teacher development and integrating critical thinking skills and technology in EFL setting. On the other hand, participant “B” said that she had an experience of more than 10 years teaching English to different age groups in diverse settings.

For the question about the types of online courses she joined, she answered that she attended courses about integrating critical thinking skills, using technology in an EFL setting and a course about TESOL Methodology. For participant “A”, after we asked participant “A” about how did she like online courses are they a choice or a substitute she said “online courses ate a choice for teachers who want to improve their teaching methods and when they attend such courses they can find solutions for many challenges they encounter in their classes”.

Moreover, she added that as EFL teacher they found a gap between what they learn in university and the professional world of teaching. She personally could bridge this gap after attending online courses.

Similarly, participant “B” had the same point of view as she said” of course online courses are my first choice to get improved in my career, as they are not only help me in learning new r=teaching techniques, but also they reform my identity as a teacher”. Additionally, she explained that she started to be more open with her students as well as with her colleagues.

That is to say, as participant “B” clarified that she was not a kind of teacher

who listened to her students' different perspectives particularly in course of Literature and Poetry which require using critical thinking skills. After having attended the course of integrating critical thinking skills, she began to give more opportunities to her students expressing their own attitudes about the themes discussed in the target lessons.

What was very interesting the response we got from participant "A" as she said that she could break the ice with her students and she could successfully build a close relationship with them after she took an online course about teacher development. She also clarified that the most important thing she achieved as a teacher after attending online courses that she could motivate her students to be independent in learning English. That was similar to what participant "B" said when being asked about the changes in her identity as a teacher "I start to learn from my students not only teaching them." She meant that she had a notebook where she wrote everything her students shared from their experience or attitudes. Moreover, both participants assured that they always recommended attending online courses to their colleagues.

Finally, when we asked them if they had any comments, we were surprised that they both wished if the Libyan Ministry of Education would sponsor such online courses as the courses these participants attended were sponsored by the American Embassy. Thus, they believed that if such step is seriously taken by the Ministry of Education, there could be an increase progress in the EFL policy in Libya.

Limitations:

This study is limited, as more participants are needed to ensure the generalizability of the findings. The other limitation is related to the COVID-19 pandemic in the world and in Libya in particular as many visits to the two teaching institutions were cancelled.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

This paper attempted to find an answer for the question "Are online courses a choice or a substitute?". It argued that online courses can function as a choice for many EFL teachers to improve their teaching styles, techniques, and career in general. As previously mentioned in this paper, online courses can help teachers to bridge the gap between the theoretical framework the teachers already have learned in university and the practical professional teaching context. Additionally, online courses can overcome many challenges



teachers face in their classes such as motivation and participation.

Continuing on the same topic, online courses contribute to reform teachers' identity in terms of the relationship between them and their students. Further, online courses increase the opportunity of motivating the teacher to get engaged in a virtual platform, which provides more chances for reflective practice. Continuing on the same point, such professional online courses are not available in the country of the study with these conditions of communication among participants of various cultural backgrounds and professors with a great deal of experience.

Moreover, this study revealed that online courses provide active learning atmosphere for all participants regardless of its virtual nature. This study also showed that online courses encourage learners' autonomy in the classrooms.

More Specifically, according to this study, attending online courses motivates teachers to increase their self-confidence particularly when they share their experience with their counterparts throughout the world. For this point, it can be said that teachers feel more confident when they share their own ideas with their colleagues as well as they feel more motivated to virtually learn from other teachers' experience who work in a diverse setting.

Finally, It is recommended that the Ministry of Education holds more workshops and seminars about online courses and introduces this virtual possible training option for many EFL Libyan teachers. Considering the future studies about this topic, we encourage our colleagues to investigate the effects of these courses on EFL policy in Libya. Regarding the digital literacy, it would be highly recommended if the Ministry of Education could provide some training courses about how to successfully use the new and modern technological devices and function the students' motivation towards this digital world in the EFL policy.

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E-Learning during COVID-19

Comparing the Perspectives of Libyan Students from English and Arabic Departments at Fezzan University

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the perspectives of Libyan students about E-learning from two departments of language (English and Arabic) at Fezzan University. The research tries to understand the students' opinions as regards the impact of E-learning, their comfortability in its usage and the support received from teachers in E-learning classes. It also aims to investigate whether they have positive or negative attitude toward E-learning during COVID-19 pandemic. The sample of this study consisted of 118 undergraduate students: 59 from each department. The data of this study was a questionnaire and it was analyzed quantitatively by using an Excel sheet and descriptive statistics. The results revealed that both groups of students from the Arabic and English departments have the same attitudes toward E-learning that they have negative attitudes towards E-learning comparing to their positive attitudes. Moreover, the two groups have increased their technological literacy by using E-learning classes and their teachers support and help them when face difficulties with their smartphones and computers, but they need training to be able to use E-learning classes effectively. This study recommended that there is a need to raise the advantages and effects of E-learning to provide guidance and for effective practice in the future.

Keywords: English department students - Arabic department students – Fezzan University – E-learning – COVID-19

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted nearly every aspect of life around the world, including significant impacts on higher education, both in its teaching, learning and research missions (Spurlock, 2020). To stop the spread of the virus, thousands of universities and colleges have been closed to encourage social distancing measures and thus limit the spread of the virus (Naciri, Baba, Achbani & Kharbach, 2020). The pandemic has forced the global academic community to explore new ways of teaching and learning, including distance and online education. The review of the literature reveals that most of the studies are undertaken to identify students' perceptions and attitudes toward e-learning. However, studies related to students' perceptions of E-learning at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic are found to be few (e.g. Adnan & Anwar (2020), Aleksic-Veljkovic, Stankovic, Golubovic-llic and Herodek (2020), Cam lien (2021), Hussein, Daoud, Alrabaiah and Badawi (2020), Nambiar (2020), and Zakarneh (2018)). So far no study has compared students' perceptions of e-learning across language disciplines. Among these studies, no studies have been conducted to compare the Libyan students' attitudes toward E-learning during COVID-19, especially at Fezzan University. Thus the present study endeavours to fill part of the research gap by focusing on two language departments (Arabic and English) at Fezzan University.

Therefore, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perspectives of Libyan students from English and Arabic departments at Fezzan University?
2. Do Libyan students from English and Arabic departments perceive E-learning positively or negatively?

That being said, moving smoothly from an environment of conventional education to distance and virtual learning could not happen overnight. This rapid transformation is linked to various obstacles and challenges at this point (Crawford, Butler-Henderson, Rudolph, & Glowatz, 2020). Because nobody knows when this pandemic will disappear, educational institutions across the globe decided to use the already available technical resources to create online learning material for students of all academic fields (Kaur, 2020).



2. Literature Review

There are many different concepts of E-learning. Each concept is presented from a different perspective and, therefore, the connotations of concepts are different. A Group of language teachers have recommended using E-learning systems to teach English because thinking about the benefits they bring. According to (Salmon, 2011), E-learning is one of the modern methods that contributes to expanding educational opportunities and makes the teaching and learning process more effective. E-learning is flexible because students can manage their studies depending on their own time. The increasing application of e-learning is also based on findings of some studies that indicate the effectiveness of e-learning compared to traditional methods. By studying through e-learning, students can increase their high level of learning achievement and higher-order thinking abilities because they engage in the learning process anytime and anywhere (Chen, Lambert & Guidry, 2010). E-Learning is using the power of the network to enable learning, anytime, anywhere.

Different researchers characterized the term E-Learning as the utilization of new and present-day Information and Communications (ICT) with the assistance of systems of PCs to give learning materials, teaching, and data to partners (Li & Masters, 2009). That is to say, apart from the Internet, ICT systems only require network connectivity to act as the technological basis for E-Learning. E-Learning is the delivery of content via all electronic media, including the Internet, intranets, extranets, satellite broadcast, audio/video tape, interactive TV and CD-ROM (Waterhouse, 2003). E-Learning comprises all forms of electronically supported learning and teaching. The E-Learning definition that is considered in this study is learning via the Internet and having interaction between students and teachers.

In the literature, different studies have an interest in how students perceive the concept of E-learning, especially during COVID-19. A review of the most significant and relevant studies to the purpose of this study is presented.

Bilal Mohd Zakarneh (2018) investigated the effectiveness of E-learning as a platform for teaching the English language in Arab universities. The results revealed that the E-learning platform is an effective platform for teaching English. Data was collected by using a questionnaire and analysed using an excel sheet. The participants learned best through the E-learning mode. They considered the E-learning platform a suitable and better way to

acquire vocabulary, develop speaking skills and English grammar, and as a better tool for exams and assessment.

Golubovie and Herodek (2020) examined the differences in students' attitudes about online teaching, more precisely on the use of the Google classroom platform during COVID-19. A survey about students' attitudes contained 15 items on 7 points Likert-type scale with two open-ended questions regarding their problems and difficulties in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and their opinion about the advantages and disadvantages of distance over classic learning used. The result reported that one of the advantages of distance learning was that they had additional knowledge and skills in the use of technology. They can choose the time and place for solving the tasks of classical education.

Hussein, Daoud, Alrabaiah and Badawi (2020) investigated the attitudes of undergraduate students toward their experience with emergency online learning during the first few weeks of the mandatory shift to online learning caused by COVID-19. Students from two general English courses at a university located in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates were asked to write semi-guided essays during the week preceding the final exams of the second semester of the academic year 2019-20. A sample of these essays was analyzed using open coding. Findings revealed that cost- and time effectiveness, safety, convenience and improved participation were the most frequently cited positive aspects of the emergency online learning experience, while distraction and reduced focus, heavy workload, problems with technology and the Internet, and insufficient support from instructors and colleagues were the most recurrent negative aspects.

Adnan and Anwar (2020) conducted a study to understand students' perspectives on COVID-19 in Pakistan. The findings of the study highlighted that online learning cannot produce desired results in underdeveloped countries like Pakistan, where a vast majority of students are unable to access the internet due to technical as well as monetary issues. The lack of face-to-face interaction with the instruction, response time and absence of traditional classroom socialization were among some other issues highlighted by higher education students.

Nambiar (2020) has conducted a study to understand teachers' and students' perceptions regarding online learning during COVID-19 in India. The participants in this study were 70 teachers and 407 students from universities



and colleges in Bangalore city. The online survey method was used for data collection. The results revealed that students' perception of online classes was a lack of quality. Moreover, technical issues were the main reason for their negative view of online classes.

Cam Lien (2021) conducted a study to identify the views of the EFL learners from faculty of foreign languages on the application of E-learning platforms. Data was collected using a questionnaire. After analyzing students' responses, the results proved that the introduction of E-learning was effective. E-learning also stimulates students to learn English and brings them comfort and joy.

Lastly not least, a study has been carried out (2021) by Muthuprasad, Aiswaraya, Aditya and Girish in the Indian context to understand the agriculture students' perception toward E-learning during COVID-19. The instrument of the study was a questionnaire distributed to 307 students. The main results revealed that the majority of the students were ready to opt for E-learning classes to overcome the pandemic close. Students preferred recorded classes with quizzes at the end to check their understanding. Students from rural areas faced difficulties in using online learning initiatives.

Reviewing the past studies revealed that few works that have studied and understood students' perspectives on E-learning during Covid-19; Adnan & Anwar (Pakistan), Cam lien (Vietnam), Zakarneh (Arab world), Muthuprasad, Aiswaraya, Aditya and Girish K. Jha (2021) and Nambiar (India), Aleksic-Veljkovic, Stankovic, Golubovic-Ilic and Herodek (Serbia), and Hussein, Daoud, Alrabaiah and Badawi (UAE). The result of these studies indicated that students in underdeveloped countries have a negative attitude toward E-learning because network connections and insufficient support from teachers.

Overall, there is still a gap in the literature that needs investigation. The above-reviewed studies investigated the students' perspectives in different countries, however; comparing Libyan students' attitudes towards E-learning demands investigation to understand their views and perspectives. To the best of our knowledge, study on students from English and Arabic departments has not been attempted to understand. We try to fill this gap with our study by drawing insights from the literature in conceptualizing the problem, exclusively concentrating our attention on online learning in education faculty.

3. Method

This study investigated the Libyan students' perceptions of E-learning in Fezzan University. This study utilized a descriptive quantitative design to obtain the opinions of the respondents. Nearly all the students in the English and Arabic departments from faculty of education \Traghen took part in the study. The sample of the study included 118 undergraduate students: 59 from each department. There are about 60 students in each department, but 90% returned, this percentage is enough to ensure the validity and reliability of the results of the study. All the students who participated in the survey were currently attending online courses or included those who finished their last semester virtually. The data of the present study was collected by using a convenient sampling technique. The convenient availability of participants from the two selected departments was the sample in the study. This method was the most appropriate method when the selected respondents according to their convenience, availability and accessibility.

This study conducted a questionnaire to the participants. Five-point Likert scale was used to collect the opinions of Libyan students on the E-learning class. Five-point Likert scale indicates with one being strongly disagreed and five being strongly agreed. The questionnaire was adopted from Kulal and Nayak (2020) because the questionnaire was tested for its reliability and validity. The questions were written in English and Arabic because students from the Arabic department need them in the Arabic language. The questionnaire consisted of demographic questions, and questions regarding perceptions of "Impact," "Comfortability" and "Support from the teacher".

Questionnaires were distributed to participants by using Google form, and participants were informed that all opinions provided by them were kept confidential. The data were collected and recorded in a systematic way, later analyzed quantitatively by using Excel sheet. Collected data were categorized into demographic information, perception and tools used. Secondary sources are used for reviewing the concept and supporting the findings.

3.1 Demographic Information of the Participants

The demographic details of Libyan students from the language departments were collected to know their background like gender, age group, computer knowledge, and tools used for E-learning. The following table explains the



demographic background of the respondents. Table 1 shows that females are major in respondents, i.e. 52 in Arabic department and 54 students in English department. For making online classes, computer knowledge or Internet knowledge is essential. Therefore the researcher asked the students about the level of expertise in computer handling. The result showed that the majority of the students (42.4%) had good level of computer knowledge.

Table 1 Demographic Information of the Participants

Students' demographic information		N of students in Arabic	N of students in English
gender	Male	7	5
	Female	52	54
Age group	18 – 25	44	52
	26 – 30	15	5
	31 – 35		2
Computer Knowledge	Very good	10	15
	Good	25	25
	Average	16	16
	Poor	8	3
Tools used for E-learning	Google classroom	47	53
	Zoom	1	51
	YouTube	2	12
	Whatsapp	43	53
	Telegram	10	4
	Google Meet	4	42

There are enormous numbers of social media and E-learning tools available in the market. Some of the tools are free, and some of the tools are premium.

To know the popular tools used among participants, the researcher were asked to mention the tools they used for their E-learning classes. For this question, participants can specify more than one option. The result of the matter is depicted in the (Table 1).

From the table, we can quickly identify that among the many popular E-learning tools available in Libya “Google classroom” is the most used (N 47 from Arabic department and 53 students from English department) and preferred tools. Whatsapp considered the second most popular (43 students from Arabic department and 53 from English department) and preferred tool for an online class. However, students from English department showed the use of more applications than Arabic department students in Zoom and Google Meet.

4. Result of Students’ Perceptions on E-Learning

The following are the results of the data analysis of the Libyan perceptions toward E-learning from a comparative viewpoint.

It is students whose opinion matters most in the education system. E-learning classes may become a chunk of the future education system, but it cannot be carried for the future unless students accept it. According to Eastmond (1995), students’ comprehension, mindset and attitude toward online classes are essential aspects for the success of online teaching. It is crucial to create an opportunity for outside interaction between faculty and students (Levine, 2005) to increase the motivation of students to learn.

Therefore, the survey asked students about the impact of E-learning on their studies, comfortability and support from their teachers. To observe the selected variables, a questionnaire was adapted by asking statements on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The following is the statistics analysis of the data.

4.1 Impact

Table 2 shows descriptive analysis for the impact factor, from the table, it is found that the highest Mean was awarded to the statement (Online classes have increased my technological literacy) in both groups with mean value (3.37) in students from Arabic department and Mean value (3.58) in students from English department. It is followed by the statement (I have positive impact on my studies due to online class) with mean value (3.31) in Arabic



data and the statement (I feel online classes help me to gain more knowledge) with mean value (3.31) in English data. While the lowest average was awarded to the statement (Multimedia based learning in online classes has facilitated better understanding off the topic) with mean (2.88) in Arabic data, but the statement (Online classes have enhanced my motivation and concentration level) had the lowest average in English data with mean (2.95). The notable result is that the two groups indicated the same weighted average of Impact factor with (3.17) which indicated that the trend of impact factor is (neutral), as a general trend according to 5-point Likert scale.

Table 2 Descriptive statistic of Impact factor

Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	A Mean	Rank	E Mean	Rank
I have positive impact on my studies due to online class	59	1	5	3.31	2	3.05	3
Online classes have increased my technological literacy	59	1	5	3.37	1	3.58	1
I feel online classes help me to gain more knowledge	59	1	5	3.20	3	3.31	2
Multimedia based learning in online classes have facilitated better understanding off the topic	59	1	5	2.88	5	2.97	4
Online classes have enhanced my motivation and concentration level	59	1	5	3.08	4	2.95	5
Total mean				3.17		3.17	

The following graph illustrates the mean of impact factor from Libyan students at Fezzan University.

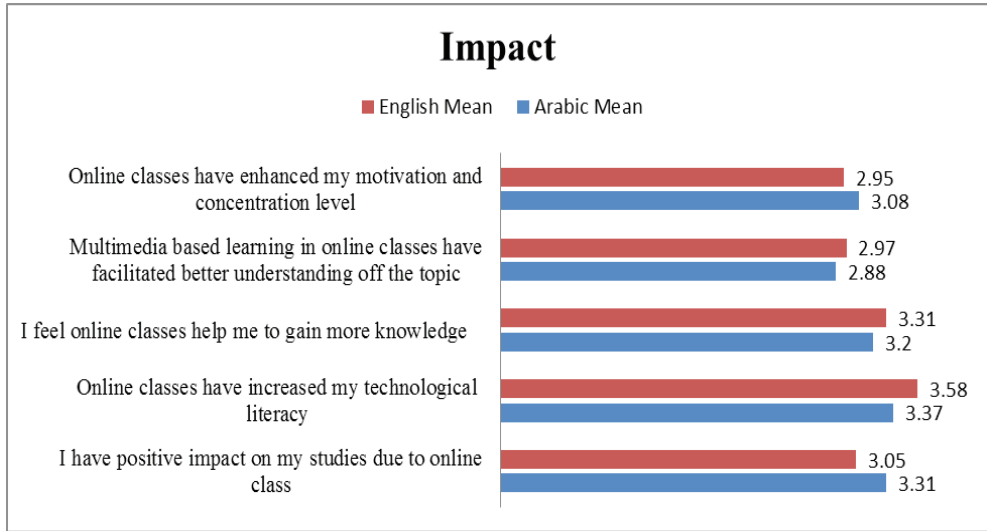


Figure 1 Impact Factor

4.2 Comfortability

Table 3 shows the descriptive analysis of comfortability factor of students to E-learning. It is found that the highest mean was awarded to the statement (I need training to be able to use the online learning tools effectively) with mean value (3.90) in respondents from Arabic department and mean value (3.81) in result from students at English department. Both groups (agree) according to 5-point Likert scale. The lowest average was awarded to the statement (I believe that learning on the internet outside off class is more motivating than a regular class.) in both groups (Arabic and English) with mean value (2.93) and (2.63) respectively, followed by the statement (I feel learning is same in class and at home in 20the internet) with mean (2.53) in Arabic data and (2.17) in English data.

The weighted mean of the second factor Comfortability was moderate (neutral) with mean (3.13) in responses from Arabic students and (3.02) in responses from students of English department. The general trend was considered moderate level according to 5-point Likert scale.



Table 3 Descriptive Statistic of Comfortabilty Factor

Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	A Mean	rank	E Mean	Rank
I feel comfortable using online learning tools	59	1	5	2.95	5	2.81	4
I feel learning is same in class and at home in 20the internet	59	1	5	2.53	7	2.17	7
I need training to be able to use the online learning tools effectively	59	1	5	3.90	1	3.81	1
I find it hard to stick to a study schedule of the on-line class	59	1	5	3.15	3	3.61	2
I feel puzzled and frustrated with the content delivered in online class	59	1	5	3.34	2	3.39	3
Online classes make me feel connected to my teacher as they would be in face to face learning	59	1	5	3.14	4	2.71	5
I believe that learning on the internet outside off classis more motivating than a regular class.	59	1	5	2.93	6	2.63	6
				3.13		3.02	

The following is the graph that illustrates the perceptions of the students from Arabic and English departments.

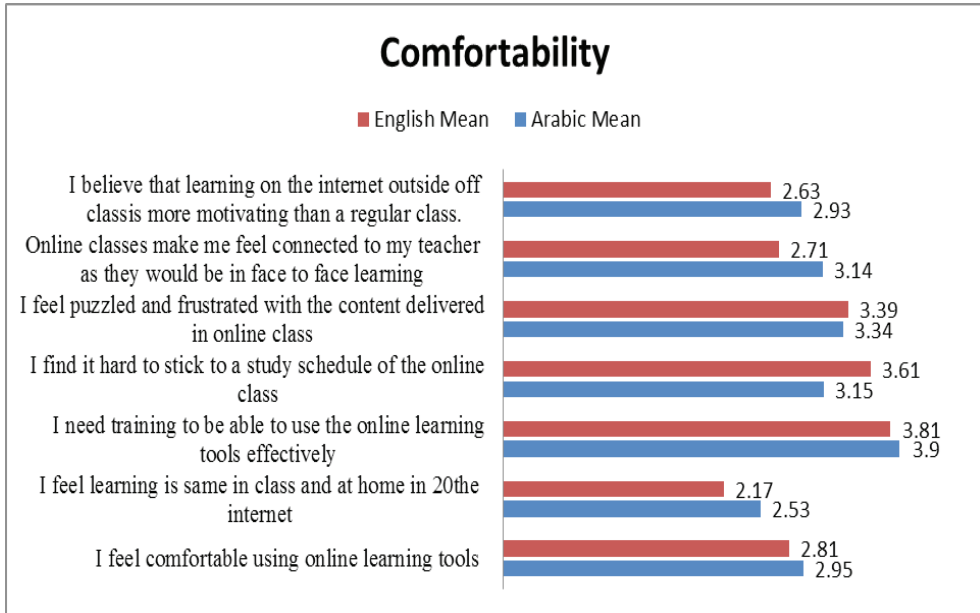


Figure 2 Comfortability Factor

4.3 Supports from Teachers

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of the third factor support from teacher. The statement (My teacher helps me when I have difficulty with the computer/ smartphone) awarded the highest average in both groups with mean value (3.68) in responses from students in Arabic department and with mean value (4.00) of English language department students. This indicated that both groups (agree) according to 5-point Likert scale. The lowest mean was awarded to the statement (Teachers are facing difficulty in the retention of students) with mean value (3.24) in Arabic department and (3.29) in English department. Therefore, the weighted average of support from teacher factor was (mean 3.44) in Arabic department and (3.57) in English department which indicated that the general trend is (Agree) which consider a high level according to 5-point Likert scale.



Table 4 Descriptive Statistic Support from Teacher

Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	A Mean	Rank	E Mean	Rank
I receive enough support and resources from my teacher	59	1	5	3.37	4	3.51	3
My teacher encourages discussion in online class	59	1	5	3.31	5	3.44	5
My teacher sets guidelines for effective communication and interaction in online class	59	1	5	3.56	2	3.49	4
My teacher motivates me to complete my homework	59	1	5	3.49	3	3.71	2
Teachers are facing difficulty in the retention of students	59	1	5	3.24	6	3.29	6
My teacher helps me when I have difficulty with the computer/ smart-phone	59	1	5	3.68	1	4.00	1
Total mean				3.44		3.57	

To provide evident to the previous result, the graph below illustrate the Mean value of support from teacher in the two studied groups.

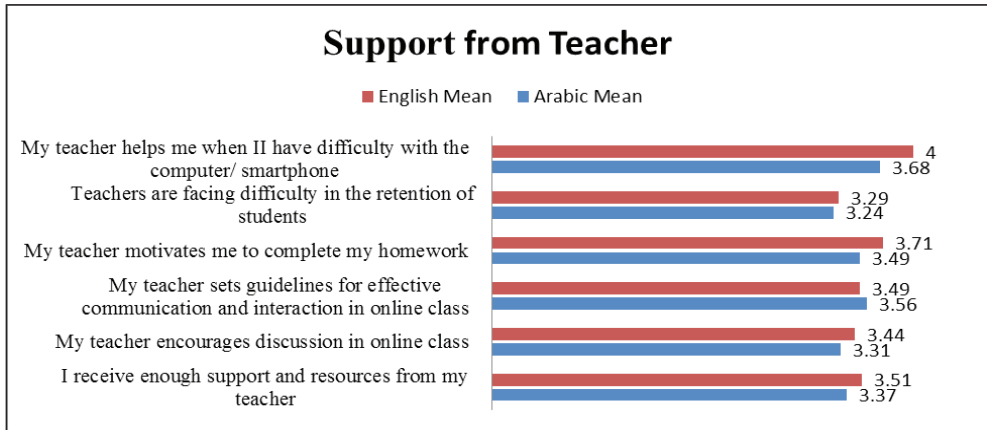


Figure 3 Supports from Teachers factor

4.4 Positive and Negative Perception

In order to answer the second research question, the analyzed data has been divided into two aspects, i.e. (1) positive perception and (2) negative perception. A positive attitude is based on all positive beliefs of students towards E-learning class, and negative perception is based on all negative feelings or views of an online course. These classifications are explained below,

4.4.1 Positive Perception

The positive statements like (I have a positive impact on my studies due to online classes), (I feel comfortable using online learning tools) and (I receive enough support and resources from my teacher) make one aspect, i.e. positive perception. Here we considered all positive statements of students from Arabic department in one group and calculated combined mean for that group and result showed in (Table 5) which says that teachers help students when they have difficulties with their smartphones and computers (M 3.68). Teachers set guidelines for effective communication (M 3.56). Teachers encourage discussion and students have positive impact on online classes (3.31). Online classes increased the technological literacy and students receive enough support from their teachers (M 3.37).

On the other hand, positive statements of students from English department also considered in one group and calculated combined mean in (Table 6)

which says that teachers help the students when they have difficulties (M 4.00). Teachers motivate students to complete their tasks (M 3.71). Online classes increased technological literacy of the students (M 3.58). Students receive enough support from the teachers (3.51). It is noticed that the teachers help their students in solving the difficulties they face is the highest Mean between the two groups.

Table 5 Combined Mean of Positive and Negative Perception of Students from Arabic Department

Descriptive statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Positive perception	59	2.53	3.68	3.20	1.413
Negative perception	59	3.15	3.90	3.41	1.318

Table 6 Combined mean of positive and negative perception of students from English department

Descriptive statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Positive perception	59	2.17	4.00	3.17	1.352
Negative perception	59	2.71	3.81	3.30	1.308

4.4.2 Negative Perception

Negative statements of data from students who studied in Arabic department like, (they need training to be able to use E-learning tools effectively) (M 3.90), (I feel puzzled and frustrated with the content delivered in online classes) and (Teachers are facing difficulty in the retention of students) (M 3.24). However, in data from students who studied in English department, negative statements like (they need training to be able to use E-learning tools effectively) (M 3.81), (they find it difficult to stick to timetable of online classes) (M 3.39).

A combined mean of positive perception and negative perception of both groups (Table 5 & 6) tell us that students from Arabic department perceived E-learning classes negatively with a mean value of (3.41), which is higher than positive perception mean value (3.20). Similarly, students from English department perceived E-learning classes negatively with mean value (3.30), which is higher than positive perception mean value (3.17). Therefore, overall, students have definite opinions about online classes.

5. Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to understand the perspectives of Libyan students in two language departments. Students from Fezzan University indicated negative perceptions toward E-learning.

The result of the current study indicated that Libyan students from the two departments need practice on technological tools to accept E-learning. Even though they get benefit from E-learning in increasing their technological literacy. It is recommended that to provide good environment of E-learning to be more effective and smooth. Students need support from their teachers when they have technical problems with their smartphones or computers were found with significant value. This is in line with the result of Namiar (2020) who found that technical support was an important factor critical to determine satisfaction with online classes. However, this result is inconsistent with Kulal and Nayak (2020) when the students responded that teachers support them in effective interaction rather than with technical problems. In the result of this study, students reported that they need enough training to be able to use E-learning tools effectively. Muthuparasad, Aiswaraya, Aditya and Girish (2021) in their study has found that students from rural area face difficulties in online learning . Adnan and Anwar (2020) found to be consistent with the result of the current study in that E-learning is not desired in Pakistan because of technological problems. Therefore, the result of the present study is in tandem with previous studies where support especially technologically found to be the most influence factor.

Another notable finding of this study is that students rated the use of E-learning puzzled and frustrated the content delivered in E-learning classes and they found it is hard to stick with the online schedule. Lein (2021) concluded that students need to be instructed under direct supervision of the teachers to receive effective E-learning. In addition, Muthuprasad, Aiswaraya, Aditya and Girish (2021) reported that students preferred well-structured content to ease their study through recoded videos uploaded in university sites. This means that the Libyan lecturers need to their teaching techniques and skills in virtual classes.

Therefore, all these findings should be considered while improving E-learning classes to make them more effective and productive for the students in the future. It is recommended after the COVID-19 settles down;



we need to continue increasing in education systems using online platforms for study aids, albeit in hybrid mode in combination with regular classes. Thus this research paper will prove useful for reimaging and redesigning the higher education with components involving E-learning mode.

6. Conclusion

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, education institutions are searching for ways and approaches to ceaselessly build up the learning process to adapt to the situation. Based on the aim of this study is to understand the view of students in English and Arabic departments toward E-learning. This research found out that English and Arabic Libyan students from Fezzan University tended to believe that E-learning is favourable and helpful because it increases their technological literacy. However, based on comfortability of using E-learning, students complained about the content and timetable of E-learning.

The statistical results of this study showed no significant differences between the students from Arabic and English department in their attitudes toward E-learning because Results of the current study indicate that students' perceptions directed to negative perception rather than positive perception. Further research need to study the perspectives of teachers and students at Libyan universities not only one institution.

It is recommended to study students' perspectives to understand the challenges and difficulties that might prevent them from having effective e-learning. The finding of the current study will help decision-makers to adopt the online mode of teaching and learning in the future. The findings also will help instructors and institutions understand students' attitudes regarding online learning under abnormal circumstances.

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The Role of Observation and Monitoring of E-Learning Program at the English Language Department, Faculty of Arts, University of Tripoli

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Abstract

Away from traditional teaching methods which require face-to-face class attendance, teaching and learning nowadays are exposed to different educational changes by using different techniques such as online classes, e-teaching apps, and so forth. This study is in favour of electronic educational method as its different electronic teaching channels can come up with good and effective results while the traditional methods fail to do so. The data was collected from interviews and observations and from the participants who were students and colleagues. This paper shows also the importance of being a supervisor and highlights the rate of students' involvement and lecturers' interest in e-learning/teaching during the Covid-19 crisis.

This study creates two labels; one deals with the channels of English teaching subjects while the other captures the general subjects. It also asks questions about the benefits behind using the materials well, following electronic teaching strategies, taking exams online, measuring the extent of the students' involvement with the lecturers, and observing their respect of the instructions related to the channels. It eventually concludes that the general subjects were not able to get good results while the English subjects of the English Department's two specialties (Translation and Literature) somehow achieved their teaching targets and received favourable feedback from students. The paper, moreover, explores the interaction between the



students and the lecturers online and how the head supervisor plays a role of a consultant to advise the lecturers towards using the best technology to record the lessons and make the connection flexible and easy.

The findings of this study demonstrate how beneficial is the use of electronic learning during the lockdown which helped all students carry on their study without any obstacles.



Introduction

In general, the strategy of teaching electronically helps the instructor to work freely irrespective of time and use the appropriate teaching material according to the students' needs. It also allows the teacher to re-record the lessons and prepare questions and manage the feedback easily. The instructors' self-evaluation is beneficial as they take into consideration the positive and negative points of their teaching style. Moreover, the interaction between the students and instructors run smoothly. Thus both feel comfortable asking and answering what is required. "Students in online learning conditions performed modestly better than those receiving face-to-face instruction." Generally instructors can provide students with different online easy access resources that develop their learning and widen their knowledge. To students, learning electronically open variant aspects of absorbing the educational subject materials effectively and intelligently as they are supported with time and resources they can search for without any time consuming. Visual and audio learning process is being utilized to help them get the self-learning improvement. Cooperation online empowers their self-confidence as they find enjoyment in taking enough time to write the assignments.

The purpose of Study

Supervising digital channels of all teaching subjects depends on a precise plan, which is based on a pioneering study in this field since the English department adopted e- learning during the period of Covid-19 pandemic and wars. Therefore, the Head of English Department and the Head of study and examinations office chose to monitor the electronic educational process closely for several reasons;

- 1 -Students do not have a chance to call off semesters for another year due to civil wars;
- 2- A new experiment for some instructors who have a lack of technology background, or the ones who are willing to experience this e-learning program;
- 3- To assure that this program has come true and gotten over the obstacles to the ones who doubt the success of the e-learning process in a country where electricity and network are often off;
- 4- To improve instructors' and students' communication skills electronically;
- 5- To establish the culture of being observed or monitored by a head supervisor;
- 6- To build a collaborative teamwork within the institution members;
- 7-To widen students' learning knowledge by getting them more exposed to online resources such as e-books, educational videos, and free online apps for their assignments.

Background

Digital classroom generally need to have a head instructor, head supervisor and active participants. They all require having a supervision system to be applied in the e-learning process. One of the studies addresses the e-supervision in University of Southern California. A paper titled “An E-supervision System in Education Environment” written by Hanadi Mardah who highlights that the e-supervision process creates a collaborative environment between the teacher and the supervisor which acquires more skills, experiences, attitudes, and teaching strategies and others. And e-supervision system reduces time, cost, and potentials which are needed in supervision processes. The researcher concentrates on how to provide a good proposed E-Supervision System Architecture, educational supervising model, and the portfolio assessment system. And her methodology is based on traditional supervision system applied in girl education by interviews, web-sites, and referencing books or sheets to define the problems. In the other side, this research included the roles of the head supervisor in e-learning as a facilitator, consultant, observer, and monitor for undergraduate students aged 19-25 and instructors – MA and PHD holders at the English Department of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Tripoli.



Limitations of the study

This study is divided into two fields: the first one is the average of students' involvement and participation in the Electronic Learning Channels of all teaching subjects; while the second is about the instructors' good use of technology. The students reported limited attention and involvement in general subjects such as psychology, Libyan geography, and Arabic language with its all branches, as they have shown weak participation due to the absence of instructors online and some of students, from different departments, misbehaved and tried to make some problems. On the other hand, the English subjects of both Sections (Literature and Translation) proved their strength when using technology. A few instructors of the English Department were unwilling to get involved in this program and refused to help recording the lectures and uploading them to students as they said this was neither a Higher Ministry of Education nor a Faculty of Arts program.

The Research Questions

The research questions which concern the e-learning process are:

- Q1- Will all channels be created in a specific time as required by a head supervisor?
- Q2- Do all the channels have the course description for more clarification to students?
- Q3- Do all students join and participate in all channels?
- Q4- Are all instructors able to use technology well in e-learning program?
- Q5- Are all instructors interested in being members of this program?
- Q6- Will this program succeed?

The Procedure

Designing E-learning Content

The role of observation and monitoring in this study is meant to facilitate the instructors' teaching methods, which enhance the quality of education they are providing to students. The *Journal of Central New Mexico Community College in Peer online Observation* illustrates that "Online class observations

are meant to facilitate an instructor's professional growth. They will be used to create an opportunity for reflection and stimulate ideas for improvement in the online environment.”

1-The Role of the Head Supervisor of the E-learning Program

Electronic learning and teaching program has invaded the world during the time of Covid 19. It is considered as one of the valuable tools that connect University instructors and learners online instead of attending face-to-face classes. The article “What is E.learning and know the Imoprtance of E.learning in Education” assumes that “E-learning has been introduced to empower learners to get basic schooling and enhance skills. Also, they can obtain a degree certificate, without actually attending school.” Meanwhile instructors and learners need to follow a system and policy that provide them with standard rules they all have to respect and obey. The system requires disciplined organization requiring a head supervisor of this electronic educational process. Furthermore, the supervisor is supposed to play different roles such as: observer, consultant, and monitor. Therefore, all instructors, students, teaching subjects and materials, and teaching electronic channels are being observed according to standard criteria given by a supervisor as he/she must have an awareness of students' needs, problems and obstacles and have the ability to solve the problems the students face as professor Najia Gjam said in an interview that took place with her online. “The head supervisor should have enough techno experience, knowledge and ability to sort technical problems out which occur during the learning process such as difficulty of communication with students on Telegram channels. Moreover the observer or monitor should have the highest flexibility towards implementations of the e-learning and teaching strategies such as having technical issues in uploading the lectures –which in turn lowers the quality of the lecture regarding the sound, in addition to students joining the channels late due to their lack of using technology in e-education. The observer must therefore help each latecomer by individually sending messages containing clear explanations with visual aids of how to join channels, participate, and respond to the instructors' questions. This was the same with instructors who have complained about not having used technology (telegram app) in their career. This was solved by sending them detailed messages carrying detailed steps of how to create an admin channel, a discussion group channel



connected to the admin channel, record lectures using a recorder app which allows to upload the book and record the lecture to facilitate the students' understanding by looking at the book as well as listening to the instructor's voice explaining the lecture. The observer sometimes had to use phone calls for further explanations to students and instructors as well. In addition to that, the head supervisor has found a way to reduce obstacles, such as the students' inability to join the teaching channel of an instructor, by adding instructors to the students' inquiries channel and they in turn reply to their inquiries.

Being a good supervisor, an observer or a mentor, one should have an awareness of a teaching process and a well-planned course strategy, a flexibility to train a personality to make a good balance between positive and negative reflections or feedbacks on lectures, having responsibility to handle any teaching issues, creating a rapport between an observer and a student, and be a friend to instructors. "Training Express" in an article of "Top 10 Supervisory Skills for a Good Supervisor" clarifies that "Supervising means directing and guiding others in an efficient and productive way. Supervisors are responsible for this job." Besides that, the observer must have good techno experience and enough time to be available when needed.

2- The strategy of E-Mentoring and observation.

Monitoring the electronic teaching performances of instructors is a fundamental way to establish a disciplined teaching environment and create a convenient atmosphere that helps them to be more creative and show a desire to make the e-learning program see the light at the end of the tunnel. Following a similar teaching strategy clarified by a head supervisor organizes the educational process in a way the materials can be prepared well, the questions set up to check understanding, feedbacks given to encourage students to work hard, the exam designed properly and finally time managed for each lesson. Discipline instructions which are set up for instructors build a strong satisfaction to respect the relation that connects the administration with teaching staff in the institution, the involvement and commitment of each one rope the educational program in a one tie which gives a support to the whole team as everyone gives lectures on time by recording them earlier and uploading on time. Moreover weekly reports submitted to instructors are aimed to show their online teaching developments and the points needed

to work on. Jennifer Leonard, in “How Administrators Monitor Progress in Virtual Environment,” states that “monitoring progress for both students and teachers will help to build and maintain an effective program as well as provide the information needed to make informed decisions,” On the other side, the students need to be observed regarding joining the teaching channels correctly, using their real names, participating regularly, and watching their behaviours. One electronic channel named “Students’ Inquires” has been created to gather all students together, save time for giving instructions, set up rules, get them updated with all institution news and readily reply to their inquiries at any time. On the other hand, the role of consultant helpfully wipes most of the obstacles that instructors and students encounter in using technology by guiding them to the right path showing the good teaching apps and exploring techno knowledge through either individual or group sessions, as some of them lack techno experience and fear of technology twist their hands and minds of getting started the electronic lessons. Consultation does not only all fall for the techno problems, it also dives in an ocean of planning lessons, choosing appropriate materials, pre and post lesson evaluations, giving pieces of advice to change their behavior, and advising instructors to show some more flexibility with students who have no techno experience such as sending and writing emails, responding to the group discussion or joining teaching channels.

3-The divisions of Channels

A – The channel of Instructor Discussion Group

The apps used in this study are many to have different varieties for students and instructors as well. For examples, for the instructors a Whatsapp group has been created to discuss different issues and try to sort them out. This kind of cooperation makes the atmosphere of the team work very comfortable and effective to share their different perspectives. Weekly reports submitted in the Whatsapp group encourage the ones who are still behind to work harder and crown the working hard instructors.

B- Students’ inquiries channel

For students , there are two apps used, one is a formal Facebook page named University of Tripoli- faculty of Arts- English language learners. It is for formal announcements such as the timetable of exams and faculty



announcements and easily accessible for visitors. Students' privacy digs in a certain telegram channel named Students' Inquiries. This channel is divided into two mini channels, one is not accessible, that means the students are not able to write comments, it is only used by an administrator or mentor to write attentions, announcements, dates of exams, warnings and so on; while the other channel named "students discussion group" is used for students to write comments, inquiries or ask questions where comments can be turned off a time the mentor specifies.

C- The channels of the two English Department Sections: Literature and Translation

The channels of the two sections are similar in a form and content where they represent their full course description either by voice mail or written form, they eliminate any misunderstanding which might happen. The course description carries a course plan, the dates of mid-tem and final exams and assignment submission, the lecture timetable. The channels are also responsible for uploading the recorded lectures on a specific time, give and receive feedback. On the other side, punctuality is an obstacle for some instructors and students and this is due to power cuts and weak or slow network coverage. Instructors often complain, as Marwa, an instructor in the English Department, said in an online interview," about students not taking e-learning seriously and inventing absence excuses not to respond to questions or send assignments."

D- The channels of General Subjects.

The general subjects are considered as mandatory. Instructors of such courses are therefore asked to create two channels; one was for discussion, the other for uploading recorded lectures. As some instructors do not belong to the English Department, communication becomes the barrier between the administration of English Language Department and the "foreign" instructors who neither accept the program nor show desire to create teaching channels. The Head of Study and Examination got involved to solve the problem and create channels to upload the lectures.

E- The E-Teaching Strategies

If the e-learning discipline sets up rules for instructors and students to follow and respect, it will definitely lead to the success of the e-teaching program at

the end. The discipline requires an equivalent teaching and learning strategy which every teaching staff member and student is supposed to respect. The strategies which have been given to all instructors are

Using Authentic and Relevant Course material

- 1- Variety of online content and resources to create community such as phone calls, telegram voice chats, Google class rooms or zoom
- 2- Students working or participating collaboratively or individually.
- 3- Describing a course before it is given the green light.
- 4- Uploading lectures and pre and post lesson questions on time.
- 5- Giving time to students to reflect on the lectures.
- 6- Open options for students' participation, individually or collaboratively, according to an instructor's directives, as "learning platforms can be used to engage students and make them feel more excited about class."
- 7- Variety in using classroom roles; it could be teacher- centered or a student-centered according to the lecture needs.
- 8- A teacher's observing students interaction and participation weekly and reflecting on them by writing a report to the head supervisor.
- 9- Personalized notes given on personal accounts to both instructors and students who sometimes show no desire to achieve their tasks.
- 10- Instructors having a weak experience in using e-classrooms were helped by the head supervisor by opening channels and uploading lectures for them. This hindrance only happened with the general subjects. It results in a weak interaction and participation of students on those channels as it was due to the absence of instructors online and their unwillingness or inability to respond to students' questions as well as a big number of non-English Department Students who caused some trouble and drove the Head Supervisor to turn off the comments.

Aspects of E-Teaching and learning improvements

Learning from classmates – colleagues

As it has been observed, students have had a chance to learn from each other either by sharing knowledge, peer correction, group work to exchange ideas



or give a hand to help the ones who have had a weak capacity to comprehend an e-lecture. On the other side, instructors are allowed by a head supervisor to join their colleagues' channels to learn about how to address a lecture electronically and widen their knowledge by reading what is on a channel. In *Journal of Teachers observing Teachers, A professional Development Tool for Every School*, Stephanie Hirsh, executive director of Learning Forward, claims that "Teacher observation is one model of professional learning that is key to supporting a new vision for professional development." "Being a mentor and observing my peers is truly enlightening," Brasslow told Education World. "I see many different learning styles and I love watching student/teacher interactions."

Establishing a culture

It is essential to establish a culture of instructors observing instructors without any sights of embarrassment or teaching privacy interference. This creates a collaborative environment which builds trust, accepts the concept of peer observation and allows them to learn different effective teaching methods and perspectives, and improve their teaching quality by taking the strong and effective feedback (method) to their classes to be applied. Furthermore, accepting the observation culture eliminates a traditional phenomenon that says that the focus would be more on performance than on professional growth.

Extended professional development

Observing other instructors takes actual practice to the forenote which means the more one observes the better he/she acquires new teaching skills. To have widely shared benefits of teaching experiments, let the instructors have more observations and know that they are themselves observed by a head supervisor to set up a control avoiding any chaotic problems or mistakes might shake the learning system. There is no right method for teaching; but when instructor and observer work together and reflect on teaching behaviour and performance, the the result will certainly be satisfactory. On the other hand, attending conferences or discussion sessions related to teaching programs feeds an institution with new teaching experiments and ideas and brings into the classroom what has been perhaps foreign to it.

Method Design

The designs of the research methodology were based on primary study and qualitative method for data collection. It has been basically distributed into

two main schemas: the first method concentrates on students' participation and effectively enrolling in e-Learning course which is clarified in the two charts below and the second one puts a light on the instructors' perspectives of e-learning program using a table showing their different concepts.

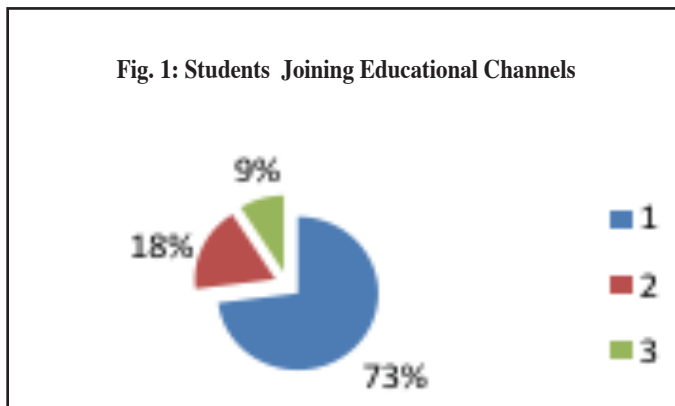
Setting and Participants

The study was conducted electronically in Autumn 2021-2022 using Telegram Channels and number of viewers on the channels. There were two types of participants distributed into two charts and one table. The first type is the number of participants which was 120 undergraduate students from the first semester to the eighth semester studying 127 subjects at the English Department, Faculty of Arts, University of Tripoli. The number of channels was 127 related to both literature and translation sections. The second type of participants were 15 instructors whose specialties were literature, translation, and applied and theoretical linguistics; two of them are PhD holders, while thirteen are MA holders.

Data collection

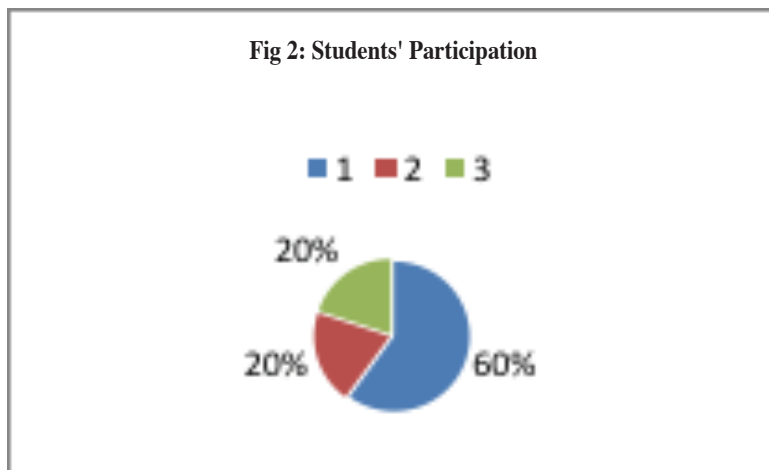
The method of data collected was a qualitative method. The electronic observation for students is illustrated in figures 1 and 2 while online interviews for instructors figure in a table 1.

Data Analysis



1- Students joined with no technical obstacles; 2- lately joined facing technical obstacles; 3- Refused to join)

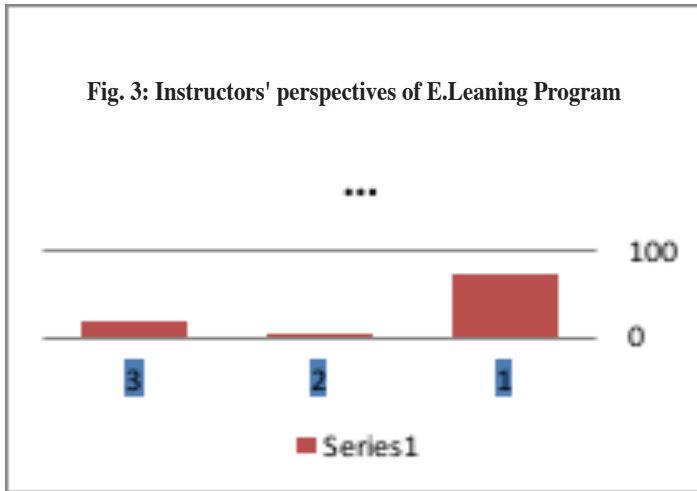
In Figure 1, Data was analyzed according to the number of students who electronically enrolled in the e-learning programs. That only took place by the number of participants of every educational channel; an instructor or observer could count the number of participants and compare it to the formal list of names given by the head of study and examination of the department. As a result, 73% of students directly joined the channels after reading the instructions shown on the students' inquires channel. Those students faced no technical problems joining the channels and the head supervisor received no questions from them. 18% faced some technical problems and took some time joining channels, as they asked for further help, forcing the head supervisor either to clarify more on the students' inquiries channel using visual aids sending voice mails or making individual phone calls; while 9% were absent and neither joined online nor sent excuse emails. However, they only showed on final exams, as they report that the reason behind their absence during the semester was the absence of internet coverage in the area where they reside.



1- Highly Active Participant- 2- Weakly Active Participant- 3- Non- Active Participant

Figure 2 shows data analysed regarding the activeness of participants who joined the electronic learning channels. As is illustrated, 60 % of participants were highly active as they replied to the post questions of the lessons, shared knowledge with their classmates, asked questions the instructors misunderstanding questions, and joined voice chat on live stream.

An observer noted that they performed their tasks correctly while 20% were weakly active students who participated in channels once or twice a week; e.g they answered the questions of the previous lessons while their colleagues were working on a different lesson.



1- strongly agree 2- slightly agree 3- strongly disagree

Figure 3 illustrates the instructors' perspectives of online observation and mentoring of their digital channels. The method used was online interview by asking them the question "do you accept the idea of being observed and monitored, and was it essential and effective in e-learning program?" The result shows that 20% of them refused the idea of being observed by a head supervisor and their reasons were the head supervisor is not supposed to spy on their channels, that he should have taken permission from the Head of the Department, and that he must be qualified to be a head observer. Almost 7% agreed to be observed but upon a few conditions as they claim that observation is an embarrassing theme to some students and instructors as well. And it could be also a form of intrusion into the instructors' teaching privacy. 73% highly agreed on mentoring their channels. They strongly assure that the role of the observer is to make a teaching process more organized and valuable. Supervision, they insist, is considered an administrative reference in terms of responding to any inquiries. It provides the instructors with information about students' academic profiles and some urgent



conditions could happen regarding educational process within the semester.

Conclusion

Supervision of Electronic Learning channels is considered one of the fundamental methods that organizes the learning process in terms of setting up strategies, giving notes, and submitting weekly reports to instructors. It is additionally concerned about the students and instructors' interests of being active members in this program. As it is pointed out in this paper, most of students and instructors effectively activated the program and did all they could to make it succeed while some refused to join. The refusal of some affected neither the e-learning process nor its members. Apart from that, students were intensively monitored so that they would not misbehave and would be available to reply to the inquiries. Instructors' strategies and teaching performances in digital channels, on the other hand, were monitored to offer technical or educational assistance whenever it is encountered. If there had not been cooperation between the teaching staff, the students, and the supervisor, the e-learning program would not have succeeded.

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English Major Students' Preferences for Digital and Printed Academic Readings at Omar Al-Mukhtar and Derna Universities

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the students of English preferences for digital and printed academic reading materials at Omar Al-Mukhtar and Derna Universities and see whether there is a significant difference between males and females' preferences for such reading materials. The data were collected using a 13-item Academic Reading Format International Study (ARFIS) questionnaire developed by Diane Mizrachi et al. in 2018. The questionnaire was administrated in person to students of English (75 females, 25 males) at Omar Al-Mukhtar and Derna Universities. The findings revealed (1) that a very large majority (%80) of the students prefer reading in print rather than in digital format, (2) that about (%90) of the participants said that they could focus on the materials better when they read them in print, and (3) that there is no significant difference between male and female students in terms of preferences for the reading format. The findings are discussed along with some recommendations for instructors at Libyan universities.

Keywords: academic reading; electronic format; print format; preference; university students; English majors





1. Introduction

No one can deny that reading is an important skill for university students. For their academic work, university students read extensively (Pálsdóttir & Einarsdóttir, 2016). Reading materials are essential to the teaching-learning process. In the past several decades, university students were only exposed to printed materials. Nowadays, with the advancement of technology, university students are engaged in reading their academic materials in electronic format. It is critical for university instructors to know whether their students prefer to read course materials in electronic or in print format (Mizrachi , Salaz , Kurbanoglu, & Boustany, 2018) in order to build a collection that matches the needs of the students (Pálsdóttir & Einarsdóttir, 2016).

Several studies have investigated students' preferences for printed or digital texts reading and found that most students advocate reading their academic materials in print rather than reading them in electronic format. However, few studies reported that electronic academic readings were preferred by university students. For example, Kortelainen (2015) surveyed 668 university students to examine their preferences for printed or electronic course readings. Using quantitative data collection method via a web-based questionnaire, the researcher found that a clear majority of the participants favoured their course materials in print format. The findings also indicated that about 78% of the participants said that they could focus on material better when they read it in hard copy, and 69% of the participants remembered information best when reading it in print. In terms of gender difference, the findings reported that there was no difference between male and female students in their preferences for printed or electronic material.

Mizrachi (2015) investigated academic reading format preferences and behaviour of 390 students at the University of California in Los Angeles, using online survey named Academic Reading Questionnaire (ARQ). The findings revealed that 67.7% of the participants preferred to have their course material in print format when they want to achieve a deep learning outcome. Also, the findings indicated that 75% of the respondents favoured to read their course materials in hard copy when it was longer than ten pages.

In their study of 674 students' preferences of reading from the screen or paper at the University of Iceland, Pálsdóttir & Einarsdóttir (2016) found that the students prefer to read their course material in print rather than in

electronic. Based on the students' opinion about their learning engagement, the findings revealed that 74.48% said that they usually highlighted and notated in their printed reading material and that nearly 69% said that they could focus better on their course material if they read it in print. The findings also showed that about 62% of the participants remember information better from their course materials when reading them from print.

In an investigation into the academic reading format preferences of 232 students at the University of Zagreb in Croatia, Pešut & Živković (2016) found that the participants prefer the print format to the electronic one as reading their course materials in print enable them to concentrate and understand the content easily. The findings also revealed that 80% of the participants remember information from course readings best when they read them from printed pages. Furthermore, the findings showed that a large majority of the students (82%) prefer to read in print when the assigned readings are 7 pages or more. These results are corroborated by Mizrachi, et al. (2018), who carried out a global study to look at the reading preferences and behaviours of 10.293 tertiary students. They discovered that the majority of university students prefer to read their academic materials in print format and learn and concentrate better on material presented in print format, with 67.6 -70.6% of each group.

A study by Alamri (2019) examined reading format preferences of 60 ESL students at a midwestern western university in the United States and found that the students favoured printed course materials over digital ones. The findings also revealed that there was no gender difference related to reading format preferences.

An investigation into university students preferences for print and digital course materials and the difference in the attitudes towards academic reading format between males and females was conducted by Alieto et al., (2020). Alieto et al. surveyed 308 pre-service teachers in Filipino and reported that the students prefer to read their academic reading materials in print rather than in electronic, and that there was no significant difference between the reading format preferences and students' gender in their reading course materials. Alieto et al.'s (2020) study seem to support previous studies by Kortelainen (2015) and Alamri (2019) in relation to the findings pertaining to gender differences.

In their study, Piramanayagam and Seal (2020) examined the emergence



of electronic book (e-book) which had changed the use of printed books in the learning process. A questionnaire was used to collect the data from 137 students (77 male and 60 female) and 13 teachers (12 male and 1 female). The students and the teachers' perception on e-books and printed books were analysed by using a pair test. The results revealed that both learners and teachers favoured printed books over e-books mostly for their easy usage and reading.

Stoller & Nguyen (2020) conducted a study on the reading format of 836 university students majoring in English. Using an online survey sent to 17 public universities in Vietnam, the findings indicated that reading printed materials for academic purposes were favoured by 60% of the respondents, whereas only 32% preferred to read their course materials in digital format.

However, a recent study by Mirza, Pathan, Khatoon, and Hassan (2021) investigated the reading preferences of 366 undergraduate students at the University of Mehran in Pakistan, using mixed-method approach. The findings showed that the majority of the participants preferred to read their course materials in electronic format. Such findings did not concur with the findings of erstwhile studies (Kortelainen, 2015; Mizrachi, 2015; Pálsdóttir & Einarisdóttir, 2016; Pešut & Živković, 2016; Mizrachi et al., 2018; Alamri, 2019; Alieto, et al., 2020; Piramanayagam & Seal, 2020; Stoller & Nguyen, 2020) which discovered that reading course materials on paper were preferred by most university students.

Although several studies have looked into the reading preferences of college students around the world, to the best of our knowledge, none have been done in the Libyan setting. In order to address this gap, this study aims to examine the students of English preferences for digital and printed academic reading materials at Omar Al-Mukhtar and Derna universities and see whether there is a significant difference between males and females' preferences for such reading materials. In particular, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are Libyan university students' format preferences when engaging with their academic readings, electronic or print?
2. Is there a significant difference between males and females regarding reading from digital or printed texts?

To answer the two aforementioned questions, a cross-sectional survey research design employing Academic Reading Format International Study (ARFIS) questionnaire was adapted and can be seen in detail in the following section – methodology.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research design

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey research design employing Academic Reading Format International Study (ARFIS) questionnaire developed by (Mizrachi et al., 2018). Survey research is a technique for gathering numerical data from the entire population or a sample of that group “ to describe the attitudes, opinions, beliefs, perceptions, behaviours, or characteristics of the population” (Creswell & Hirose, 2019, p.2). The requirement to contact a large number of individuals drives the adoption of a questionnaire as a data collection technique in this study.

2.2. Participants

The participants in this study were 100 university students (75 females and 25 males) majoring in English at Omar Al-Mukhtar and Derna Universities. The participants are all Libyan EFL learners and their native language is Arabic.

2.3. Instrument

This study adopted the survey tool of Mizrachi et al. (2018) named as Academic Reading Format International Study (ARFIS) questionnaire. The questionnaire asked the students to read and rate the 13 items about students' preferences for digital or printed academic reading materials on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Out of the total 13 items, five of which measures the learning engagement while the remaining 8 items measure reading format preferences. The distribution of the items are as follows: learning engagement (1, 7, 9, 12, and 13) and reading format preferences (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, and 11). In addition to the 13 items, One question is added by the researchers to gather demographic information, gender, which may have an impact on reading format preferences.

2.4. Data collection and analysis

The questionnaire was translated into Arabic (See Appendix) and administrated in class to 100 students (n=66 Omar Al-Mukhtar university



students; n=34 Derna university students) under the supervision of the researchers during the academic year 2021-2022. All participants were taught by the researchers; hence, the data were easily collected. The aim of the study and the instructions were explicitly explained to the participants, and they were informed that there was no right or wrong answers to any questions. The process of distribution and collection of the questionnaire took approximately 25 minutes. After collecting the data, the 100 questionnaires were checked and found no items were missed; therefore, one-hundred (n=100) questionnaires were analyzed in this study. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages). To compare the differences between male and female students in their preferences for digital and printed academic reading materials, chi-square test was conducted.

3. Results and Discussion

As previously mentioned, this study was conducted to examine 100 English major students' preferences for digital and printed course materials at Omar Al-Mukhtar and Derna universities and see whether there is a significant difference between male and female students' preferences for such reading materials. The results obtained from the analysis are presented and discussed in the following subsections.

3.1. Libyan university students' preferences for electronic or printed course readings

Table 1 presents the results of English major Libyan university students' preferences for digital or printed course readings. Overall, a large number of the students are more likely to read their course materials in print format rather than in electronic format. The results also revealed that the majority of the students (81%) prefer to have all their course materials in print format whereas only 6% of them did not do so. About 76% of the participants like printing out their course materials rather than reading them digitally. Furthermore, the results showed that a great number of the participants (77%) favour to read their course readings on paper if they are longer than 5 pages. Although these findings differ from few published studies (Mirza, et al.,2021), they concur with several prior research by Kortelainen (2015), Alamri (2019) and Alieto et al., (2020) who reported that university students endorsed their course materials electronically. The findings of the present study are likely to be due to the reading habits of printed materials which have been lasted for ages in

most Libyan schools and universities.

On the other hand, when it comes to the electronic materials, more than half of the participants (n=56) did not prefer electronic textbooks over print textbooks, yet only 27% of them strongly agreed or agreed with it. The findings also revealed that 57% of the participants strongly disagreed or disagreed that they preferred to study their course materials on screen. Furthermore, the findings revealed that if the assigned reading is fewer than 5 pages long, nearly half of the participants (n=46) are opposed to reading it electronically; however, 29% of them are in favour of it. It is probable that more than a half of English major Libyan university students did not like to read on-screen materials even if they are less than 5 pages because of eyestrain and getting lost when scrolling up and down. Screen reading, according to Farinosi, Lim, and Roll (2016), results in concerns with distraction and a lack of focus.

Table 1. Students' preferences for digital or printed course readings

No	Statement	SA	A	DEP	D	SD
2	It is more convenient to read my assigned readings electronically than to read them in print.	8%	13%	26%	36%	17%
3	I prefer to have all my course materials in print format (e.g. book, course reader, handouts).	60%	21%	13%	6%	0%
4	If an assigned reading is more than 5 pages long, I prefer to read it in print.	42%	35%	12%	10%	1%
5	I prefer to print out my course readings rather than read them electronically.	53%	23%	15%	9%	0%
6	I like to make digital copies of my printed course materials.	9%	27%	36%	21%	7%
8	If an assigned reading is less than 5 pages long, I prefer to read it electronically.	16%	13%	25%	29%	17%
10	I prefer electronic textbooks over print textbooks.	13%	14%	17%	33%	23%
11	I prefer to read my course readings electronically.	9%	11%	23%	30%	27%



3.2. Learning engagement

As shown in Table 2, five statements—four linked to print course readings and one to digital course readings—are used to assess participants’ opinion on their learning engagement with the course materials. The results revealed that most of the students (73%) remember information from their course readings best when reading them from printed pages, and that about 77% usually highlighted and annotated their print course readings. When they asked about reviewing their course material in print, a significant proportion of the participants (71%) strongly agreed or agreed with it. The results also showed that a very large majority (89%) of the respondents could focus on the material better when they read it in print. These results confirm earlier research by Pálsdóttir & Einarsdóttir (2016) and Pešut & Živković (2016), which discovered that most participants remembered information from their academic course materials better when they read them on paper. It is likely university students preferred printed materials because they were more accessible, less tiring on the eyes, had tactile characteristics, helped them focus, and allowed them to annotate and highlight text, according to Johnston & Salaz (2019).

Table 2. Students’ learning engagement with course readings

No	Statement	SA	A	DEP	D	SD
1	I remember information from my course readings best when I read them from printed pages.	53%	20%	16%	10%	1%
7	I usually highlight and annotate my print course readings.	37%	40%	16%	3%	4%
9	I am more likely to review my course readings (after I’ve read them at least once) when they are in print.	39%	32%	18%	9%	2%
12	I usually highlight and annotate my electronic readings.	12%	20%	38%	23%	7%
13	I can focus on the material better when I read it in print.	59%	30%	9%	2%	0%

3.3. Gender difference for printed or digital course readings and learning engagement

Table 3 and 4 present the results of the second research question “*Is there a significant difference between males and females regarding reading from digital or printed texts?*”. As can be seen from Table 3 and 4, it is evident in general that no statistically significant gender difference was found regarding the reading format preferences as suggested by the P-values which are less than $\alpha = .05$. These findings are mirrored in previous studies by Alieto et al. >s (2020), Kortelainen (2015) and Alamri (2019) who found that there was no gender difference in terms of academic reading format preferences. It can be inferred that the gender factor has no impact on the students’ preferences for digital or printed course materials. However, surprisingly there was a significant gender difference pertaining to item 5 “I prefer to print out my course readings rather than read them electronically” as suggested by P-value = $.02 <$ than $\alpha = .05$. This means that female and male students differ only in their preferences towards printing out course materials instead of reading them on screen. Compared with male students, females preferred to print out their course materials rather than reading them in digital format.

Table 3. Gender difference for printed or digital course readings

Statement	G	N	SA	A	DEP	D	SD	Chi-square	P-value
2.It is more convenient to read my assigned readings electronically than to read them in print.	M	25	2%	1%	6%	12%	4%	3.481 ^a	.481
	F	75	6%	12%	20%	24%	13%		
3. I prefer to have all my course materials in print format (e.g. book, course reader, handouts).	M	25	16%	5%	3%	1%	0%	.353 ^a	.950
	F	75	44%	16%	10%	5%	0%		
4. If an assigned reading is more than 5 pages long, I prefer to read it in print.	M	25	6%	10%	6%	3%	0%	7.276 ^a	.122
	F	75	36%	25%	6%	7%	1%		



Statement	G	N	SA	A	DEP	D	SD	Chi-square	P-value
5. I prefer to print out my course readings rather than read them electronically	M	25	13%	1%	9%	2%	0%	15.075 ^a	.002
	F	75	30%	25%	14%	5%	1%		
6. I like to make digital copies of my printed course materials.	M	25	2%	4%	9%	6%	4%	5.531 ^a	.237
	F	75	7%	23%	27%	15%	3%		
8. If an assigned reading is less than 5 pages long, I prefer to read it electronically.	M	25	6%	4%	5%	8%	2%	3.589 ^a	.464
	F	25	10%	9%	20%	21%	15%		
10. I prefer electronic textbooks over print textbooks.	M	25	4%	3%	5%	9%	4%	1.304 ^a	.861
	F	75	9%	11%	12%	24%	19%		
11. I prefer to read my course readings electronically.	M	25	3%	3%	10%	6%	3%	7.730 ^a	.764
	F	75	6%	8%	13%	24%	24%		

The P-Value is significant at $p < .05$

Table 4. Gender differences between Students' learning engagement with course readings

Statements	G	N	SA	A	DEP	D	SD	Chi-square	P-value
1. I remember information from my course readings best when I read them from printed pages.	M	25	12%	6%	4%	3%	0%	.891 ^a	.926
	F	75	41%	14%	12%	7%	1%		
7. I usually highlight and annotate my print course readings.	M	25	8%	9%	4%	2%	2%	4.470 ^a	.346
	F	75	29%	31%	12%	1%	2%		
9. I am more likely to review my course readings (after I've read them at least once) when they are in print.	M	25	9%	7%	4%	4%	1%	2.799 ^a	.346
	F	75	30%	25%	14%	5%	1%		

Statements	G	N	SA	A	DEP	D	SD	Chi-square	P-value
12. I usually highlight and annotate my electronic readings.	M	25	5%	5%	10%	4%	1%	2.952 ^a	.566
	F	75	7%	15%	28%	19%	6%		
13. I can focus on the material better when I read it in print.	M	25	14%	9%	2%	0%	0%	1.155 ^a	.592
	F	75	45%	21%	7%	2%	0%		

The P-Value is significant at $p < .05$

4. Conclusion, limitations and recommendations

The present study has investigated the reading format preferences of university students at Omar Al-Mukhtar and Derna Universities and determined whether there is a significant gender difference in terms of reading format preferences. The study concluded that most of the participants have a strong preference for academic reading materials in print rather than in electronic and that a great number of the participants focus on the materials better and remember information from course materials best when reading them on paper. It is also found that there was no difference between male and female students' preferences for digital or printed course materials. These results suggest that university instructors should take into accounts their students' preferences and perceptions towards the teaching-learning process. It is also recommended that university instructors should teach their students by offering them seminars on how to use technology in their learning, since technology has played a significant role in higher education. In addition to this, it is preferable for university professors to use a blended learning strategy so that they can help students use technology in their learning, which might help them become better readers.

Although the current study has provided Omar Al-Mukhtar and Derna Universities instructors valuable insights into their students' preferences for reading course materials on paper or on screens, there are a number of possible limitations that need to be taken into account. The study was initially restricted to 100 English majors at Omar Al-Mukhtar and Derna Universities. Therefore, it is not possible to generalize the results to all English major students at all Libyan universities. To provide more precise results, further research are required with bigger participant populations from a variety of



colleges and universities. In addition to this, the present study used only a questionnaire to investigate the reading format preferences of university students and determine whether there was a significant gender difference in terms of reading format preferences. There is a need for more research to examine in-depth the students' preferences for printed course materials through interviews and to investigate how academic discipline and personality type relate to preferred reading formats.

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Appendix

Academic Reading Format International Study (ARFIS) Questionnaire

Instructions:

In the table below, for each statement from 1 to 13, mark on the left box how much you agree with on the scale 1-5:

1=Strongly agree

موافق بشدة

2= Agree

موافق

3=Depends

على حسب

4=Disagree

غير موافق

5=Strongly disagree

غير موافق بشدة

▪ I am: Female Male

Rating	Academic Reading Format International Study (ARFIS) Questionnaire
	1. I remember information from my course readings best when I read them from printed pages. أتذكر المعلومات من منهج المادة بشكل افضل عندما أقرأها من الصفحات المطبوعة.
	2. It is more convenient to read my assigned readings electronically than to read them in print. من الانسب قراءة منهج المادة المخصصة لي إلكترونيا بدلاً من قراءتها مطبوعة.
	3. I prefer to have all my course materials in print format (e.g. book, course reader, handouts). أفضل الحصول على جميع منهج المادة الخاصة بي في شكل مطبوع.
	4. If an assigned reading is more than 5 pages long, I prefer to read it in print. إذا كانت القراءة المعينة هي أكثر من خمس صفحات ، فأنا أفضل قراءتها مطبوعة.
	I prefer to print out my course readings rather than read them electronically. أفضل طباعة منهج المادة بدلاً من قراءتها إلكترونيا.

Rating	Academic Reading Format International Study (ARFIS) Questionnaire
	5. I like to make digital copies of my printed course materials. أحب عمل نسخ رقمية من مواد الدورة التدريبية المطبوعة.
	6. I usually highlight and annotate my print course readings. عادتا ما أقوم بتسليط الضوء على منهج المادة المطبوعة وتدوينها.
	7. If an assigned reading is less than 5 pages long, I prefer to read it electronically. إذا كانت المادة المخصصة للقراءة أقل من خمس صفحات ، فإنني أفضل قراءتها إلكترونيا.
	8. I am more likely to review my course readings (after I've read them at least once) when they are in print. من المرجح أن أراجع منهج المادة (بعد قراءتها مرة واحدة على الأقل) عندما تكون مطبوعة
	9. I prefer electronic textbooks over print textbooks. أفضل الكتب الالكترونية على الكتب المطبوعة.
	10. I prefer to read my course readings electronically. أفضل قراءة منهج المادة الخاص بي إلكترونيا.
	11. I usually highlight and annotate my electronic readings. عادتا ما أسلط الضوء على قراءتي الالكترونية وأشرحها.
	12. I can focus on the material better when I read it in print. يمكنني التركيز على المادة بشكل أفضل عندما أقرأها مطبوعة.

The Interference of Technology with the Spelling Proficiency of EFL Learners

An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Utilizing technology can generate many benefits for students as it offers a beneficial platform for language learners. Internet opens a wide variety of opportunities to practice and enhance their English language skills. However, it has been causing a declining in some areas of language learning, such as spelling. This paper examines the inadequacies that technology has caused in EFL learners' spelling proficiency and the main reasons behind this issue. This study was motivated by the increase of spelling errors found in the writings of students at Tobruk University. Data was collected from questionnaires filled in by 40 students. It was analysed using qualitative analysis methodology. This study has shown that the overuse of technological devices – which offers auto-correcting services – and social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp have a negative impact on the students' conscious ability to detect spelling errors. This study recommends that students should be more engaged by, for example, adding more traditional writing exercises.

Keywords: Spelling errors, proficiency, technology. EFL learners, omission, insertion, substitution, vowels, consonants.



1. Introduction

In the past few decades, the world has witnessed immense advancements in terms of information and communication technology (ICT) which has created a parallel digital world where all people interconnect. ICT has a dire effect on how people live, work, communicate and learn; it simply facilitates free and instant information sharing that is accessible to all people regardless of their socioeconomic backgrounds. This instant access and sharing of information and media are mostly achieved through the different social networking platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp messenger, Tik Tok, and Instagram.

However, one of the major shortcomings of the technological advancements is that they have regrettably caused some drawbacks of people's linguistic abilities (e.g., Adams, 2007; Andersson, 2015).

A decent amount of literature suggests that “computer-mediated communication (CMC)” or what others prefer to call it “technology-mediated communication (TMC)” has negatively impacted people's spelling proficiency (see among others: Herring 2003; Jacobs 2004; Crystal 2006; Grinter et al. 2006). This is mostly due to the constant use of phone-based and internet-based instant messaging; comments and replies to comments on social media; group discussions and debates; and other forms of electronic interactions (see among others: Jansen, 2003; Shoeman&Shoeman, 2007; Varnhagen et al., 2010).

Some studies show that people have created abbreviated forms for popular words, phrases, and emotional expressions with the aim of speeding up the communication process (Werry 1996; Varnhagen et al. 2010). Varnhagen et al. (2010) argue that this has led to a whole new taxonomy of language; and that TMC users now have their own unique spellings and meanings. Surprisingly, there are now guides and dictionaries for these new spellings and expressions (see among others: Jansen 2003; Shoeman&Shoeman 2007; and www.urbandictionary.com). The constant use of these shortened forms – along with auto-correction applications – has led to a steep decrease in students' ability of producing accurately spelled linguistic forms. Accurate spelling can be defined as the ability to write or spell words correctly according to the standards (Othman, 2018) and it is regarded one of the main components of well-composed pieces of writing. Spelling mistakes occur when a learner consistently makes the same errors repeatedly because they are not aware of



the correct spelling (Kusuran, 2017). It is generally caused by the student's inability to distinguish between letters and sounds of the words (Siti and Muhammad, Zainal Muttaqien S.S., M. Hum, 2017). Exposure to incorrectly spelt words can lead to a great difficulty differentiating between the right and wrong spellings. This increases the subsequent likelihood that incorrect versions will be identified as being correct (Brown, 1990).

There are two common types of errors: topographic and cognitive. The former involves the insertion, omission, substitution, and transposition of letters, while the latter is caused by phonetic similarities (Kusuran, 2017).

1.2. Statement of the Problems:

Learning a second language need to master four skills which are listening, speaking, writing and reading. Writing is considered as one of the essential skills as well as the most challenging skill, as it is important to the achievement of several writing assignments and projects in different subjects. Additionally, one of the most common issues encountered by EFL learners is spelling errors. This study is carried out on the 2nd year students of English department at Tobruk University. As spelling mistakes is an issue which is not taken seriously by most students. It is an issue that is obviously observed by the researchers in most learner's assignments and exams. It has been noticed that the decline in students spelling proficiency is due over-reliance on technology. It can be said that most student rely on technological device to do their homework and assignment. As a result, they become unaware of detecting spelling mistakes in both consonants and vowels. For example, they write *teatcher* for *teacher* and *jop* for *job*. Therefore, this paper examines the effect of technology on the student's spelling proficiency as well as to identify the most common type of spelling mistakes among EFL learners.

1.3 The Significance of the Study:

This research is significant as it will help to investigate and analyse the effect that technology can have on the spelling proficiency of EFL learners studying in the English Department at the University of Toburk. This study presents and analyse the different error types of spelling mistakes committed by 2nd year students. It based on the observation of increasing spelling mistakes among students.

1.4 Research Aims :

1. To examine the ways by which technology has affected students' spelling proficiency.
2. To investigate the correlation between this effect and the spelling challenges that students face in general.
3. To determine the most common types of spelling errors committed by students.
4. To determine what type of technology has the greatest effect.

1.5. Research Questions:

1. To what extent can technology effects spelling proficiency of the EFL learners?
2. What are the most common spelling error types committed by students?

2. Literature Review:

In order to investigate the role of technology in writing one has to consider two specific factors. The first is the use of spell-checkers and auto-correction programmes in writing assistive technology. The second is the impact of social media and different Apps on EFL learners.

Benyo (2014) investigated English spelling mistakes committed by students of first year at Dongola University. He examined the causes of this difficulty. Two tests (pre and post intervention) were distributed to 200 Sudanese EFL students in two different faculties. The research found out that students encounter difficulties in vowels and the interference of the native language. Besides, he suggested another cause which implies that students are unaware of the rules of spelling in English.

Wilson (2018) proposed a study that examine the social media on the spelling abilities of the learners of Federal College of Education Yole. This research presented the negative impact of social media on EFL learner's spelling proficiency. A questionnaire was used to collect the data.

The research confirmed that social media effects negatively on student's spelling mistakes ability. As students spend more time on social media platforms than the academics particularly during their exams.



2.1. Writing Assistive Technology

This can describe any software that either points out or corrects spelling mistakes or carries out both functions. It can underline and correct a user's spelling mistakes whether the cause has been by poor performance or simply typing out the wrong spelling. In some cases, it also suggests to the user a range of words and tries to predict what the intended word should be. This is made possible by analysing the user's input to create a large linguistic database. A prime example of this can be seen in the search engine Google (Adams, 2007).

Previously, this assistive technology existed as separate applications [19]. But today it can come into play wherever a user is asked to enter text including in web browsers, word processing software and virtual keyboards. This brings a powerful and rich dictionary to anyone using this technology

2.2. Social Media:

According to Martinez cited in Boyd (2009), technology allows people to expand their social networks by contacting people who they may not have met in person. Wellman, Salaff, Dimitrova, Garton, Gulia & Haythorn, (1996) put forward the theory that technology both maintains existing social ties and helps to form new connections outside pre-existing social groups. This allows for the formation of communities around shared interests as opposed to shared geographical locations. Over time, social media have expanded thanks to the increasing availability of mobile phones. Baran (2010:272) comments that the influence of social media can be advantageous (positive) but that this depends on the ways in which the user chooses to use it. Therefore, academics and researchers across the world have been able to establish some findings on the influence of social media. According to Englander, Terregrossa & Wang (2010) the negative effect of social media on the academic performance of students is far greater than its advantages. Thus, social media may be considered to have a negative effect on academic excellence and achievement. Oche and Aminu (2010) posit that the majority of today's students and adolescents now have Facebook accounts which is leading to a significant decline in their academic performance. This is especially noticeable in the use of English, however, explanations for this decline may not simply be due to the excessive usage of social media. Correspondingly, many might be quick to blame the poor

quality of teaching, forgetting that students' attention may have shifted from physical associations to virtual or online friends. This also has a negative effect in academic areas such as literacy and spelling.

Olubiyi (2012) notes that the trend of being engaged on social media is visible all around us with some users, who are often students, being connected almost round the clock to socialise and remain visible in the virtual world. It has even been noted that this continues in classrooms and lecture theatres during lectures while attention should be paid to the learning process. Thus, many students' progresses are greatly impeded due to excessive activity on social media.

2.3 Benefits of social media:

The original aim and purpose of social media is to form a means of sharing information leading to a mutual benefit. It has helped to do this in the way in which it can humanise, amuse and influence an audience. Most importantly, social media platforms have a "contagious and outreaching influence" which mainstream media lack.

Osahenya (2012) describes this as the "unstoppable power of the social media" In spite of the fact that a lot of negative qualities have been ascribed to social media as a result of the harm that it can do to students' learning it is also important to acknowledge the positives that it can offer if properly harnessed. Abubakar (2011) posits that the open, chatty and interactive nature of social media propels and boosts participation. Among the diverse forms of social media he mentions are blogs, YouTube, flicker, 2go, Facebook and Twitter.

Boyd (2007) demonstrates that academic institutions are themselves starting to use several social media platforms for educational purposes and to share information among students, for example to inform them about assignment deadlines as well as offering other forms of support.

He concludes that social media can be a positive influence on students if properly used. He also believes that social networking sites allow users the opportunity to air their views and feelings without restrictions of any kind. Boyd (2007) also perceives that social media serves as both

a meeting place and a platform that propagates positive interactivity and where like-minded individuals can showcase their talents. Boyd & Ellison



(2007) further explain in clear terms that secondary school students can make good use of social media to acquire knowledge, for example by learning more about the universities in which they hope to become undergraduates.

2.4 Apps

Recent research in the area of technology has narrowed its focus to investigating the use of apps in lessons. In recent times, investigation into technology has included researching the use and role of apps in lessons. These have been described by Hutchinson et al. (2012: 18) as “applications created for digital devices [...] to serve a single, specific function”.

Falloon (2013) has categorised two types of app: ones that enable content consumption and others that create it. The latter mean that users can create content that they can use to practice skills that they can then share with others. The former support a ‘behaviourist view of learning’. This includes the concept of reinforcement through rewards for getting answers right and rising up through different levels of success.

When Shuler (2012) analysed the apps available to download from the educational section of the Apple Store for use on iPods, iPads and iPhones it was found that over 80% were aimed at young people, ranging from toddlers to teenagers. It was also found that there were very few apps specifically designed to improve literacy, especially in comparison with the number available for other subjects like maths.

Hutchinson et al. (2012) suggest that the most useful literacy apps “allow users to type or write on top of printed text or other backgrounds” and to “record audio for a response”. McFarlane (2013) agrees stating that apps that facilitate knowledge building lead to the best learning outcomes.

3. Research methodology

This study used qualitative approach to examine the problems of spelling mistakes committed by 2nd year students of English department at the university of Tobruk. Their number was 40 participants (6 males and 34 females). This research was carried out in two steps, in the first step, the researcher presented a test that contains 50 words of the most common error issues for the students. These words have been dictated, so the students can write them out of context. The researcher examined all error types in order to

classify them into four categories.

The second step, a questionnaire was presented to the students based on the test, it contains a number of multiple-choice questions that ask the student about their opinion. so that the researcher can identify the main causes behind the obstacle of poor spelling. This study was conducted during their study sessions.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion:

A questionnaire was distributed to the 2nd year students at the department of English, Tobruk University. It was two parts a test and a questionnaire. In order to find out the student's proficiency of spelling. The test contains 50 words that are divided into 4 groups. The groups are divided based on different errors categories. which are: omission, insertion, institution and silent omission. These categories are classified according to Cook's classification of spelling (1999). Similar to this classification was used by AL-Oudat (2017) when he classified the spelling errors of Omani Students at Al-Balqa Applied University students in Jordan. Each category is divided into subgroup, vowels and consonants. Each subgroup consists of 05 words, these words have been chosen based on the most common spelling errors among students.

In SPSS analysis, chi square statistic was used. It is a test used in Human and Social Science commonly used to test the relation between two variables. It formulates of two hypotheses, the null hypothesis which means there is no significant association between variables. While the alternative hypothesis is association between the two variables (Lokesh 2009).

1.1 Omission Error

According to Cook (1999), it is a type of spelling error made by EFL learner when the miss a particular letter in a word. Based on the results, it is the highest number of errors committed by students during the test. Omission is divided into four subgroups: consonants, vowels, silent consonants, and silent vowels. For instance, they wrote *weding* for *wedding*, *polution* for *pollution* in consonants, and *belive* for *believe*, *helthy* for *healthy*. Also in silent consonants, they wrote *sience* for *science*, *sychology* for *psychology*. In silent vowels, the wrote *busness* for *business*, *biscit* for *biscuit* and *ignor* for *ignore*.

Generally speaking, in omission errors, the degree of confident 0.99 ($\alpha=0.01$) is used to compare between the results,



Value X^2 critical is 21.666

Degree of freedom $10 - 1 = 9$

$X^2 = 99.9$

$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$

E

Consonants Omission:

Table (1): Consonants omission errors $X^2 = 49.9$

answers	wedding	pollution	really	marriage	community	
Observed correct answers	13	06	13	11	07	
Expected correct answers	20	20	20	20	20	
X^2	2.45	9.8	0.2	4.05	8.45	24.95
Observed errors	27	34	22	29	33	
Expected errors	20	20	20	20		
X^2	2.45	9.8	0.2	4.05	8.45	24.95

Null hypothesis H_0 : there is no relation between technology and increasing spelling mistakes.

Alternative hypothesis H_1 : there is a relationship between using technology and increasing spelling mistakes. Based on the results, X^2 value calculated is greater than tabulate X^2 . According to the results, H_0 is rejected, therefore, technology has a strong negative impact of students spelling proficiency.

Based on the results is compared by SPSS, it can be seen the omission of consonants, vowels, silent consonants and sin lent vowels, there is a significant relation between using technology and increasing spelling mistakes in writing.

Vowels Omission:

Table (2): Vowels omission errors $X^2 = 51.3$

Answers	believe	reason	bowl	boat	healthy	
Observed correct answers	10	08	07	12	14	
Expected correct answers	20	20	20	20	20	
X^2	5	7.2	8.45	3.2	1.8	25.65
Observed errors	30	32	33	28	26	
expected errors	20	20	20	20		
X^2	05	7.2	8.45	3.2	1.8	25.65

Omission of silent consonant:

Table (3): Silent consonants omission errors $X^2 = 46$

Answers	known	Science	Taught	Foreign	psychology	
Observed correct answers	12	15	09	07	11	
Expected correct answers	20	20	20	20	20	
X^2	3.2	1.25	6.05	8.45	4.05	23
Observed errors	28	25	31	33	29	
expected errors	20	20	20	20		
X^2	3.2	1.25	6.05	8.45	4.05	23



Silent vowels omission

Table (4): Silent vowels omission errors

answers	business	people	Tongue	ignore	biscuit	
Observed correct answers	09	30	15	12	10	
Expected correct answers	20	20	20	20	20	
X ²	<u>6.05</u>	5.00	1.25	3.2	<u>5.00</u>	20.5
Observed errors	31	10	25	28	30	
expected errors	20	20	20	20		
X ²	6.05	5.00	1.25	3.2	5.00	20.5
						X ² =41.0

1.2 Insertion Error

It is a type of error, classified by Cook (1999), which appears when an extra letter in a word is added. It can be applied in both consonants and vowels.

According to the results, most students committed similar errors. For instance, they add extra vowels such as *meaddle* instead for *middle*, *cliamate* for *climate* and *suwre* for *sure*. As well as the used additional consonants such as *teacher* for *teacher*, *missuse* for *misuse* and *exerscise* for *exercise*.

Consonants Insertion

According to the results related to the insertion of vowels and consonants, calculated X² is greater than critical X². Thus, there is connection between the two variables, technology and errors. It has been shown that using modern technological devices such as mobile phones and laptops which offer spelling-checker and auto- correction tools results in increasing poor spelling for most students.

Table (5): consonants insertion errors $X^2 = 66.6$

answers	teacher	misuse	mistake	temperature	exercise	
Observed correct answers	13	07	09	06	08	
Expected correct answers	20	20	20	20	20	
$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$	1.8	8.45	6.05	9.8	7.2	33.3
Observed errors	26	33	31	34	32	
expected errors	20	20	20	20	20	
$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$	1.8	8.45	6.05	9.8	7.2	33.3

Vowels Insertion:

Table (6): vowels insertion errors $X^2 = 34.5$

answers	middle	climate	Beautiful	technology	sure	total
Observed correct answers	13	08	10	14	16	
Expected correct answers	20	20	20	20	20	
$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$	2.45	7.2	5.0	1.8	0.8	17.25
Observed errors	27	32	30	26	24	
expected errors	20	20	20	20	20	
$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$	2.45	7.2	5.0	1.8	0.8	17.25



4.3 Substitution errors:

It is a type of error proposed by Cook (1999), it appears when a letter is substituted by another one, vowel or consonant. According to Cook, learners commit this type of error based on their pronunciation. For instance, it has been shown in the results that they wrote necessary for necessary, job for job and wheraz for whereas in consonants. As well as they wrote ingeneer for engineer, weerd for weird and thier for their in vowels.

Table (7): Consonants substitution errors $X^2 = 15.8$

Answers	necessary	Job	Sure	pain	whereas	
Observed correct answers	12	22	13	16	15	
Expected correct answers	20	20	20	20	20	
$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$	3.2	0.20	2.45	0.8	1.25	7.9
Observed errors	28	18	27	24	25	
expected errors	20	20	20	20	20	
$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$	3.2	0.20	2.45	0.8	1.25	7.9

Consonants Substitution:

Table (8): Vowels substitution errors $X^2 = 33.5$

answers	engineer	Weird	Near	enjoy	their	
Observed correct answers	14	05	13	17	16	
Expected correct answers	20	20	20	20	20	
$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$	1.8	11.25	2.45	0.45	0.80	16.75
Observed errors	26	35	27	23	24	
expected errors	20	20	20	20	20	
$X^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$	1.8	11.25	2.45	0.45	0.80	16.75

Vowels substitution

The previous tables show the errors related to graph choice between vowels and consonants, it demonstrates a significant difference $X^2= 33.5$, $X^2= 15.8$. t

Consonants graph choice table shows that there is a significant relation between using technology and increasing spelling mistakes. Based on Chi-square test, $X^2= 33.5$. As it has been noticed that most participants' errors related to the way they pronounce the words. Whereas, in English orthographic system is different compared with Arabic (Thompson-Panos & Thomas-Ruzic, 1983).this can cause a source of obstacle for the EFL learners, so this leads to different types of spelling mistakes such as *sure shure, whereas whereaz, necessary nesessary*. While in vowels, the null H_0 hypothesis that technology and spelling errors are independent is accepted $-X^2= 15.8+$, which means there is no relation between technology and errors. The calculated chi-square is less than tabulated value.

5. The Questionnaire:

Generally speaking, in order to fulfil the main purpose of this paper, a questionnaire is distributed to the students to investigate their attitudes about technology. It consists of 10 questions related to their spelling proficiency.

The table below reveals that nearly half of the students who believe that using technological devices sometimes affects their spelling ability, with the percentage of 52.5%. While third of them are completely sure that technology effects. However, it has been shown that only 17% of them don't believe so. Besides, it can be noticed that most of the learners who use the internet to do assignments or homework with a percentage of 47%, whereas only 20% of the participants don't use technology to accomplish their assignments.

It is clearly noticed that the average of those who use spelling-checker on their devices is 55% while only 7.5% don't use them during their study. Overall, it has been demonstrated that the least percentage is for those who don't use spelling-checkers on their devices, this can lead to over-reliance on internet during study sessions.

Table (9): Frequent use of Technology

Questions	Yes	NO	Sometimes
Do you think using technological devices affects your spelling	30%	17%	52.5%
Do you use the internet to do your assignment	47.5%	20.0%	32.5%
Do you use spelling-checker on your devices	55%	7.5%	37.5%

Table (10): The most common spelling mistakes

question	vowels	Consonants	Silent letters	Vowels combination	Both (consonants / vowels)
What are the most common spelling mistakes made by you	42%	5.0%	7.5%	20%	25%

The previous table examines the student's opinion about the most common error mistakes they believe they commit. The results show that the majority of students face problems with vowels in spelling. As the greatest percentage is that related to vowels in general, 42%. This was previously noticed in the results of the test, in vowels omission and insertion errors.

Table (11): Student's use of dictionary

question	Paper dictionary	Mobile dictionary	Online dictionary	Google translate	other
What types of dictionaries do you use	5%	32.5%	30%	27%	5%

The table reveals the types of the dictionary the student prefers, it can be proven that mobile and online dictionary have the highest percentage 32.5%, 30% respectively which are roughly similar. Whereas only 5% opted for paper dictionary. Thus, this can demonstrate that the majority of the students tend to use technological tools during their study this leads to have a negative

impact on their spelling proficiency as these tools offer auto correction and spelling checker, as a result, they don't have awareness of the right spelling.

Table (12): Student's daily hours on social media

Question	hrs 1-2	hrs 3-4	5-6 hrs	More than 07 hrs
How many hours per day do you spend on social media	12.5%	20%	40%	27.5%

The table shows the number of hours students spend on social media per day, the results presents that the percentage of the respondents who spend 5-6 hours daily is the highest 40%. Surprisingly, the second greatest percentage is those who spend more than 7 hours a day online.

Consequently, the overuse of social media activities leads to decline in their spelling proficiency, as the researchers observed that during study sessions and exams. For example, is when the students use the pronoun (I) in lower case instead of uppercase, also when the use (u) (ur) (plz) ...etc instead of *you, your* and *please*.

6. Conclusion:

This paper investigates the impact that technology have on the EFL learners' spelling proficiency. The results show that overreliance on technology has a significant effect on increasing spelling errors of 2nd year students of English department, at Tobruk University. According to this study, technology can be considered the main cause of declining students spelling proficiency, as technological gadgets become as an essential part of daily life for new generation of the 21st century. thus, it is an effective tool which offer many advantages in life. Although, it has a great negative impact on the EFL learner's spelling proficiency, as they spend much more time on smart phones and the internet. Based on the findings, students have obstacles of spelling errors in both consonants and vowels. However, mistakes in vowels appear significantly, as students commit mistakes in vowels much more frequent. According to this research, errors were classified into different types, omission, insertion and substitution. The students face issues mostly in insertion, particularly in consonants insertion as in missuse for misuse. Whereas, the second largest proportion is vowels omission, such as belive for believe.



7. Recommendations:

According to the findings and conclusion, this study recommends the following:

1. This study recommends that students should be more engaged by, for example, adding more dictation sessions.
2. Student should engage more academic programmes and websites rather than spending more time on social media.
3. Student should use special notebook to record and recognize their spelling mistakes.

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Investigating the Use of Arthur Miller's Death of a *Salesman* (Play and Film) in the Language Classroom

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Abstract

Students are fond of watching short films on Youtube, mobile phones, keyboards, and screens. Thus, teachers of English can guide their students to use such technological aids in teaching and learning drama. Current learners have grown up with technology and they know how to use it. This means that teachers of English should be aware of using such visual aids and their importance in teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Many of the students panic when they face literary texts because of the linguistic complexity of these texts. However, students have the chance to enjoy film adaptations of many famous dramas in English. Of course one way of appreciating and grasping the value of any literary texts is done through a careful and thorough analysis of the texts and their language components. A teacher of language should make his/her students aware of how the text works and what particular meanings are expressed. This may be done through selecting a passage from a drama and the film clip that corresponds to it. The extract chosen here is taken from Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*. The findings of the study showed that the majority of the students insisted that viewing the film makes them understand the drama better.

Key words: metalinguistic features, Technology, Youtube, Film clips.





1. Introduction

The use of films can bring variety and flexibility to the language classroom by extending the range of teaching techniques and resources and helping students to develop all communicative skills. Thus, it is important for a teacher of English to help his/her students understand and analyse the literary text in terms of linguistic features. Then he/she can also make the students watch the film clip related to the literary text and help them analyse closely the images on the screen. This technique makes the learning style more interesting and beneficial and the students will show a tendency to read more about the author or other works if the same genre. Teachers of English insist that literary texts play an important role in both language learning and language teaching. One of the aims of teaching literature is to encourage students to feel that they can read and enjoy books on their own. Reading literary texts allows students to spend a lot of time looking at language and the aesthetic and moral values of the text.

Kenndey, Gioia, and Revoyr (2012) claim that there is a relationship between studying literature and the achievement in the real world. They add that interpreting writing and reading about literary texts enhance the competitiveness in the job market. This will help the readers of literature to develop their personalities. R. Carter and M. Long (1991) argue that there are three main reasons for the teaching of literature and each reason embraces a particular set of learning objectives for the students of literature. These are: (1) the cultural model, (2) the language model, (3) and the personal growth model. For example, teaching literature within the culture model helps students to understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space. However, teaching literature within language model is important because it enables students promote language development.

2. Literature Review

Drama gives teachers the opportunity to teach their students in a way which would create love for learning. It provides valuable problem solving, social, and creative skills. Drama also embraces the students' imagination and emotions. It is also an effective learning tool. This is because it involves the students intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. The use of action clip in teaching drama gives the students the opportunity to enjoy acting out a small part of the story without worrying. Thus, the best way of taking the advantages of teaching literature in the classroom is to use the extracts from

the book and film clip. This is simply because the use of films in learning process makes the

environment of the classroom more interesting and the teacher will be sure that all the students become involved. Lazar (1994) states that there are many advantages of using extracts from books and films. First, it provides students with a fascinating glimpse of the conventions and conflicts of another culture. Second, it encourages meaningful language practice. For example, through images on the screen, students will have the chance to express their feelings and opinions about the book and the film. Students will also be engaged with the filmmaker's interpretations of the novelist's craft.

Lazar (1994) also adds that this approach can be exploited in a number of ways. It can be used over an extended period of time to focus on selected extracts and film clips from a whole novel and drama, or it can be used in an occasional basis on literature courses that take in selected writings. This technique is also different from traditional education and has become a new teaching style. It can be applied into two ways: (1) the first, the students can watch the film clips at home and read the extracts from the book in class. In this case, students who study with mouse, keyboard, and screen do not see any teachers' expressions of encouraging or criticizing in the learning environment. (2) The second, the teacher designs the teaching by making the students read the extract then asks the students to watch the clips in class or making the students watch the clips first then read the extracts from the book.

For Zettl (2008:340), the film dialogue informs viewers about the theme, plot, characters and circumstances of the story and helps the audience in the interpretations of the story line and the understanding of the relationship between characters including moods, attitudes of characters, and their personality. A film's sign sensually and perceptually represents what in the text is. J. Sherman (2010:15) mentions types that make films difficult or easy to comprehend. She addresses the things that make the film difficult as Follows:

- High verbal density, i.e. a lot of speech with very little action
- Words which do not match the actions, e.g. words which are in conflict with action or an ironic commentary
- A high degree of naturalism in speech, e.g. actors with their backs to the



camera, inconsequential dialogue

- Dialect and regional accent
- Period language remains difficult

There are also some features that make films easy. They are:

- A close connection between speech and action
- Clear conversation story-lines: straightforward love stories aimed at adolescents (e.g. *A Dirty Dancing*), (*Titanic*). Such stories have simple plot lines and language
- Clearly enunciated speech in standard accent
- Films where one of the main characters isn't able to communicate very well because he /she is deaf or a foreigner (see Sherman, J. 2010)

A relevant study is conducted by Shalbag (2013) on the use of extracts from a novel and film clips. It reveals that the technique of using novel and film in language classroom helps students to be engaged in a never-ending process of interpretation and evaluation. For the nature of examinations in literature most of teachers design their questions on integrated language-based approach to literature. R. Carter, R. and R. Michael (1992:159-161) suggest the following characteristics:

a) **Paraphrase and Context**

In this type of questions, students are exposed to the extracts from the texts they have studied. The extracts are normally pivotal to the text and the students are required to say what is pivotal about them in terms of the structure. Such questions are sometimes about the plot, character, or a whole and this kind of the questions are called context questions. Paraphrasing then is done by the students

who are also asked about tropes as metaphors, similes, or other rhetorical devices.

b) **Describe and Discuss**

These questions are the most common type and they are widely used by the teachers of literature. For example, students are asked to comment on

what happens to a character with some discussions of reasons on motives for an action. Example: Do you find any differences between the character in the book you read and in the film you watched? Such questions are widely used in the university level.

The following is an example from Cambridge University:

- Describe Snowball and explain what happens to him. (George Orwell, *Animal Farm*)

The same questions on watching can be applied here as follows:

- Describe Mr. Darcy's feelings when Lizzy refuses his proposal. (Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*)

Such questions can be regarded as paraphrase and context questions. But one may ask if there is a format of such questions or not. Cambridge proficiency level examinations contain relatively a high promotion of descriptive and plot-based questions.

c) Evaluate and Criticize

Such questions are of a more advanced type. Students are required to be more critical and sometimes they are invited to evaluate the relative success the writer has in conveying a particular scene or idea or character. This means that the focus is always on the plot and character. Compare between these two examples:

- Illustrate from the stories how Lawrence's attitude to his characters is often a mixture of ridicule and compassion.
- Illustrate from pride and prejudice Jane Austen's attitude to her characters is often a mixture of ridicule and compassion.

From the above explanations it can be derived that most of the students' examinations are designed for the students to consider whether characters in plays, novels, and even poems are complete. Students are less commonly asked to elicit from the texts the moral, religious and sociological ideas. Unfortunately most teachers advise students to read slim and summarized books in order to make students pass the examinations. Plot and characters summaries are also provided.

In relation to the above, J. Sherman (2010: 120-121) mentions the strategies



of addressing questions after watching a film on a novel. He divides the questions into different types such as context and content, vocabulary and comprehension questions. For the context and content questions he suggests the following points:

- After giving plenty of background, ask students to describe the characters involved.
- Ask student to write down the antagonist and protagonist characters.
- After describing the actual content of the whole film, ask students to paraphrase what they understand.

For comprehension questions Sherman, J. (2010) suggest the following:

- Ask very simple questions after the first viewing (low-order questions). Then move to difficult ones after the second viewing.
- Get the students to prepare comprehension questions on what they have seen as well as on what they have heard.
- Check their grammar while they are preparing the questions then have them ask each other the questions from the group to group.
- View again to check the answers
- Get the students to identify the difficult scene which they don't understand.
- Ask students each to concentrate on one speaker and follow what he/she says then select anything he/she says which is not clear to them and which is more important. Review these parts and explain them.

In this study, the researchers use Miller's death of a salesman as a sample. The main reason of using films in the classroom is that Miller uses a zigzagging process that spans present past and future. This means that the plot is not developed chronologically. It is created in a bit-by-bit piecing together of events. The play begins in the present as Willy shown in the grips of his conflict. Miller make us understand through a series of flashbacks and daydreaming sequences. This makes the students get confused because the events are not presented chronologically. It can also be added that the arguments which occur for many years and which are close to the surface facilitate the eventual clash which occurs at the end of Act 2 and which leads to such harsh words as those exchange between Willy and his son Biff:

“You vengeful, spiteful mutt.” We understand the reason behind such intense condemnation. Such speech seems unbelievable and would reflect badly on the speaker. But students watch the film, they find execution to this because they know what is happening to Willy’s mind and they accept the fact that he is desperate better than depending on reading .

3. Research Questions

This research seeks to find answers to the questions which are raised to examine the actual utilization of the extracts from the book and film in the language classroom among university students.

- 1- What differences do you find between Willy Lowman in the reading passage and Willy Lowman in the film clip?
- 2- Which do you prefer- the extract from the Drama , or the scene from the film?
- 3- Do you think that the technique of using Drama/Films is preferable and more effective?
- 4- Does the film maker present the actions in the film as the same as in the book?

4. Research Objectives

This study aims at investigating the value of using the scripts from the drama and film in language classroom. In choosing the scripts, the teacher should ensure that the language is accessible to the learners and relevant to their needs and that the topic arouses the students interests. Themes relating to family situations are therefore useful. Thus, Miller’s death of a salesman meets the students’ needs.

5. Research Participants

The subjects for this study were native speakers of Arabic. They were studying English as a major subject of specialization in the department of English Faculty of Education, University of Al-Mergeb. They were fourth year university students of the academic year (2020/2021). The research samples were (20) participants. The reason behind choosing this level was based on the assumption that students at this stage were expected to be exposed to the many literary texts during the third and fourth years of their study.



6. Research Tools

The tool used in this study was an open questionnaire of 7 items. The mode of the questionnaire used in this study was a paper-and-pencil questionnaire administration where the items were presented on paper. Because of the covid19 participants sent their answers via internet. The purpose of these questions was to gather information from the participants. For reliability the questionnaire was calculated by the computer programmer. For validity the questionnaire was given to a number of professors of English language to examine them and to give comments on the questionnaire statements. The subjects were also asked to write their own comments on their answers.

7. Findings and Discussion

1- Do you watch the film clips of Miller's death of a salesman?

The whole participants answered this question with "Yes." This means that the students watch the clips.

2- If yes, what differences do you find between Willy Lowman in the reading passage and Willy Lowman in the film clip?

Interestingly, it has been observed that most of the participants of this study have found some differences between the extracts from the drama and the images from the film with respect to some of the dialogues and the description of the characters. 95% of them agreed that the film maker focuses on the most important actions and he does not go deeply in detail as the dramatist's does.

3- Which do you prefer- the extract from the Drama , or the scene from the film? Provide comments on your choice. It is important in this study that 90 % of the Participants preferred watching play as a movie than reading it, because in the movie the events and characters are more interesting. They also add that watching the film can save time and effort. Only 10 % of the participants assured that reading the extracts from the drama is effective and fruitful for their own imagination.

4- Which do you prefer to be first the extracts from the book or the clips from the film? Give reasons for your choice. It is interesting to note that 70% of the participants preferred to begin with the film clip, claiming that this leads to save both time and effort; while, 25% of them agreed to start with reading passages . This is because the participants have found that starting with the book will

prepare them to understand the images on the screen. However, 5% assured that they get confused after watching the film. One of the participants

comments was that she prefers to watch it as a movie first so that the story is clear and then read it to find out more details and places.

5- Is the filmmaker's message the same as the dramatist's?

100% of the participants agreed that there is no differences between the message in the drama and in the movie, but in the film many feelings and attitudes are clarified.

6- If you were the filmmaker, would you have done anything differently?

70 % of the Participants insisted that if they were the film maker they may focus on more details.30 % provide no answer.

7- Do you think that the technique of using Drama/Films is preferable and more effective?

In responding to this question, 80% of the students insisted that viewing the film makes them understand the play more. They commented that reading the scripts from the book is not enough to enhance both the linguistic and literary understanding. In other words, the students panic of the literary texts because of the linguistic complexity of these texts. However, 20 % of the participants assured that reading the scripts from the drama is effective and fruitful for their own imagination. They also claimed that watching films on screens may contradict their culture. The participants also added that depending on the reading passages is easier to manage because some of the classrooms have no TVs and computers.

8. Conclusion

The use of drama / film technique can teach life skills such as, cooperating with others, speaking publicly, being creative and imaginative, and becoming more confident. This way of teaching enriches the student vocabulary. This technique also helps students to be engaged in a never-ending process of interpretation and evaluation. For example, students will have chance to know both the dramatist's idea and the filmmaker's. This will encourage students to imitate the characters in the film clips. Students will also have chance to analyze passages from drama and their cinematic equivalents in an enjoyable and classroom task. Thus, the approach to teaching literature in a language classroom should focus on certain features of language in order to generate an appreciation of the style, effects and techniques of writing in addition to carrying out language activities that help develop language competence and literary appreciation in relation to each other.



9. Direction for further Research

This paper is limited to investigate the value of using the extracts from the play and film clip in the language classroom. The researchers have used Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* as a sample and the research project has been conducted on the fourth year university students of English department, Faculty of Education, Khoms, Libya. This research paves the way to a number of researches that might be worth of investigation. For example, the N/F or D/F technique can be applied to other authors' works. In addition to this point, a bigger number of participants might give clearer results about the use of D/F technique. This research project can also be conducted on students from other disciplines or on other levels.

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Appendix

The Questionnaire

The aim of this questionnaire is to compare and discuss the text and the film clip of drama. Thus, the researcher will gather the data and analyze the participants' answers. Please answer this questionnaire and try to distribute it to your colleagues if possible. Because of the covid19 please send it via face book messengers'. Thank you in advance.

1- Do you watch the film clips of Miller's Death of a Salesman?

a) Yes **b) No**

2- If yes, what differences do you find between Willy lowman in the reading passage and Willy lowman in the film clip?

.....

3- Which do you prefer- the extract from the Drama, or the scene from the film? Provide comments on your choice.

.....

4- Which do you prefer to be first the extracts from the book or the clips from the film? Give reasons for your choice.

.....

5- Is the filmmaker's message the same as the dramatist's?

.....

6- If you were the filmmaker, would you have done anything differently?

.....

7- Do you think that the technique of using Drama/Films is preferable and more effective?

.....

On Multimodality Integration in Online Instruction:

A Case Study of Some Virtual Classes Delivered at the English Department during Covid (19) Quarantine

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Abstract

Recent research has shown evidence of the positive influence of adopting the multimodal teaching approach, especially in the e-learning context. The assumptions are manifold. Employing multimodal digital techniques can be highly beneficial in terms of enhancing students' learning experiences, taking into account students' variety of learning styles. Using multimodal pedagogies can be a key in drawing students' attention to the target material and a way to boost their cognitive skills as well as their class engagement. The core concept of the multimodal approach is that the process of teaching nowadays should no longer depend solely on language, for there are other effective means of meaning-making. Instructors should push their boundaries to experiment as well as take advantage of the multiple, viable digital modes of content delivery when designing their on-line lessons and e-course activities in order to keep abreast with the rapid waves of change vis-à-vis the status quo and the future of digital learning.

Hence, the current study examines the multimodal digital practices of a number of Libyan higher education instructors who were involved in an experimental e-learning program proposed by the English Language Department at Tripoli University during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the course of their fully online classes, instructors displayed varying levels of digital literacy and some employed different modalities of teaching resources and communication venues when approaching their

virtual lectures. Therefore, the paper mainly reports on the practices and the implications of multimodality in e-learning settings by highlighting students' takes on the e-learning experience as a whole and the impact of integrating diverse multimodal resources on their uptake.

A total of seven online classes were observed in terms of the amount of the various digital media and modalities of lesson design and communication activities applied. The Multimodal Design Elements framework proposed by the New London Group is used as a reference for data analysis. The study is based on a descriptive-qualitative approach. A brief questionnaire is tailored to illicit students' views on the e-learning program, including the challenges and the course materials used in the program. 41 students participated in the questionnaire.

The findings show that in unimodal classes, where instructors depended on one medium of delivery and interaction, students displayed scarce to no interaction and did not exhibit any kind of engagement nor commitment to the class. Conversely, in multimodal classes, where instructors used a minimum amount of creative and innovative communication and instructional media for interaction and delivery, students showcased a high level of engagement, commitment, and achieved remarkable learning outcomes.

The results show that students were highly excited about digital mediated learning, especially for audio-visual modes where teachers supported their lessons with videos. Additionally, students expressed that using diagrams and charts when demonstrating a lesson can help them memorize and retain information better, especially when it comes to content-based classes. Furthermore, the study reveals that when using the multimodal teaching approach, not only is content creation and lesson delivery facilitated, but also the level of student-teacher interaction is eased and highly activated. This study stresses that technology should no longer be used as a luxury or an auxiliary aid in the instructional process but rather an essential part and player in the teaching process, be it in a real or a virtual classroom setting.

Key words: multimodality, e-learning, technology, digital literacies, students' learning styles.





1. Background

In the late 2019, the whole world was witnessing unprecedented circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic; officials globally raced to find solutions to curb outbreak locations and the increasing morbidity rates by banning gatherings in all public places as well as imposing strict social distancing rules; by March 2020, most educational institutions worldwide had experienced unexpected closures and had urgently sought to come up with feasible alternatives to compensate for the sudden pause in education, especially during the periods of *complete* lockdown and quarantine, when COVID-related mortality rates reached alarming levels.

The sole applicable solution that was adopted by many schools and universities across the world was to deliver lectures and attend classes behind digital screens. The decision to create virtual campuses for both educators and students was not a novelty, as the culture of distance learning has always been globally prevalent and strongly present in most developed countries, even before the COVID-19 crisis. However, for a developing country like Libya, the issue was highly problematic and complicated as the culture of ICT (Information Communication Technology), especially in the higher education context, has always been absent.

In 2020, in response to the continually increasing dire situation of the pandemic, the English Language Department at Tripoli University, embarked on a distance learning program, via the Telegram platform; the goal was to ensure the continuity and regularity of the educational process. Moreover, the department's vision was to prevent having "*une année blanche*" and to successfully run the academic year without any suspensions.

The e-learning program was extremely resilient. It offered opportunities for professors to deliver virtual lectures via the Telegram platform and to design online teaching materials in accordance with their own preferences. The materials had to be based on the department's assigned curricula; they had to satisfy the students' academic needs, meet their expectations, and most importantly, accomplish the learning objectives. The distance learning program was quite experimental and highly challenging for the department's faculty members as well as for the students alike since it was the first of its

kind.

During the course of their online classes, some teachers displayed different codes and modes of resources and communication tools when approaching their lectures. It is worth mentioning that the e-learning experience is currently still going on in some classes, however, in the form of a blended learning approach, as it has been readily approved by most of the students.

The reasons why not all classes are now held partially virtually are: first, some professors have very humble digital literacy backgrounds; therefore, their command of technology and ICT tools is very limited. This group of professors find it way easier for them to handle their classes in the traditional way, i.e., in an actual classroom setting; second, a good number of professors have blatantly expressed a clear rejection of the concept of online teaching, and hence they prefer to hold on to the old school face-to-face teaching fashion without any kind of IT reference or interference. In fact, it is important to note that a considerable number of teachers believe that online teaching doesn't have the same value as face-to-face instruction.

As for students, albeit being quite intimidated and confused prior to the actual online program, they consequently showed a great deal of acceptance and gradually developed a sense of commitment and connectedness to their fully remote classes. Most of them demonstrated a clear interest in the e-learning experience, especially in classes where teachers showed a considerable level of digital literacy knowledge and created innovative course materials enhanced with diverse *multimodal/multimedia* teaching and communication resources.

2. Literature Review: Multimodality in Digital Teaching-Learning Context

Recently, there has been a plethora of research in the area of online learning and teaching, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Many virtual classroom-based studies have sought to explore and better understand how different digital instructional practices and methodologies can affect students' remote learning experiences. One of the key areas that has particularly gained attention is *multimodality* in the e-learning context.



Many scholars and researchers, Maiulo Jonathan 2022, Dressman (2019), Gibbon (2012), assert that course materials which make use of multimodal communication and instructional digital tools enhanced with grabby layouts, including *meaningful graphics, chromatics, images, podcasts, videos, and audio-visual* resources can, to a great extent, deepen students' learning experiences and stimulate their curiosity, especially when the digital modes are simultaneously combined in a coherent way.

The underlying assumption of the multimodal teaching approach is that modern teachers should always devise and update their digital teaching tools since they are dealing with a generation of learners who were born in a digital era where smart phones, video-games, social networks, and advanced computer-based technologies have immensely affected almost all their avenues of life. The learning process should be a simulation of real-life interaction where people interact and make sense of the world around them by means of their various senses all at once. The senses that we use for everyday perception and interaction are: *sight (visual), hearing (auditory), smell, touch (tactile), movement (kinaesthetic)*. The theory of multimodality can be rightly described as follows:

“.. in its most fundamental sense, is the coexistence of more than one semiotic mode within a given context. More generally multimodality is an everyday reality. It is the experience of living; we experience everyday life in multimodal terms through sight, sound, movement. Even the simplest conversation entails language, intonation, gesture and so forth”

Therefore, the multimodal approach to teaching places value on the significance of applying digital-based resources into the teaching process as it has become vital and inescapable. Integrating technology-based tools into today's everyday instruction is no longer a luxury or an option, but rather a necessity and a must. Recent empirical studies have come up with findings that vehemently support the core concepts of this approach. These studies have shown the tremendous positive effects of using digital multiliteracies on

learners' motivation, level of participation, and overall performance in class. In fact, designing online course materials with different engaging digital resources and media can be precisely tailored to the expectations of today's learners. In this respect, Dressman (2019) asserts :

“In the digital age, multimodality has become even more central to communication, and this is especially true for language learners, who depend on the multiplicity of channels available on a screen to help them “pick up” meaning in a target language.”

It is worth mentioning that the term “multimodality” has always been associated with multimedia. In fact, both multimodality and multimedia are used interchangeably in linguistics-related literature. However, recently, some scholars have attempted to clarify the nuances between them. In this regard, Arola Sheppard and Ball (2014) make a fine distinction between the two terms “mode” and “medium”:

“A mode is a means of communicating. A medium is the channel or system through which communications are conveyed. The plural form of medium is media. So, for example, if we want to communicate in the linguistic mode, we might choose the medium of print. If we want to communicate in the aural mode, we might choose the medium of a podcast. Both print and podcasts are forms of media.”

Central to the concept of multimodality in teaching is that learners are different types. Teachers should acknowledge the diversity of students' learning abilities and styles. Further, modern teachers should make genuine efforts to design online course materials that appeal to a diverse spectrum of learners. Kress (2003) argues that:

“We need to develop a theory that can take



into account the multimodal nature of all human knowledge, one that encourages multimodal design and creation. Preferring one mode over another disservices some members of society and denies them agency”

The term “multimodality” first appeared in academia in the 1990s, specifically in the discipline of social semiotics by the New London Group (known as the NLG), who were a group of scholars, led by Gunther Kress. It consisted of ten academics and theoreticians of different nationalities and of different areas in the social sciences. These scholars were dedicated to researching and developing new (multi) literacy pedagogies that reflect today’s social environment and technology .At the heart of this theory is the assumption that human communication is changing with the advancement of technology.

Modern man uses different modes for making meaning, i.e., language and speech are not the only media of communication and meaning production. Teaching and communication are becoming no longer print-based but mostly screen-based. Therefore, “linear and mostly text” materials should be avoided in modern day pedagogies.

The theory was later brought to the forefront in the field of ELT by Gunther Kress’s seminal work Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design (1996). Kress developed discerning views about applying the Multimodal social theory in the field of language teaching. His theories stress the significance of creating ELT teachers who understand the importance of going beyond language when it comes to teaching. Teachers should “*digitize*” their courses by applying modes such as images, videos, and blogs, as well as animations and interactive games to maximize students’ comprehension level and guarantee knowledge retention. He further illustrates with some examples from kids’ storybooks and study materials where pictures and illustrations are excessively exploited for the sake of activating the different senses, conveying meaning, and maximizing comprehension. The argument is that even adults should be exposed to various modes and representations of meaning to better their understanding of the target material and hence achieve deep learning.

In a rapidly growing digital age, we have to acknowledge that many aspects of teaching and learning have completely changed. Relying on traditional media of instruction nowadays, such as materials in print or speech, no longer suffices nor stimulates students' learning curiosity and cognitive skills. Kress (2003) stresses that "Multimodality looks beyond language and examines these multiple modes of communication and meaning making." [The Gordon Kelley Academic Success Center](#) further maintains that using various modes can enrich the content of the lesson and help students activate their senses, increase concentration, and easily internalize new information.

"...the advantages gained through multiple learning strategies include the ability to learn more quickly and at a deeper level so that recall at a later date will be more successful. Using various modes of learning also improves attention span. Familiarizing yourself with various learning styles will only enhance your ability to study more effectively. For example, when comprehension of reading material has not been successful, a visual representation can often assist the student in comprehending the material. Or, if listening to a lecture has not allowed the student to gain complete understanding of a concept, viewing a presentation on the same topic or attending a group study session could result in a more positive learning experience [...] Multimodal Learning Strategies are a step in the right direction for most learners allowing the student to be more aware of learning preferences which may result in a stronger desire to learn new material. Combining learning modes can also result in a more balanced approach to studying and learning which leads to greater understanding, comprehension, and retention.

The principles of multimodal theory in teaching precisely align with those of the VARK's model of learning styles. According to the VARK model



(1970) advanced by Neil Fleming, learners are classified into four categories depending on their learning styles and preferences. Students can be *visual*, *aural*, *read/write*, or *kinesthetic*. Visual learners learn best by viewing images, illustrations, color-coded notes, videos, graphs, and charts, while aural learners depend on listening when learning and understanding the target content. Aural learners prefer listening to podcasts, teachers' voice notes, audiobooks, and class recordings. On the other hand, read/write students learn best when reading and writing down information for memorization or creating presentations. Kinesthetic learners are practical in nature; they prefer applying and doing new concepts to achieve better understanding. Therefore, educators and teachers are required to satisfy a diversified body of students to meet their needs and expectations by designing versatile course materials to ensure the best learning outcomes. **Sankey, Birch, and Gardiner argue that (2010)** "students may feel more comfortable and perform better when learning in environments that cater for their predominant learning style".

In 2021, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States released the findings of a comprehensive research entitled "*Teacher Professional Development in the Arab States during the COVID-19 Pandemic*" to evaluate the distance learning experiences in the MENA region. The report focused on the collective challenges, techniques, obstacles, and e-learning environments used in these programs. Unfortunately, the research did not include Libya and a number of other Arab countries. In fact, it specifically surveyed Lebanon, Jordan, KSA, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco.

The report concluded that although many Arab countries succeeded in launching e-learning programs within the first weeks of the pandemic, the quality and efficacy of these programs remain questionable. The research reported that among the many reasons behind the failure of many e-learning programs in the Middle Eastern region is that most e-learning materials produced during the times of Corona lacked creativity, i.e., eclectic and innovative digital practices regarding course design and structure. Furthermore, most programs were exclusively teacher-centered; in other words, students were mere information recipients and did not take part in the instructional process.

“The next very significant challenge was digital illiteracy [...] teachers were not comfortable designing digital content with ease. Especially at the beginning of the crisis, teachers did not master even the ability to create links and or using the new platforms. Teachers needed much training on student-centered pedagogies and on how (new) technologies can facilitate taking into account the different learner contexts and needs [...] Many teachers complained that they had not been made aware of the existing resources and facilities”.
Malak Zaalouk (2021)

In fact, the survey disclosed deeply entrenched problems concerning teachers’ development programs in the Arab world, especially when it comes to their digital literacy knowledge. It concluded that Arab teachers and educators were generally not well prepared to fill in the gap during the pandemic, regardless of the affluent funding offered by some of their governments. (Zaalouk, 2021:14)

1.1. Multimodal Resources

Multimodal resources are various and are technically described as modes. *«Each mode does a specific thing: images show what takes too long to read, and writing names what would be difficult to show. Color is used to highlight specific aspects of the overall message.* Kress (2012) Therefore, “modes are connected to any of the five senses.” Alison Gibbon (2012)

The below chart (Figure 1) outlines the main multimodal resources that should be adopted when designing effective digital teaching materials; they consist of four main areas of design: **linguistic design, visual design, audio design, spatial design, and gestural design.** Atypical multimodal course design should consist of at least two or more of these design areas that help students activate their senses and impact their cognitive skills for better knowledge retention. All these modes interlace together to produce deep, meaningful content that is embodied in different representations that ultimately match and suit different learners. (Shanahan, 2020).

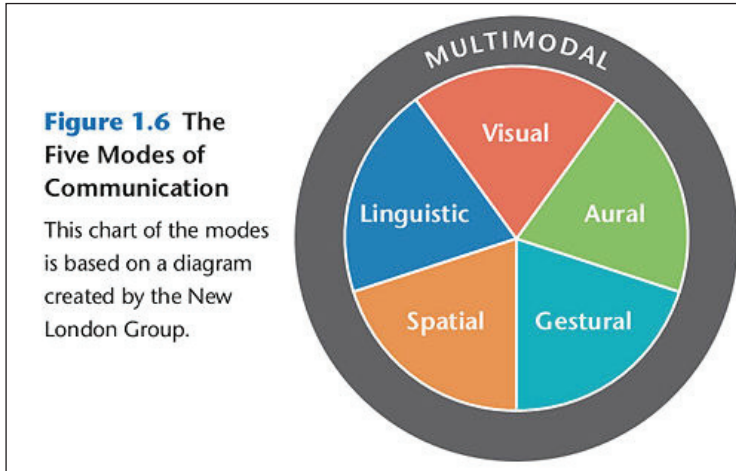


Figure 1 the five elements of multimodal design

The process of designing a multimodal material can be described as follows:

“using multiplicities of media and modes [...] it involves teachers making design choices in the ways in which the curriculum content is expressed, arranged, and sequenced multimodally[...]To engage aptly with multimodal texts involves understanding the affordances of the different meaning-making resources and how they work together to produce a coherent and cohesive multimodal text” (Toh, Lim, Nguyen. 2022)

The chart was advanced by the New London Group and is used in this present study as a reference to explore and detect teachers’ applications of the multimodal resources that “permit the design of meanings”. Valencia (2016)

2. Research Objectives

The purpose of this paper is to examine the multimodal digital practices of a number of Libyan instructors who were involved in an e-learning program at the English Language Department, University of Tripoli, during

the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This study stresses the importance of applying the multimodal teaching approach especially in online-oriented classes. Applying multimodal pedagogic strategies benefits a wide range of students whose learning styles and preferences are diverse. It highlights the significance of promoting the culture of digital literacy within the avenues of higher education. It further corroborates the necessity of establishing a sustainable teachers' digital literacy development program across the nation to harness and update Libyan teachers' digital skills. The concerned authorities should make urgent reforms and take serious steps towards integrating digital learning into the higher education sphere as it has become mandatory and inescapable in this rapidly growing digital age.

Revisiting the e-learning experience and contemplating the weaknesses and challenges that were encountered by both the educators and the students involved in this study can help find solutions for similar digital learning endeavors in the future. The study suggests the need for substantial, intensive IT courses for all Libyan teachers, especially for instructors in the higher education sector. These courses should be periodical and mandatory under the supervision of the ministry of higher education and research. Providing the necessary class digital equipment is also a must as education, even in real classroom settings, has become highly digitized.

Introducing and applying technology-assisted applications as well as methodologies in online instruction will dramatically contribute to the quality of education. In addition, deploying diverse multimodal techniques in fully or blended online teaching will help teachers ameliorate their teaching practices and address all students regardless of their learning preferences. Thus, it will eventually have a positive impact on students' performance and learning outcomes.

2.1. Research Questions

This paper addresses the following questions:

1. What were the most predominantly multimodal resources used by some Libyan instructors at the English language department during the COVID-19 pandemic in their fully online instruction?

2. What were the most assistive multimodal communicative activities that stimulated students' interaction and class discussion?

3. What were students' views on the online learning experience in terms of course materials, teacher's availability, and class interaction?

4. Research Methodology

This research is based on the Multimodal Design Elements framework proposed by the New London Group to analyze teachers' multimodal practices. This model clearly shows the main compartments of a multimodal design that covers the areas of meaning-making design, including linguistic design, aural design, spatial design, and visual design. The following chart, adapted from The London Group (1996), illustrates these design areas in detail.

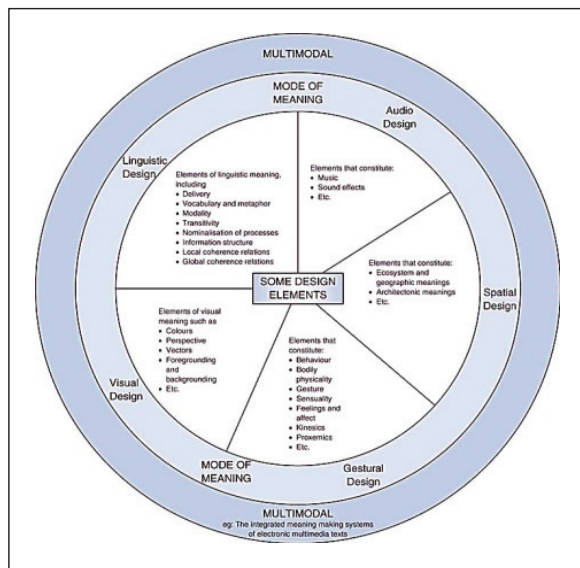


Figure 2 The New London Group Model for meaning making Design Elements

The study uses descriptive-qualitative approach to data analysis. A brief questionnaire, consisting of five questions, was sent out to students to review their perspectives on their e-learning experience at the English language department, Tripoli University. The concise questionnaire was also intended to illicit students' views on some of the obstacles they encountered during

their remote classes. A total of 41 students participated in this study. They were of 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th semesters. Their ages ranged from 18 to 24 years old. An interesting note is that most of them were part-time employees in both the education and business sectors.

Seven virtual classes were closely observed across two semesters. Two classes were structure-based in nature, while the rest were pure content-based. Seven instructors were involved in this study; they were all female MA holders. Their ages ranged from 30 to 45 years old. They all had a high-profile teaching history and had been working in this domain for years. The researcher joined their classes via a hyperlink posted for students on the department's page on Facebook. The purpose was to investigate the various online teaching methodologies used by these instructors in terms of course design, including the multimodalities integrated for instruction and interaction. The researcher did not inform the instructors about the purpose of joining their academic channels to ensure they run their virtual lessons in the usual way of teaching. They were all cooperative, and some expressed their utter consent to join their course channels.

3. Results and Discussions

The following part reports briefly on the multimodal elements of design used in the observed online classes as well as the types of assessments and interactive activities deployed. *Therefore, upon the systematic observation of the eight virtual classes delivered by some Libyan professors at the English language department/Tripoli University, via the Telegram social platform, during the COVID-19 quarantine, the following results have been found:*

3.1. Teaching Modalities and Multimodalities

A good number of teachers adopted diverse multimodal elements of design when delivering their virtual classes across the two semesters; however, not all these elements were incorporated all at once into a single “text”. Still, these classes, which used at least two or three multimodal elements, could rightly be described as multimodal as Hasbrock contends that “**Multimodal instruction involves having the learner engage simultaneously or in close sequence with the material using two or more of their sensory “modalities”**”¹

Clearly, there have been evident efforts on the part of most teachers to use and

1- <https://medium.com/inspired-ideas-prek-12/understanding-multimodal-instruction>



merge different modes of meaning-making and to make the learning process possible and realizable for students. Generally, the most predominantly adapted modes ranged from **linguistic design, audio-visual design** to **aural design**.

Some professors were committed to sending in-print materials in Word or PDF forms; they would follow up these text materials with audio recordings that provided in-depth explanations of the lessons being covered. Some of these classes did not really depend on any visuals, i.e., images, illustrations, or diagrams. Even the sent documents were in the form of simple blocks of text that resembled the pages of ordinary books. There were no highlighted notes or side annotations of any kind. This method of instruction resembled the typical traditional classroom in which students place their sheets in front of them and instructors lecture in a one-way manner. The instructors relied solely on the linguistic design in this approach.

In structure-based classes, the instructors relied largely on sending text materials related to the course in PDF files. In addition, they further enhanced the lesson with similar audio-visual content from **YouTube**. The teacher would embed one or two videos from YouTube; they recommended the students to watch them to achieve full comprehension. Many students found this method very helpful and informative in terms of helping them grasp the lesson well. However, a handful of students complained that some of the YouTube videos were not exactly the same as the proposed lesson in the curriculum in terms of the content. For example, some videos lacked depth and precision, or some had off-lesson parts.

Another effective method that was adapted in content-based classes when several teachers used the **Vrecorder** app. With this method, it was possible for teachers to create a multimodal course material that combined **linguistic, audio-visual, and spatial designs**. The teacher would video record the reading material on their screen and at the same time explain the lesson. This application offers teachers assistive tools for demonstrating their classes, such as making annotations, zooming in on key concepts, or highlighting important lines and paragraphs. Students found this method completely helpful and practical. They were able to save the video and watch it at their convenience.

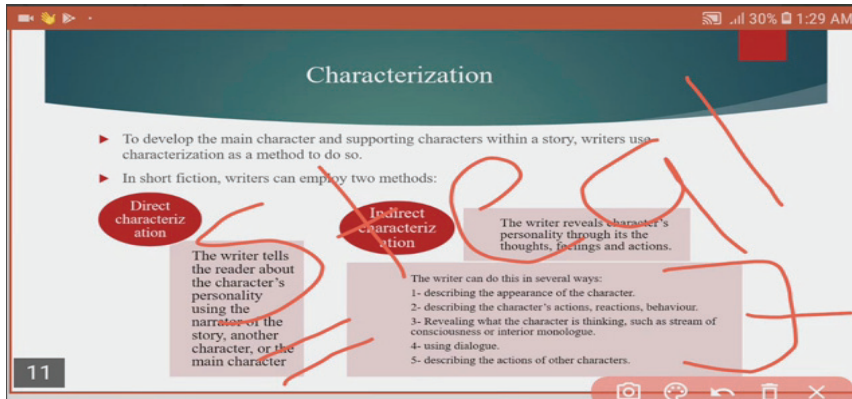


Figure 3 Vrecorder app affords a range of tools for multimodal instruction

In some cases, there were some instructors who simply uploaded documents to read. Students, on their behalf, had to download these text materials for study. In this method, students had to develop self-study skills and promote their learning autonomy. Every time the teacher sent a document, she would ask the students to review the material, and, in case of any difficulties, the students were welcome to go back to the instructor for any necessary clarification. Many of the students who were involved in this course expressed their frustration with the serious difficulties they had to encounter, especially that some of the lessons required demonstration and profuse explanation. A good number of students have reported that they felt completely discouraged from communicating with the teacher. They claimed that they were too shy to ask their teachers for more clarification. To mitigate this dilemma, some of them created channels for peer-study to ease the process of understanding. In this regard Maiullo (2022) stresses that: *“paying attention to modes of communication in online classes also helps approximate face-to-face activities that engage students with comprehensible input and result in authentic communication.”*

As for the few multimodal classes, it was noted that one of the teachers who adapted this approach depended mostly on both **linguistic** and **audio-visual design**. The teacher created PowerPoint video presentations, which were all uploaded on a **YouTube** channel so that students could find them as a reference. These PowerPoint video lectures were recorded and enhanced with clear layouts and a meaningful use of chromatics. The lessons' key concepts

were underlined or highlighted in red for foregrounding purposes; there was also an ample use of charts and diagrams with labels and captions. Charts and tables were used to simplify the lesson and sum up long articles.



Figure 4 Using illustrations and labels in Multimodal digital classes

Infographs with labels were also used for demonstration. Important concepts were summed up and enlisted in numerated points. This facilitates the process for the students to memorize and internalize the new information easily, especially since the teacher usually read these summary points in a high tone with a slow pace. Moreover, the lessons ended with a weekly assignment. In these assignments, students apply the new concepts and theories in practice. The assignments were graded as part of the class assessment policy.

Some professors depended solely on **aural design** by sending students lecture recordings followed up by a cluster of questions about the lesson as homework. Based on some side conversations between the researcher and the students, many complained about finding lengthy audio clips extremely tedious, especially when the teacher spoke feebly and seemed to be just reading out from the text.

There was also another case when the teacher relied on a unimodal approach based on **linguistic design**. The teacher sent multiple readings to the students. The lessons were annotated with highlighting and underlining. However, they were all explained “textually” by means of typing lengthy

paragraphs, mostly in Arabic. There was no single “voice” recording by the teacher, so the students did not hear the instructor’s voice whatsoever. As observed, there was not much interaction in the discussion channels. Still, students were committed to submitting their assignments on time because they were marked; the teacher, on the other hand, was committed to sending feedback to all students. Students involved in this class expressed that online courses without visuals or audio were completely empty and boring. On many occasions, students needed to develop an affective relationship with their distant classes and teachers. However, not sending audio recordings or responding in type drove many learners to lose interest and zest fast.

A further notable observation was that students generally did not seem encouraged to join in live sessions. Among the many professors who participated in this distant learning program, only one attempted to run live classes via **Zoom**. However, every time the instructor scheduled a live session, no student showed up. Students claimed that it was challenging to secure good connection coverage to attend the sessions smoothly without any disruptions or internet breakdowns; while others thought that having recorded lessons was more beneficial and practical, especially during lockdowns when most students were home and it was challenging to find a quiet zone when all family members were around. Conversely, there were very few cases where teachers ran audio live streams on Telegram. It is true that many students did not join in, but at least there were a few others who did enjoy having interactive synchronous classes with their teachers.

A further common feature that was found in all the observed virtual classes was that they did not entail **gestural nor spatial designs**. Students did not experience watching their professors give classes as they were all not webcammed.

3.2. Multimodal Types of Class Activities and Participation Level

As far as assessment strategies are concerned, some teachers used various modes for assessing students. Besides written assignments, there were some teachers who did weekly oral quizzes. The weekly oral quizzes were mandatory and required students to record their answers in voice notes. This created a more dynamic, socially-driven class as students were able to listen to each other’s answers, and sometimes this led to further discussions. It was noted that in multimodal communicative classes, students in the beginning reacted/replied textually to their teachers; however, they eventually grew

more encouraged to, voluntarily, react verbally to the posts, announcements, and feedback. This was an obvious sign that they had started to feel at ease and that their virtual environment was beginning to be familiar and comfortable.

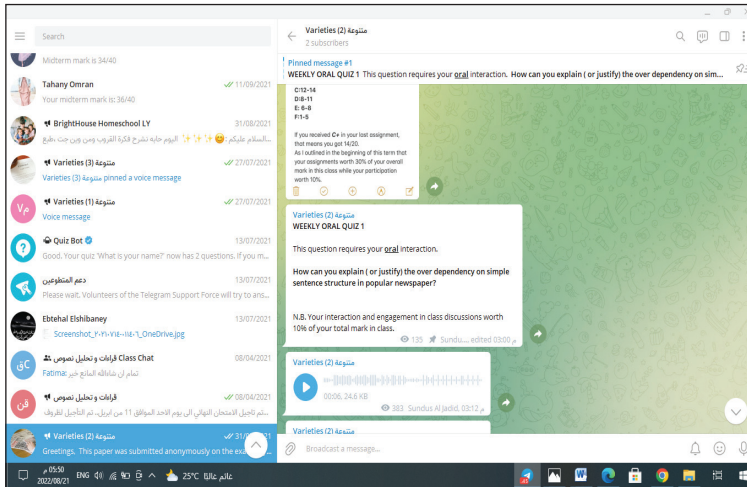


Figure 5 Interactive oral quiz activities in DL classes

A shared feature among all unimodal classes was that students' participation was remarkably low. Participation was also below the average in some multimodal classes where teachers did not create any interactive communication activities or where the teachers scarcely communicated orally, i.e., in voice recordings with the students. Many of these discussion channels remained blank because students were always hesitant to initiate or lead discussions. In fact, all teaching approaches concur on the principle that a classroom cannot be successful if it only imparts knowledge without requiring students' participation and involvement. It is important worth mentioning that the prime purpose of founding Telegram discussion channels was to create communication threads and an inclusive, interactive two-way sphere for teachers and students to discuss course-related questions and untangle possible obscurities. In many classes, it was clear that the teacher made an effort to create a quality course with lively discussions and activities; unfortunately, only a few came up with innovative interactive activities to entice students' class engagement. It was found that most teachers, who complained about their students being passive and inactive, did not apply enough interactive class activities and scarcely communicated orally with their students.

Another useful activity that was largely deployed in multimodal classes was the multiple choice questions (MCQ) in the discussion channel to check students' levels and maintain their progress. In classes that adapted this activity, students participated actively in these polls because they were devised as games. Therefore, students were exceedingly motivated to take part in these activities, which catalyzed their class participation. These activities enabled the teacher to gauge the students' level and locate the areas that required extra reinforcement. In his article "What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy" (2003), Gee argues that "*Motivation for humans lies in challenges that feel challenging but doable and in gaining continual feedback that lets them know what progress they are making.*"

In many online classes that required assignments, students were discouraged when a few instructors did not send their feedback. Feedback provision is of paramount importance for students, especially in an e-learning context, to track their progress and, most importantly, to foster their self-confidence. Students were also disrupted as there was overlapping in submission deadlines across the various classes. A few instructors were tolerant in terms of extending submission dates, while others showed a strict attitude toward deadlines.

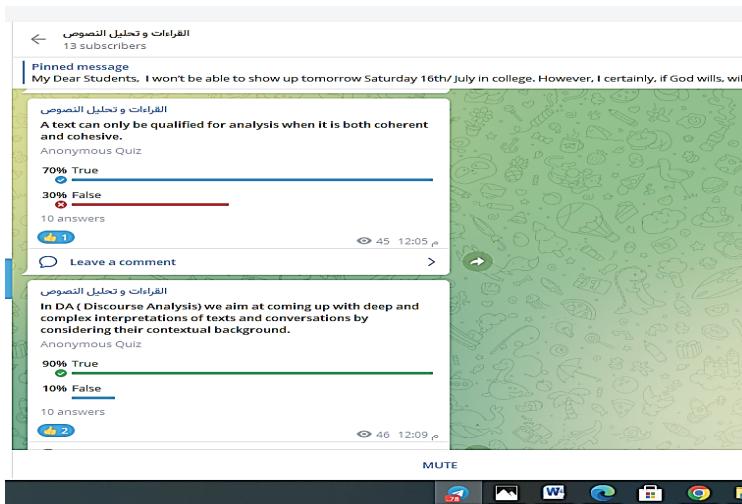


Figure 6 Interactive MCQ activities in DL classes

To even further make a communicative socially oriented class, there was an interesting class activity where the instructor asked her students to work in groups for a class assignment; not all the assignments required group work



but the instructor did this group activity for once or twice. However, students were immensely excited to work collaboratively with their classmates. The teachers split students into groups and were instructed to create a discussion channel for each of these groups. The teacher joined these groups to monitor their progress and to check on the efforts of every student.

Another important point to acknowledge is the significance of choosing the **Telegram** platform as a virtual learning management system (LMS) for this online program. In fact, Telegram has been proven to be effective and applicable for carrying online classes with boundless ease and flexibility. Moreover, unlike other learning environments that students might find a bit complicated and quite unfamiliar, the Telegram application is a social platform in the first place and is mostly used by a wide range of youths for communication purposes.

3.3. Students' Perceptions on the E-Learning Experience

A brief questionnaire was designed to measure students' satisfaction with regard to the distant learning (DL) program run by the English language department at Tripoli University. This questionnaire was designed by one of the participating instructors who sought to find out students' opinions vis-à-vis their virtual classes, which were based on the multimodal approach. The teacher taught five classes for two semesters. They used a multimodal approach that entailed elements including linguistic, aural, and audio-visual designs. The questionnaire comprised twelve questions. For the purpose of this study, only five questions were selected and sent out to the participating students in Arabic to give them a room to express themselves at ease. The questionnaire focused on specific criteria related to the course design, top challenges, and teachers' availability.

The questionnaire Given to English Language Department Students to assess their DL experience

1. How do you describe your distant learning experience?

2. Given to the online course materials you had, was it too challenging to understand the lessons?

3. *Would you like to carry the online experience even after the end of the pandemic?*

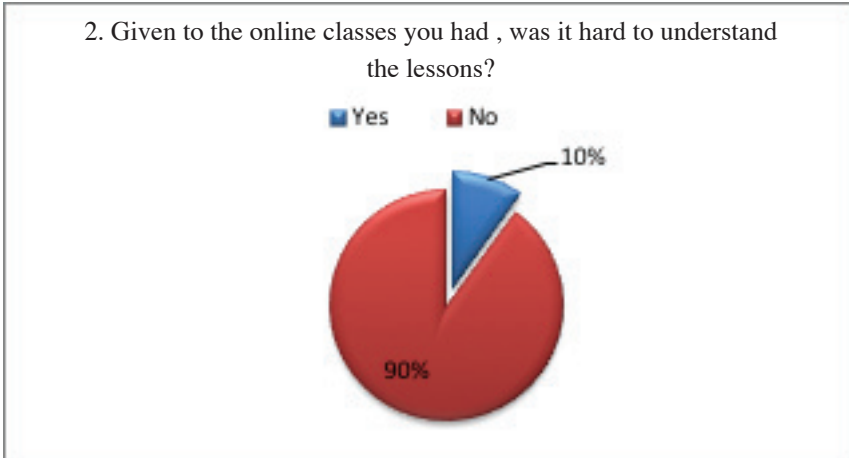
4. *Have you encountered any difficulties communicating with your teacher?*

5. *Write about a specific challenge you had while studying on line?*

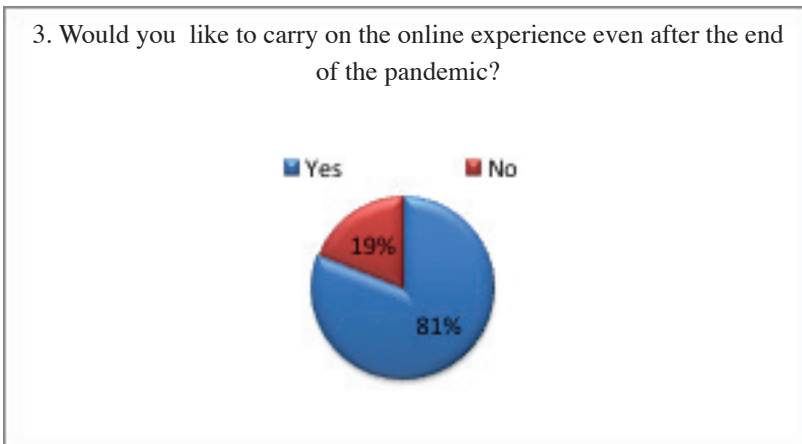
As for the first question, most of students agreed that the e-learning experience was successful and perfectly went beyond their expectations; however, a couple of students believed that the e-learning program fell prey to many pitfalls, including weak internet coverage, high cost of internet credits, and also the excessive number of assignments and research papers that they had to submit. Prior to their distant learning experience, students were not accustomed to writing lengthy research papers on a weekly basis; only a few classes required them to work on term papers. The disheartening feeling that overwhelmed most students was also another downside as reported by one of the students “being far from campus and friends was an unbearable challenge in itself”. On the other hand, it is important to note that many students have expressed that the online experience harnessed and honed their research and writing skills. This is especially true since many assignments required group work, so students found a valuable opportunity to work closely with each other and exchange knowledge.

The second question sought to find out students’ level of comprehension of the content delivered virtually during the pandemic. As shown in the pie chart, most of them thought most of the lessons were clear thanks to the clarity and the organization of the layout. Students confirmed that PowerPoint video recorded presentations were the best teaching modality, especially when the content was empowered with diagrams and visuals. In fact, “combining images with text or recording is a great way to make materials accessible for students of varied proficiency levels” as Maiullo (2022) puts it. Students were appreciative of teachers who spoke clearly when recording their aural or audio-visual materials. Several students maintained that YouTube educational videos were extremely helpful especially when they are discussed with the instructors. Moreover, many students emphasized that diagrams and mind mapping should be incorporated in all online lessons because these tools

deepen their understanding and accelerated their memorization of key concepts. They all agreed that lessons that were devoid of any visuals, audios or videos were tedious, empty and monotonous.

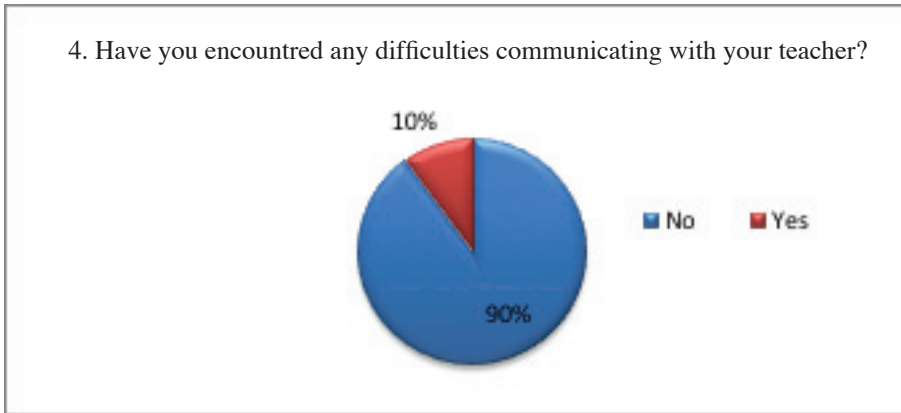


PowerPoint software affords teachers with ample tools that make their lessons attractive and engaging. They can select appropriate templates based on the nature of the course; additionally, videos and websites can be embedded in these presentations for additional reinforcement.

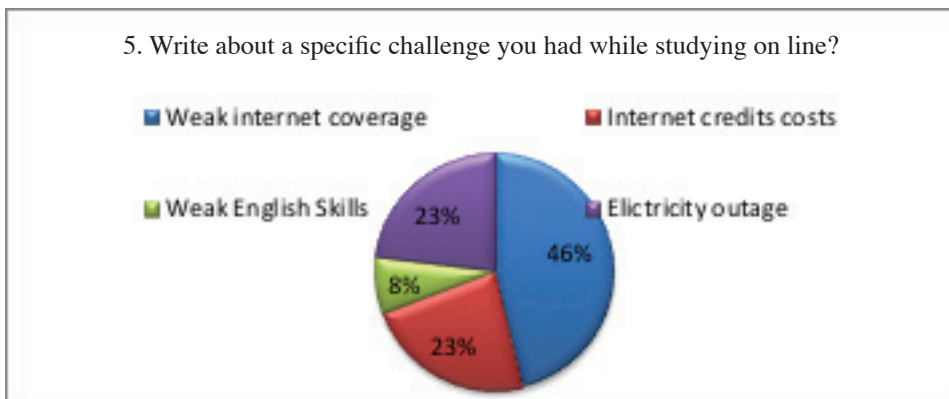


A large number of students stated that they would like to continue taking classes online in a form of blended learning even after the pandemic has ended. Many expressed that teachers' digital materials helped them understand the

lesson and achieve a full grasp of key concepts. Moreover, using interactive communication venues assisted students in approaching their teachers and spelling out their concerns without any insecurities or hesitation. Students are now, more than ever before, think more positively about distance learning than before the COVID-19 crisis.



As for teachers’ availability, not all teachers involved in this program were cooperative in this regard, but as it has been observed, most teachers in this study were indeed available and approachable 24/7. Students were comfortable sending queries directly to their teachers, although there were some complaints about teachers’ not responding sooner.



The last question revealed the most typical challenges students had during online instruction. Most of these challenges were external however a small



number of students voiced worries about having self-confidence concerns as well as difficulties to respond in English during oral quizzes. These students reported about+ their inability to understand the content especially when it was utterly explained in English without any L1 reference.

4. Conclusion

This research was an attempt to shed light on the English language department's virtual teaching experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. It specifically aimed at examining teachers' multimodal pedagogic practices in the online instruction. Although the acute pandemic crisis hit all educational institutions by surprise, a good number of instructors showed a great sense of alertness and unwavering seriousness. The research also aimed at disclosing students' perceptions regarding online learning and the most common challenges that they encountered in their virtual classes.

The results of this study further confirm, along with a host of previous studies, that the multimodal approach can be considered the optimum model to adapt, especially in the online instruction context. The multimodal approach appeals to students of various learning styles, and most students in this study agreed that courses with multimodal design were characterized by clarity, organization, and effectiveness in delivering the target content. To encourage student participation, some teachers in this research used multimodal communication practices. Based on the findings, students were immensely encouraged to participate when the instructor gave ample opportunities that required them to respond vocally and in different forms, such as collaborative group projects, polls and games.

The distance learning program yielded promising results for further future development; obviously, students' learning outcomes were considerably satisfactory and most educational objectives were successfully met, especially in the multimodal classes.

The distance learning program revealed Libyan teachers' aptitude to acquire and apply digital teaching-related skills and methodologies in their day-to-day instruction. Their high potential was revealed by their serious attitude and creative digital teaching responses during the COVID-19 crisis.

The COVID-19 experience was a lesson, and a blessing in disguise, especially as far as the Libyan educational context is concerned. It surfaced the *problematique* related to ICT integration and digital literacy knowledge in

higher education. The study highlights the significance of providing ongoing teacher training programs in ICT across the nation as the whole world is transitioning to a fully digital phase, in all avenues of life. These programs will help Libyan educators and academics to be in step with their peers and international counterparts around the globe. Even today, many teachers continue to use the digital course materials they used during the crisis in their actual classrooms. Without a doubt, the online learning programs that were implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic opened up new avenues for creativity, allowing Libyan teachers and all teachers worldwide to push their boundaries and experiment with a variety of digital teaching methods in order to provide a high-quality education for all.

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II

E-Learning/Teaching Psychological, Physiological, and Social Effects on Students and Faculty

A Comparison of Distance and In-person Learners: Students' Perspectives and Attitudes Towards the Use of Zoom

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic led several colleges to switch from face-to-face (FTF) in-class instruction to remote instruction in the midst of the spring 2020 semester. Zoom was widely used by organizations as their delivery platform. This study looked into how students felt about using Zoom for distance learning and how they thought it affected their engagement and learning compared to face-to-face instruction. In this study, EFL students from Tobruk University were involved. A questionnaire and interviews were used to gather the data. The findings showed that students felt negatively about using Zoom and that it had a detrimental impact on their learning experience and motivation to learn.

Key words: distance learning , in-person learning , EFL learners, Zoom

Definitions:

Distance learning: a method of learning where you study from your home and receive instruction and assignments online instead of going to school, college, or university.

In-person learning: The classic method of learning, in which you attend a value at the same time for a series of sessions, can be described as learning. A teacher or instructor will instruct or tutor you while following a curriculum, which is a set schedule of lessons.

EFL learners: EFL is abbreviation for English as a foreign language : the teaching of English to students whose first language is not English.

Zoom: a brand name for computer software that enables a pair or more individuals to communicate with one another online using their smart phones, tablets, or laptops.

Introduction

Universities and schools were obliged to switch completely from FTF to remote instruction as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic, which resulted in a new type of learning environment for both teachers and students. The utilization of new technologies, producing instructional materials that suited the new environment, offering an interactive remote learning environment, and implementing new evaluation methodologies were just a few of the difficulties instructors faced. To facilitate the shift from FTF to remote instruction, many institutions and colleges offered their faculty members professional development opportunities. To aid in this seamless transition, several teachers gave their children laptops and internet access. It was difficult for the administration, teachers, and students to relocate.

Many government organizations, academic institutions, non-profit groups, and private citizens choose Zoom during the Covid-19 pandemic. Tobruk university was one of these universities which chose zoom during the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2011, Eric Yuan founded Zoom. It is a web-based collaborative video conferencing solution that offers high-quality audio, video, and screen sharing, making it perfect for online meetings, webinars, online classes, and other types of virtual conferences. It became easily accessible for academics, staff, and students in many universities. The various Zoom features could be used by teachers to design engaging learning environments. A virtual white board with annotation capabilities to clarify topics, breakout rooms to create small collaborative group work, polls for student input, and chat to support class discussions are some of these features. Zoom meetings can also be recorded and made accessible for later use.

Many colleges switched from FTF classroom instruction to remote instruction as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak; some adopted Zoom as their delivery platform. This study's goals included examining students' views



toward using Zoom as well as how they felt about learning and engagement when using Zoom as opposed to conventional FTF sessions. The following three questions were the focus of this study's analysis:

- 1- What do students think about using Zoom for learning?
- 2- How engaged do the learners feel in the classroom when utilizing Zoom?
- 3- Which do students prefer, the traditional face-to-face classroom or the Zoom classroom?

Literature review

It's not new to use distance learning methods like videoconferencing. They have been used for many years by professors in higher education to interact with students in real time. Numerous research (e.g., Anastasiades et al., 2010; Candarli & Yuksel, 2012; Delaney et al., 2004; Ghazal et al., 2015; Karal et al., 2011; Knipe & Lee, 2002; Mader & Ming, 2015; Oh & Lee, 2012) concentrated on the usage of video-conferencing systems. Some research (e.g., Archibald et al., 2019; Maul et al., 2018; Sayem et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2018) particularly addressed the usage of Zoom in the classroom. Researchers have begun looking into online learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic, particularly during the past several months (Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Agarwal & Kaushik, 2020; Basilaia et al., 2020; Bao, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020; Murphy, 2020; Naciri et al., 2020; Toquero, 2020).

Knipe and Lee (2002) investigated the claim that video conferencing does not provide the same level of teaching and learning as traditional classroom settings. The findings showed that the quality of the teaching and learning provided to the students at the distant site was inferior to that provided to those in the typical classroom. A study was done in 2012 by Candarli and Yuksel to find out how college students felt about videoconferencing. Students in their second and third years of college participated in the study who spent roughly 30 minutes in an English class through videoconference. According to the study's findings, students felt that using videoconferencing in class was inappropriate.

An investigation on a blended synchronous learning environment was

done by Wang et al. (2018). The majority of participants in the course used face –to-face attendance, while the remaining participants used two-way videoconferencing (zoom). The study's goal was to discover more about how the students learned and how they felt about the blended synchronous learning strategy. The study involved 24 students who were enrolled in an optional course at a facility for teacher training. According to the study's findings, students appreciated the convenience and adaptability of taking classes remotely through Zoom. The researchers did note that there was little student participation via Zoom. Sometimes, students would turn off their cameras and not respond when called upon. Additionally, the researchers did not notice any significant technical issues, and neither did the students who were participating in the Zoom sessions. It appeared that all of the online students could readily attend the Zoom sessions. The researchers came to the following conclusions about what makes a successful BSLE experience: good communication between online students and the instructor, as well as between online students and classroom students; online students' engagement; redesigned instructional activities; and high-quality audio.

According to a 2017 study by Sayem et al., employing Zoom can help students learn fundamental engineering units more effectively. The quantity and kind of contributions to the Moodle Q&A Forum and the number of students participating in Zoom virtual tutorials were used to gauge student engagement with the course. The usage of Zoom virtual tutorials, according to the researchers, enhanced student satisfaction while reducing instructor effort by about 25%.

In a study published in 2019, Archibald et al. investigated if Zoom might be used to gather qualitative data for health research. Online qualitative interviews with 16 female nurses were used to gather data.

The interviews lasted between 50 and 92 minutes. When compared to FTF, phone, or other videoconferencing platforms, the researchers discovered that 69% of the participants preferred Zoom as an interviewing method. The following benefits of adopting Zoom for qualitative interviews were also mentioned by the participants: rapport, convenience, simplicity, and user-friendliness. The researchers discovered that Zoom might be a very suitable platform for gathering information from qualitative interviews. The relative simplicity of use, cost effectiveness, data management features, and security



alternatives were cited as the causes.

The perceived benefits of using Zoom for dissertation chairs to train and mentor doctoral students were examined by Maul et al. (2018). Participants in this study included dissertation chairs and PhD candidates from a university in the southwest of the United States. Researchers devised a survey to gather demographic information on the university's dissertation chairs as well as information on how often they use Zoom with their doctorate students. Using a 19-item Likert style survey, data were gathered. The poll was divided into five sections: demographic data, monthly Zoom usage, Zoom use with dissertation chairs' doctoral students, and more. The researchers also spoke with four dissertation chairs and four PhD candidates. Researchers discovered that the use of Zoom was valued by both instructors and students. They said that Zoom improved productivity and allowed students to develop meaningful relationships with their advisors.

Agarwal and Kaushik's (2020) FTF lessons were substituted by 40-minute Zoom lectures as a result of the COVID 19 epidemic. At the conclusion of the lecture series, 77 students wrote down their impressions. The majority of students (97%) said the sessions related to their clinical practice and learning needs, and 99% said the sessions were appropriate for their level of learning. All of the participants agreed that adding Zoom lectures to the medical curriculum would be a good idea. These findings led the researchers to the conclusion that postgraduate training in future classes should include online teaching. Demuyakor (2020) looked at how satisfied Ghanaian overseas students were with their online education experiences at Chinese higher education institutions. According to the study's findings, pupils were in favor of using online learning tools. When switching from FTF to online, they were happy with their online learning experience and thought the courses were worthwhile. On the other hand, students who took the courses while they were outside of China said they had to pay a lot of money to acquire internet access for their online classes. Additionally, students who were in residence halls reported that internet connectivity was extremely poor.

Methodology

The main objective of the current study is to examine learner's views toward using zoom as well as how they felt about learning and engagement when

using zoom as opposed to conventional FTF sessions in English Department at the faculty of Art, Tobruk university.

Data collection

The data were collected based on the interview and by using questioner were answered by participants studying English as a foreign language at Tobruk university. The interviews attempt to learn more about undergraduate students' perspectives of the benefits and drawbacks of using zoom.

Based on the questionnaire

Data collected through questionnaire showed that during this period of transition, pupils' learning experiences were not entirely satisfactory. The outcomes of this study could have been influenced by a variety of circumstances. The rapid change that called for the adoption of a new platform and the creation of alternative activities and delivery strategies caught the instructors off guard.

The Questionnaire	Yes	No
1. Do you enjoy using zoom during the class?	20%	80%
2. Would you like to use zoom in other classes?	19%	79%
3. Do you feel comfortable using zoom in the class?	18%	78%
4. Does the use of zoom help you participate in the class in ways that enhance your learning?	30%	70%
5. Does the use of zoom made it easier for you to be more engaged in the class discussions?	28%	68%
6. Does the use of zoom increase your interaction with your instructor?	26%	66%
7. Does your attention to the class tasks during the zoom sessions was greater in comparison to the traditional face-to-face class meetings?	10%	90%



The Questionnaire	Yes	No
8. Is it easier to participate in group activities in the zoom sessions in comparisons to the traditional face-to-face class meetings?	15%	85%
9. Does the activities during zoom sessions motivate you to learn the class content than the ones in the face-to-face traditional class meetings?	17%	83%
10. Do you participate more in the zoom sessions in comparison to the traditional face-to-face class meeting?	19%	81%

Results of the interview

Students cited flexibility (80%), simpler contact (20%), textual communication (10%), and the utilization of multimedia (5%) as advantages of Zoom. These results concur with those from the study by Wang et al (2018). Students in their study appreciated the convenience and adaptability of attending classes via zoom at remote locations. Zoom sessions were perceived by students as being more flexible than face-to-face interactions. They were able to attend classes anywhere thanks to the flexibility of the classrooms.

However, students cited the following as the main drawbacks of using Zoom: Distractions (70%) poor interaction and feedback quality (50%) bad educational content (20%), and technical issues (10%). These results suggest that students did not consider technical issues to be a significant disadvantage. This result matches what Weng et al. (2018) discovered in their investigation. The researchers found none of these students in their study did not report any significant technical problems while utilizing zoom ,despite important technical issues.

According to the interviews, students' assessments of the benefits and drawbacks of utilizing Zoom.

Benefits of zoom	yes	No	Drawbacks of zoom	Yes	No
1-Flexibility	80%	20%	1-Distractions	70%	30%
2-Simpler contact	20%	80%	2-Poor interaction& feedback	50%	50%
3-Textual communication	10%	90%	Bad education .3	20%	80%
4-Utilization of multimedia	5%	95%	4-Technical issues	10%	90%

Data Analysis

Obtained from questionnaire and interviews were analyzed on the first , second and third questions all of the learners were answered “yes” 20% and “no” 80% ; which mean 20% of learners enjoy using zoom during the class and would like to employ zoom in other classes whereas 80% do not enjoy using zoom during the class and would not like to employ zoom in other classes. Similar to this, Candarli and Yuksel (2012) discovered in their research that students typically had a negative opinion of using video conferencing. The results, however, go against what Wang et al. stated (2018). The study’s participants felt favorably about using zoom in their classes. Although there were some initial uncertainties and technical difficulties, they saw it as a valuable tool for facilitating teaching, as this student’s response indicated: ‘even though there were some initial uncertainties and technical difficulties, I appreciate the positive spirit that the instructor has shown throughout the module’ (p.10).

In response to the fourth, fifth and sixth questions on how using zoom affected their perceptions of their classroom engagement, 70% of learners disagreed 30 % agree. Generally, the student’s replies varied, indicating that they thought using zoom had largely a negative effect on their level of involvement in class and had no positive effect on it. The findings of this



study and those of Wang et al.'s (2018) study are in agreement.

Students preferred traditional FTF classroom instruction over Zoom sessions, according to their responses to the seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth questions. This is consistent with Roy et al.'s(2020) study finding that after the COVID 19 lockout, students chose to return to face-to-face instruction. Similar findings were observed by Doggett (2007); 80% of the students said they would have felt more at ease in a regular classroom setting.

Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic had an impact on instruction and learning during the spring 2020 semester at numerous colleges around the globe. Many colleges turned to online education to overcome this challenge. Some people used Zoom in place of their FTF lessons. The transition was not simple for teachers or pupils who were unprepared for it. Many colleges offered technology assistance to both teachers and students; some offered internet access and laptop loans. This study compared FTF sessions to Zoom sessions to examine how students felt about their learning and participation. The study's conclusions showed that during this period of transition, pupils' learning experiences were not entirely satisfactory. The outcomes of this study could have been influenced by a variety of circumstances. The rapid change that called for the adoption of a new platform and the creation of alternative activities and delivery strategies caught the instructors off guard. Some customers had unexpected and technical concerns when utilizing the new platform, such as problems with internet access and Zoom attacks. Access and equity issues should be included to the list above. By providing their staff and faculty members with training sessions on the use of various technologies, teaching methodologies, and evaluation procedures, many universities are attempting to be better prepared for the fall 2020 semester. Toquero (2020) urged schools to modify their educational procedures in order to meet students' learning demands outside of the four walls of the classroom. Bao (2020) identified the following five high-impact teaching practice guidelines for online education in order to attain a high quality of online learning: The following criteria must be met for online learning platforms to be effective: (a) appropriate relevance between online instructional design and student learning; (b) efficient delivery of online instructional information; (c)

sufficient support from faculty and teaching assistants to students, including prompt feedback, tutoring, and email guidance after class; (d) high-quality participation to improve the breadth and depth of student learning; and (e) contingency plan to handle unanticipated incidents. In order to end, I would reiterate Toquero's (2020) demand for academics to study the pandemic's effects on educational systems around the world. More research should be done in the upcoming semester.

Directions for Further Research

Based on the results of a questionnaire and interviews at the undergraduate level, the following are some recommendations for distance learning:

- 1- Web - based learning should be improved at the undergraduate level, and both its use and implementation should be user-friendly. The majority of students lack access to online education and frequently struggle with using tools necessary for it.
- 2- The study suggested that the government official set and create goals and objectives to make sure that online courses or programs are launched. The maximum amount of anticipated outcomes can be obtained by creating goals because they serve as the driving force behind a program.
- 3- The government should host seminars, workshops, and colloquia to provide hands-on training and to enhance students' knowledge of online learning.
- 4- Effective methods to improve online learning at the undergraduate level include teaching different online modules and providing appropriate rewards.

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The Impact of Social Media on English Language Students of Tobruk University

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Abstract

Technology has changed the way we read, write, and communicate with each other in ways no one could have predicted; specifically, through emailing, text messaging, and reading e-books. Technology moves incredibly swiftly, rendering new words faster than ever. The printing press, telephone, and broadcasting all changed the English language learning. However, using keyboards reduces the practice of real language. The changes blogging brings to language are different than those brought by texting. One may find that English has become expressively richer because of the internet and another may think the opposite, it depends on the student's desire for learning. Facebook, for example, is making the idea of calling someone and wishing them a happy birthday obsolete; and job searching is becoming an online activity via LinkedIn. Franco-Arabic and abbreviations used in online chatting have also infiltrated everyday speech. This study focuses on the impact of social media on students of English at Tobruk University. Data has been collected from a questionnaire which has been sent online to the students of English Language department. Data was analyzed using a quantitative research methodology.

Key words: Social media; Academic performance; University Students,



1. Introduction

Advances in technology play an important role not only in everyday life but also in education system. For the purpose of communication and information people use social media. It has become a significant tool which facilitates getting information whenever needed. Indeed, students are fond of social media for several reasons. Firstly, social networks give a feel of freedom, and it is easy to use. Secondly, they can make a new substitutional or virtual community that may create many conflicts in the real life. “The problem in the last decade was the interactive addiction on television and radio. Now students are the largest users of social media which influencing them to change their daily life, behavior, community approached, public life and the bodily events” (Saha and Guha, 2019). The overuse of social media can be noticed inside the classroom when English teacher asks the students what this word means? They immediately check their phone’ dictionary App then they answer. Even more, the more they use electronic Apps, the least they use their minds to answer their assignments. With regards to English as a foreign language online media has opened the doors for the learners of English so that they can communicate with the native speakers through applications, such as Facebook, whatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat, Skype. Indeed, numerous types of online media are available and free for everyone. For this reason, the majority tend to use the internet.

The dominated language today contains terms that spread out all over the world after millions of views and shares of famous bloggers. Unconsciously students prefer not to use educated or elevated language terms, therefore they use the abbreviations of chatting inside the classroom. As they incorporated with the development of speed time, students tend to use the internet also to do homework. When it comes to academic performance, the effect of social media on college students may appear as unfinished assignments, lack of attention to details, neglect of work in classroom, less activity, insomnia, and some of mental health issues mentioned in some previous studies. This study aims to examine the impact of social media on our university students.

2. Literature Review

While the effect of social media usage on academic performance is nothing new, previous studies try to examine both positive and negative impact on students. This study aims to highlight the negative side effect of the overuse



of social media and does not neglect some of its positive points. Heidi Zwart has divided the impact of networking websites on the university students into five areas:

2.1. Heidi Zwart's Classification of Social Media Impact

2.1.1. Social Wellbeing

Heidi Zwart, in her article, "Effect of social Media on College Students", explains that FOMO (The fear of missing out, an emotional response to the belief that other people are living better, more satisfying lives or that important opportunities are being missed, Kate Brush, 2019), is perhaps the most discussed negative effect of social media on college students. The fear of missing out on what others perceive as a more idyllic life is strongly correlated with discontent, social isolation, and mental health issues. Additionally, it is common to set unrealistic expectations of life after scrolling social media. Social problems resulted from jealousy, envy, and other relationships are also common as a result of social media use as people "befriend" or "follow" one another but don't connect the way they would in real life relationships.

2.1.2. Emotional Wellbeing: Facebook Depression

Many researchers have introduced a new phenomenon called "Facebook depression", which is defined, according to Jacob Amedie (2015), as depression that develops when individuals spend amounts of time on social media sites, such as Facebook and then begin to exhibit classic symptoms of depression. To him "depression is one of the inadvertent consequences of excessive social media usage".

For clarity, the term is not just limited to face book, but also refers to the impact of other social media sites like Instagram, Telegram, Snapchat, TikTok, WhatsApp, etc.

A new study has conducted by psychologist Dr. Mark Becker, who found that individuals who engage in social media, gaming, texting, cell phones, etc., are more likely to have depression and anxiety. Dr. Mark Found a 70% increase in self-reported depressive symptoms among the young using social media and a 42% increase in social Anxiety.

According to Heidi Zwart, "Anxiety and depression are most prevalent. Some studies report that 41.6% of college students report anxiety as a top

concern. Others says 1 in 5 students report high anxiety and social media use may be contributing to those statistics”.

2.1.3. Social Media and Criminal Activities

Besides the emotional problems, Jacob Amedie (2015), describes the second Major idea covered in his article as “the enabling of criminal activities through the use of social media”. Furthermore, some irresponsible people benefit themselves of social media platforms to lie, attack, cheat, and hurt others in many ways. To conclude, according to some previous readings, the electronic crimes may be exemplified in hacking banks and political systems, drug dealings and world cyberattack. Such crimes may affect their academic performance.

2.1.4. Academic Wellbeing

When it comes to the academic level, the impact is clearly obvious on college students. Heidi Zwart found that college students appear as unfinished assignments, lack of attention to details, and neglect of work. She added “some of the mental health issues lead to poor academics, in addition to lack of sleep from late night scrolling and posting”. Another study conducted in this field by Kolhar and Abdallah (2021), in College of Sciences (Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University) Saudi Arabia, found that the majority of the participants reported prolonged use of social networking sites for nonacademic purposes. These habitual behaviors can distract students from their academic work, adversely affect their academic performance, social interactions, and sleep duration, and lead to a sedentary lifestyle and physical inactivity, which, to them, in turn can render them vulnerable to non-communicable diseases and mental health problems.

As the world continues to move away from traditional forms of media and engage with digital tools, such as social media, the globe is becoming increasingly governed by networking platforms. Dr. Zenab (2021) Ibrahim discussed the popularity of Franco-Arabic among Young Arab students and its harmful impact on both English and Arabic languages learning. She defined Franco-Arabic as; “Franco-Arabic typing was developed to meet the requirements of speed, as computer and smartphone keyboards were initially limited to Latin letters”. She added “This led to most people becoming familiar with Latin letters and their location on keyboard, so it was easier and faster to



use the same letters to write Arabic – even after keyboards began displaying the Arabic alphabet.” According to Dr. Zenab the immediacy of social media means that people were able to keep up with events unfolding in real time, and two-way communication also enables users to interact and share opinions with others. Thus, she said that the priority has become for the language that can communicate the idea as quickly as possible, and with the least amount of effort. Finally, Dr. Zenab came to conclude that Franco-Arabic is not a system of using the Latin alphabet and numbers to replace certain Arabic Letters, this system was invented lately and disturbed Arabic language perception, so the digits and abbreviations unconsciously overlapped and spread widely (especially) in WhatsApp messages.

2.1.5 Peer Connection

People use social media to communicate with their relatives. Also, they use the internet in order to collect information needed. Heidi Zwart mentioned that a positive effect of social media on college students emerges in a shared sense of community to stay in touch with family members while away from home. She added, “Healthy relationships are possible when social media use is moderated, especially when emotional support is needed to get through difficult times”. This positive impact makes students feel supported and saved. Finally, Zwart gave an example saying; “hearing someone saying ‘I understand’ or ‘me too’ can be a powerful psychological experience.”

2. 2 Hours Spent on Social Media

Saha and Guha (2021) conducted a study in Bangladesh in which they asked the respondents about time spending on social media per day. Time spending on social media meant how long they were logged on the website. Their research results were 21.5% users use social media 1.5 to 2 hours per day. 16.7% use 2 to 2.5 hours per day. 11.75% use it for 1 to 1.5 hours. 14.14% use it for ½ to 1 hour. 9.56% use it for 0 to ½ hour. 11.9% use social media for 2.5 to 3 hours. According to Saha and Guha’s study, respondents said that they did not continuously use SMSs, but they are live on SMSs during some time. The diagram of the study shows that those who use social media three or more than three hours represent 14.3% of the users. Also, there are many spiteful users in social media and these accounts are used often. Their study discovers that normal people spend 90 minutes on average on social media daily, which is somewhat more than what their survey deduced. They came to conclude

that “around the globe, people are less vulnerable to social media usage in their daily lives than Bangladeshis”. Another possibility, they conducted, is that students of their country have more free time in comparison to others so they can easily manage additional time to browse on social media.

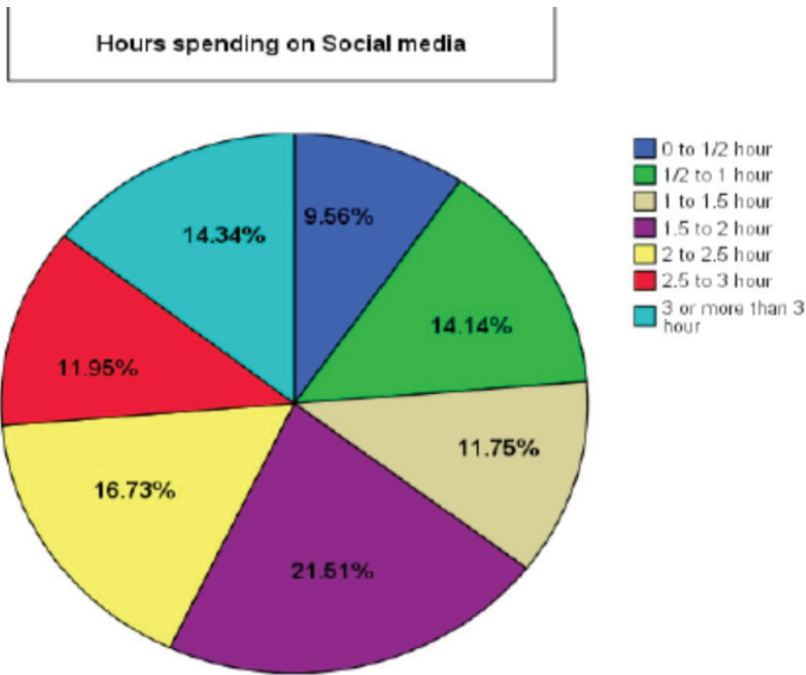


Figure 1

3. Methodology and Data Source

The methodology adopted for this research was a survey with a questionnaire. Since it is a quantitative research, the percentages were calculated by Survey Monkey App which facilitated the process of collecting and analyzing data. The survey was shared online among groups of English department students who are enrolled at the university of Tobruk. They are requested to fill up the questionnaire instantly. Respondents were a random sample of online groups from freshmen to senior students of English department. The respondents are 40 students of undergraduate students whose age range is between nineteen to twenty-two years old. The Questionnaire was consisted of 10 items had



multiple-choice form. Consequently, the questions were divided into three categories. The first set of questions is concerned with the element of time or duration that social media consumes; the second, is concerned with the influence of networking websites on the students' academic performance; the third set, is focused on the most widely used social media application. The results are built on their own personal attitude towards the usage of internet websites.

4. Results and Data Analysis

Based on the study goals, the analysis is divided into three stages as follows.

4. 1. Analysis One: Social Media and Time Consuming

Since the use of internet has become an easy task therefore, most of the students have smartphones, Lab tops and taps. Moreover, many web-based social networking sites have been created to be easily accessible around the clock from anywhere. The main content of the following questions [1- 2- 3- 4] is the students' time consuming. Thus, the survey data in [Fig.A, Fig.B, Fig.C, and Fig.D] contains items that has the highest percentages of the respondents and the responses. 44% of the respondents log in social media most of the day whereas just 3 respondents which preforms only 8% do not use internet daily. Therefore, the wide difference between the two previous percentages is clearly obvious. The results show that most of English students overuse the internet websites. Further, item 3. enquires about the hours that students spend on social media. It has been found that 48% of the candidates spend about 3-4 hours on networking websites. It seems to be quite number of students who waste a lot of time on social media. As for posting on social media platforms, 28% of the students post every few weeks. The ratios are very converging in item 5. The percentage shows that posting on social media doesn't matter to them. For internet access in leisure time, question 6. gives the confirmed result. 59% of Tobruk university students join the internet websites at free time. On the other hand, students use the internet most of the day. Thus, this excessive use may affect their scientific attainment.

Table 1

Items	Answers	Responses No.	High Percentage
1. How many times a day do you look at social media?	Most of the day	17	44%
2. How much time do you spend on social media per day?	3-4 hours	19	48%
3. How often do you post on social media?	Every few weeks	11	28%
4. When do you access social media?	At free time	23	59%

As a result of the study, students who spend too much time on social media suffer from Facebook depression, isolation, pale face, poor sleep, anxiety, eye fatigue, headache, obesity diseases, and other health problems. As result of these health issues, the level of education will of course be affected.

Q1. How many times a day do you look at social media?

Table 2

Answer choices	Percentages	Respondents
Not every day	7.69%	3
Once a day	7.69%	3
2-5	17.95%	7
5-10	12.82%	5
+10	10.26%	4
Most of the day	43.59%	17
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
Total		39

Table 2 shows the results of the students' time spent on internet per day.



Q2. How much time do you spend on social media per day?

Table 3

Answer choices	Percentages	Respondents
Less than 30 minutes	2.50%	1
1-2 hours	22.50%	9
3-4	47.50%	19
5-10	15.00%	6
+7	12.50%	5
Total		40

Table 3 shows the results of how often students' post on social media.

Q3. How often do you post on social media?

Table 4

Answer choices	Percentages	Respondents
Never	12.82%	5
Every few months	20.51%	8
Every few weeks	28.21%	11
Every few days	23.08%	9
Daily	2.56%	1
Weekly	12.82%	5
Multiple times a day	0.00%	0
Total		39

Table 4 shows the results of the time of students' accessing social media

Q4. When do you access social media?

Table 5

Answer choices	percentages	Respondents
At free time	58.97%	23
While at the university/ work?	2.56%	1
At mealtime	7.69%	3
During social occasions	2.56%	1
Any spare time	28.21%	11
Total		39

2. 2. Analysis Two: The impact of Social Media on the Students' Academic Performance

The following chart shows 44% of the students rarely interfere some abbreviations in their writing. While in (item7.) there are small proportion of the respondents use some abbreviations while writing, for example, they sometimes write u instead of the pronoun you. In the investigation we found 50% i.e., 20 students usually miswrite with franco-Arabic2 letters; the language is commonly used among university students chatting.

Question 6. examines if the students join social media to improve their speaking ability by communicating with native speaker. The result shows 41% of the candidates are not interested in improving their English by communicating with native speakers.

The last question in the chart enquires how much the students benefits from social media. The result was in the middle i.e., 19 students answered with (yes) and the other half answered with sometimes. This shows that most of the candidates think that internet websites are useful.



Table 6

Questions	Answers	Respondents No.	Percentages
5. Do you use some abbreviations of chatting in the classrooms?	Rarely	17	44%
6. Do you join social media to enhance your language by communication with native speaker?	No, I don't	16	41%
7. Choose some words that you usually miswrite inside the classroom?	-You=u	9	22%
	-other	20	50%
8. Do you think that social media is useful?	-yes, I do	19	48%
	-sometimes	19	48%

Table 6 shows the results of the academic impact on college students and their attitude towards it.

Q5. Do you use some abbreviations of chatting in the classroom writing?

Table 7

Answer choices	Percentages	Respondents
Never	41.03%	16
Rarely	43.59%	17
Always	15.38%	6
Total		39

Table 7 shows the results of the academic impact on college students' language improvement.

Q6. Do you join social media to enhance your language by communicating with native speakers?

Table 8

Answer choices	Percentages	Respondents
Yes, I do	28.21%	11
No, I don't	41.03%	16
Sometimes	30.77%	12
Total		39

Table 8 shows the results of the academic impact on college students' writing inside the classroom.

Q7. Choose the word that you usually miswrite inside the classroom.

Table 9

Answer choices	Percentages	Respondents
You=u	22.50%	9
Your=ur	2.50%	1
To=2	12.50%	5
At=@	12.50%	5
Other	50.00%	20
Total		40

Table 9 shows the results of students' attitude toward social media

Q8. Do you think that social media is useful?



Table 10

Answer choices	percentages	Respondents
Yes, I do	47.50%	19
No, I don't	5.00%	2
Sometimes	47.50%	19
Total		40

2. 3. Analysis Three: The Most Common Used Applications on Social Media

The last set of questions are concerned with the most commonly Apps used on social media. Where the results of item 9 show that students mostly use WhatsApp. 45% of the respondents make online groups for studying and peer connection. Also they share information, jokes and pictures. 12% show that Facebook takes the second ranking after WhatsApp. Eventually, question 10 examines the number of accounts which students have on social media. Since the results were in the range between 4 to 6 networking websites. 25% and 20 % of the total number of the students have many accounts on several social media platforms. Let us say the 6 applications in order are WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, and Twitter. Hence, the respondents skipped Google and YouTube, this means that they rarely scroll to get information.

Table 11

Questions	Answers	Respondents No.	Percentages
9. Which from the following Apps do you use?	WhatsApp	18	45%
	Facebook	5	12%
10. How many social media sites do you have accounts with?	4	10	25%
	6	8	20%

Table 11 shows the most popular social media platforms among the students. It shows which social media platforms students frequently login. In this study,

the most widely used application was WhatsApp (45%), followed by Facebook (12%), while Instagram and TikTok recorded the same results of percentages which is, (12.50%). Furthermore, Telegram and messenger rated the same scores (7.50%), in other words, they come in third stage in the most frequently used programs. In fourth, Twitter recorded a very low score; which means that the students rarely login to Twitter, maybe because they used to deal easily with Facebook. Lastly, Google, YouTube and Skype were the least recorded scores among social media platforms which was not the desirable expectation. This is conclusive evidence that students neglected to enter Google and YouTube to gather information but rather preferred conversational media.

Table 11 shows the rates of using social media applications.

Q9. Which from the following Apps do you frequently use?

Table 12

Answer choices	Percentages	Respondents
WhatsApp	45.00%	18
Facebook	12.50%	5
Messenger	7.50%	3
Instagram	12.50%	5
Tiktok	12.50%	5
Google	0.00%	0
Youtube	0.00%	0
Telegram	7.50%	3
Skype	0.00%	0
Twitter	2.50%	1
Total		40

Table 12 shows the number of accounts that students had on social media platforms.



Q10. How many social media sites do you have accounts with?

Table 13

Answers	Percentages	Respondents
1	7.50%	3
2	12.50%	5
3	17.50%	7
4	25.00%	10
5	15.00%	6
6	20.00%	8
7+	2.50%	1
Total		40

Conclusion

Even though the previous studies on academic learning suggest that the impact of social media (for non-academic purposes) on academic performance is mainly negative, there is a growing assumption that social media used for educational purposes may have a better impact on students' performance. From the study we observe that the higher proportion of students use internet only for chatting. Evidence shows that Google and YouTube are the least used among other applications. Social media is taken as an entertainment task by the university students. Moreover, they prefer to share videos, jokes, songs, and readily available information to update their daily status. The majority of the students use internet for many hours per day and they think the time they spend on social media is useful. Furthermore, most of the candidates do not feel any impact of social media on their language skills. This positive impact may be utilized for communication with the society. Most of the students denied that they used social media to develop their language skills by communicating with native speakers. They mostly rely on classroom learning. On the other hand, a small proportion of them try to benefit from social media, for example, by

downloading international movies, following English influencers, applying for English courses online, doing assignments and translating English terms on electronic dictionaries. In different circumstances, the negative impact of networking websites on students' lives is that they badly affect their study and waste their time. The study has been conducted to encourage students to continue using social media to expand their language learning perception.

The research results show that students sometimes unconsciously interfere abbreviations or Franco-Arabic of chatting (Ex. You=u, to=2, @=at, for=4, question=so2al, picture=9orh) in writing. Consequently, the overusing of such words may be reflected on the students' writing skills inside the classroom. The study also found that students who were spending too much time on social media were spending less time on learning. In addition, students were found having a high perception of, and full dependency on, internet websites. This impact may even reflect on students' capability to enhance their linguistic rules, but it totally depends on their desire to learn. The syllabus should be directed to the use of social media for academic purposes. If not, the students will register a remarked decline at the university.

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The Benefits of Interconnection among Fourth Industrial Revolution, Digital English and Learning Motivation inside EFL Classrooms: A Case Study

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Abstract

The invention of technology has undeniably made life easier than many years ago. Because of audio and visual effects in using ED (educational technology), learners like to learn a lot of new things such as: learning new languages, playing games and chatting with new friends in a global environment.

The fourth industrial revolution, including the fields of artificial intelligence, quantum computing, Smart home, autonomous vehicles, biotechnology and IOT (Internet of Things), robotics, 3D printing, and nanotechnology, can easily develop learners' capacities and motivate their learning process as well. The fourth Industrial revolution plays this role because it can be performed by using digital English in a form of guidelines, instructions, interactions and operations. In addition to that, it offers the students the chance to be enrolled easily in labor markets in the future as they can apply and work via technology in their jobs.

This case study focuses on the use of robots shown on student's smart phones inside the classrooms. I hypothesized in my study that using robots as electronic tools after giving the appropriate guidelines increase the students' motivation and performance particularly in in comprehension courses. Unlike the traditional tools used in class, robots allow the students to learn better. Robots videos from Internet are connected to sensor devices, hearing

sound effects and watching touchable colored screens, attracted the students' attention and increased their learning motivation. The robots have abilities to save data about the persons sitting in front of them and interact with them too.

In this paper, I introduce the background of my study, the objectives, the hypothesis, the methodology, and the value of the whole experience. After the literature review, I examine the results and present the conclusion and recommendations.

Keywords: Fourth Industrial Revolution; Interactions; Digital English; Learning Motivation; Digital Environment; Internet of Things



1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

Using fourth industrial revolution tools inside classrooms need professional skills from the side of the teachers because digital English is new and teachers need to be trained on how to use this type of teaching tools. If teachers and instructors choose to use it either completely or partially during the time of giving lectures, they should be able to accept and face this great challenge.

The Industrial Revolution 4.0 provides the advent of the digital age, and claims that educational institutions embrace an education revolution too. Education 4.0 provides the notion of teaching and learning innovation and uses information and technology in its processes (Anggraeni 2018). The acquisitions of Digital English and Education 4.0 help users to adapt to the digital world; it is very useful to implement the Industry 4.0 without any primary hurdles (A. Hariharasudan and Sebastian Kot, 2018).

1.2 Aims of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide the importance of using one of the inventions of fourth industrial revolution in education through Digital English performed by robots. This study seeks to find the useful interconnection among Fourth industrial revolution, digital English and motivation in education.

1.3 Questions of the Study

The author tried to find the right answers to her investigative questions which are:



- 1- What is the impact of 4th industrial revolution upon students' learning process?
- 2-To which level, 4th industrial revolution can increase acquiring English skills as a foreign language?
- 3-What is the most suitable invention of 4th industrial revolution which can be used as an effective tool of teaching between the teachers' hands instead of white boards and markers?

1.4 Hypothesis

This experience has been tested by the author herself because this new teaching tool faced the author and considered as a great challenge to her through giving regular lectures to her students at some Libyan colleges.

1.5 Methodology of the Study

Because this study is a case study, the samples were collected randomly by giving them some information about how to learn and check their errors from taking advices from talkative robots installed in their mobiles, laptops and pads. In addition to, the data of the study has been collected by using observation method and at the same time the data analyzed by using pie charts. All these procedures have been done during the lectures delivered to the students by the author, who is the lecturer herself.

1.6 Value of the Study

This study is a unique work in Libya because using **ED TECH** (Educational technology) is still new in Libya, especially when it is related to using 4th Industrial revolution inside educational classrooms.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Characteristics of 4th industrial revolution

According to Sadiyoko (2017), there are nine characteristics of Education 4.0 as follows:

1. It can be done anywhere and anytime.
2. It is based on students' needs.
3. It is flexible delivery.

4. It reflects peers and mentors.
5. It is about sharing information to answer “why” and “where” questions.
6. It is about practical application.
7. It is about modular and project.
8. It reveals students ownership in which the students participate a lot.
9. It contends evaluation process.

2.2 The Need for 4th Industrial Revolution in the Teaching and Learning Process

Assistive technology is growing, and the abilities it provides to special education students are limitless. Simulation and robotics technologies offer a range of possibilities within education, with a helpful solution for every student’s learning needs. As the technological world unveils new innovations daily, the educational world will continue to benefit from the opportunities offered with these groundbreaking tools.

“Students with special requirements are reaching new levels of learning through the use of robotics in the classroom. With these technologies children with autism are learning communication and social skills and students with developmental issues and attention disorders are learning focus. Individuals with severe physical disabilities are also offered a constant companion and health monitoring system - all through the use of robotics. Robots can be programmed to suit each individual child’s need, offering special education in a much simpler, accessible format.

Simulators - Simulators are able to offer students with special needs an introduction to real-world scenarios in a non-threatening environment. Everyday lessons can be taught at a comfortable pace, including subjects ranging from basic self-care to stay-safe techniques in emergency situations. Simulators have also provided a way for special education educators to see the world from their students’ perspectives, including hearing-impaired or blind simulations”. (Purdue University, Purdue Northwest (PNW), Krannert School of Management, 2020).

2.3 How do Robots Interact with Students inside Educational Classrooms and Increase their Learning Motivation?

Here, I refer to Philip Graves’s work which was edited and amended by



David Graves in 2019. It is about the quality of using a robot to effect upon human behavior and I mentioned this in details because it completely and effectively supports my topic. He said that “Modern social robots are designed to interact with humans by making use of a variety of sensors that are then converted into data their programming can meaningfully interpret...».

The latest ways of teaching come in a form of electronic machines which are known as robots. These new ways can effect on the learners’ motivation in learning and understanding of lessons given by teachers combined by social robots.

Robots have many senses which can give them the abilities to interact with students and teachers inside the learning and teaching environment. These interactive senses are like communicative tools between robots and learners. The senses like vision, listening to the people who are in front of them and reading saved data and texts.

As in Philip Graves’s work which was edited and amended by David Graves in (2019) say «... Just as any animal needs senses to detect what is present in and happening in its physical environment, so too do robots need artificial senses for the same purpose. 21st century social robots like Pepper have been equipped with artificial sight, hearing and touch, but generally have no artificial sense of taste or smell...»

Some recently designed robots have other features of sensing which is touching, this kind of robots can interpret the programmed touches into sounds by knowing the meaning of every kind of touch and trying to pronounce the sound referring to saved and designed for that touched thing.

In 2019, Philip Graves and David Graves report that:

«... Modern social robots are fitted with integral microphones, allowing them to receive analogue audio data. This is then converted into digital audio by on-board Analogue-to-Digital Converters (ADCs) and fed into their programs. In order for them to make sense of that digital data, they need to be programmed to interpret the sounds they are hearing with reference to their ADSR (attack, decay, sustain, release) envelopes and frequencies. Ideally they should be programmed in a sophisticated enough way to recognize words from the digital audio patterns of human

speech, as well as making sense of background noises and not being distracted by them when people are speaking...».

These sophisticatedly designed robots are able to interact inside different environments according to the circumstances in which they are found, either inside schools, colleges, institutions, factories, companies or any other place. And in each place they can behave differently from another place. According to the job they are supposed to do. In companies, for example, they take orders to carry some heavy goods or any other items, but at schools, they are used upon the teachers' goals to make information reach effectively and interestingly from the teacher to the students and so on.

Another feature of modern robots, is the job of movement from one place to another depending on the teachers' aims, such as walking inside the classrooms and saying words to the learners, shaking hands with them, or opening windows, doors, writing on boards and going outside the classrooms with teachers after the lesson ends.

Social robots also, are designed with colored lights and screens which allow them to give feedback about any feelings or emotions to interact with learners effectively inside learning environments, for example, if any student cant understand a lesson or has any bad situation, the robot will show sad face on the screen put on his face depending on the students' mode and so on.

In 2019, Philip Graves and David Graves wrote that “Robots are equipped with internal digital cameras by which they are able to receive digital images of their visual environments. This makes for a rich source of data for their programming to process into identifying what these environments consist of, the first step towards responding appropriately in a way that facilitates communication with nearby people.”

Specially-designed robots can be combined by speakers, music, vocalizations and speaking skills which are saved by teachers to interact with students. And depending on the job the robots supposed to do inside the classrooms.

Physically, the ways of designing robots referring to their bodies and heads, arms, faces and even the outside color of robots are important to be used by teachers because these features can motivate learners' attitude toward learning more or less, so the teacher can choose the robot which can do the



wanted job.

These new machines are developed every day just to meet the users' needs and to offer services to the customers. Many companies need this type of technology, many factories need these machines to do the job of humans in case of any emergency situation happen and even travelling companies use robots to help airplanes captains in controlling the planes in air. The choice of needed robots is depending on the service they can offer to the customers and to the teachers as well.

As teachers, we the social robots with abilities of reading programmed texts, ability of comprehensive skills, understanding students' emotions and increasing the level of learning motivation. In addition to the latest developed feature like faces with screens combined with music and colored lights to offer a comfortable environment of learning. So the more sophisticated features are needed by all teachers and instructors the more goals will be achieved.

I agree with the author Aaron Maurer (2016) when he said that:

“As teachers, we're well aware that STEM education is essential in preparing students for today's world of non-stop innovation. In my 13 years of teaching I've seen many curriculum fads come and go, but the use of robotics in the classroom has proven to be a consistent and surefire way to teach students the STEM skills needed to prepare them for the future job market. I've seen firsthand how it teaches students 21st century skills including coding, engineering and the scientific method in a fun and engaging way”.

Aaron Maurer reports in 2017 that:

“.....When students interact with robots in the classroom and make them perform various motions and tasks, your students' different strengths will start to shine. When assembling robots in teams, some students are great at speaking and can verbally bring ideas to life. On the flipside, there are students who may not be as vocal but they lead behind the scenes: they code, perform technical tasks and/or makes sure the team stays on task.”

Through the exercise of putting the robot together and making it move,

these two types of students—both leaders in their own right—learn to communicate as a team and express their ideas to craft the best end result. The ability to come together as different types of leaders, communicate with each other and utilize their personal strengths will be essential throughout these students' lives, no matter if they become an artist, a business executive or an engineer.

Robotics can teach students how to communicate across different technology platforms. Social media has become a part of our everyday lives and using it is as innate for students today as using the telephone was when I was a teenager. There are plenty of good things about social media — but also many potential dangers and things that you want your students to avoid.....

I've personally seen the numerous benefits of student community involvement, including increased attendance, higher grades, a sense of greater security, fewer behavioral problems and an increase in positive attitudes about school and homework. However, I've also witnessed youth struggle to find positive ways to get involved with their communities and don't know where to look for resources on how to get started.

Teaching robotics in the classroom can create a sense of community within the classroom that expands to the *outside* community in which you live. I've had students go out and present their robots at our local art museum and various technology fairs. It's their show and their product, so the students naturally take ownership and pride over what is presented.

Through opportunities like these, students begin seeing robotics as more than a project for a grade but rather as a tool that can inspire others. Nine times out of ten, seasoned professionals build the robots they see on TV, and getting started can certainly feel intimidating. But when you have young students teaching others how to build robots, many will think to themselves, "I can do that." The next thing you know, another mind is interested in STEM!

Robotics teaches essential teamwork skills. The STEM skills that robotics teach are great for inspiring tomorrow's engineers. However, I realize that not all of my students are going to work for NASA or even work in a science and math-related field. Yet some of the teamwork skills they learn through robotics are ones they will use for the rest of their life.

When students work in groups on a project with a robot they quickly



see that technical skills, such as coding, are very important. However, their robot won't move if they don't know how to collaborate with others and communicate their ideas. Through robotics in the classroom, students learn how to express themselves and listen and relate to others— honing valuable life skills.

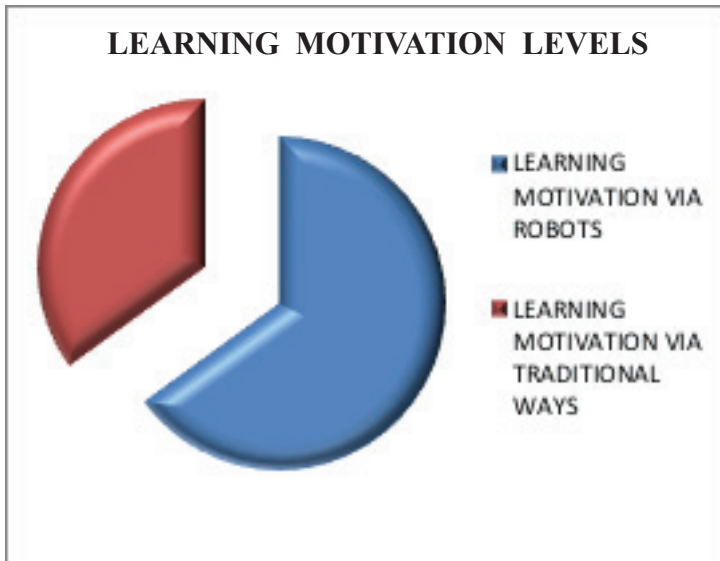
STEM lessons are extremely important for students as they prepare to enter the 21st-century workforce. Through robotics, students can learn more than just how to code. They can learn skills in leadership, community involvement, communicating across different technology platforms, finding their passions, and teamwork, which will position them for success well beyond their school years. As I continue my education journey, I'm excited to see the surprise benefits that teaching robotics in the classroom will uncover next!"

As (Candradewi Wahyu Anggraeni, 2018) said. "Promoting Education 4.0 in English for Survival classes is one of great ways to follow the development of educational setting since nowadays students belong to millennial generation in which they fit to implement Education 4.0 in their class. The three challenges found in promoting Education 4.0 must be solved by considering the learning objectives, students' need, students' speaking proficiency level, and lecturers' readiness. Education 4.0 is able to be implemented in many subjects as long as the teaching and learning process should reflect the characteristic of Education 4.0".

3. Results and Discussions

As the author of this article and from my own experience, I was using robotics lectures to teach my students English writing skills for many years. And I was observing their high levels of desires, motivations and interaction among them inside the classroom. Because of the audio effects and visual effects combined by the way of giving lessons by robotics platform, my students were feeling interested and spending a nice time during delivering this kind of lectures.

I was collecting my data needed for this article through observation, and I also analyzed my data through using pie charts. After analyzing my data, I discovered that my students reacted more positively with lectures given through the use of robots than lectures given traditionally (i.e. whiteboards and marker).



This pie chart represents the levels of the motivation reacted by my students during using robots inside the classroom. The 65% blue color refers to the students' level of learning motivation via robots, and the 35% red color represents the level of my students' motivation by my use of the traditional way, which is using books, boards and markers.

During one of my lectures, I was teaching my students how to check their written texts through giving them some checklists to use these checklists to find out any errors related to their written texts such as spelling errors, starting the first letters of titles in capital letters except prepositions and articles, leaving margins from the both sides left and right. Punctuate their sentences well and so on. . I observed that they liked the way of giving these checklists via robotics and reacted with it more than giving the same checklists traditionally through board and marker.

4. Conclusion

This is the time, in which robots are used inside smart classrooms as tools by lecturers' to teach their learners in most universities. The author used observations as means of data collection to note the learning motivation and communication among learners. And the author used pie charts to analyze the collected data. Technology-implemented up skilling in the teaching and learning process is known as Education 4.0, which is inspired by Industry 4.0



(Anggraeni, 2018).

I spent twenty years of teaching experience in the field of Applied linguistics, and from my own experience and observation, I felt that I am completely convinced that this generation is interestingly able to learn and convinced with everything related to technology and mobiles, especially with cell phones because all the time these students carry their mobiles with them. In addition to, they like to communicate and chat with people, their classmates, and their teachers, their relatives either inside their classrooms or outside classrooms.

I agree with the author Neil Selwyn (2018) when he reported that “fifty years after Stanley Kubrick introduced cinemagoers to HAL9000, the prospect of a robot-infused world still feels more science fiction than social fact. Yet robots are steadily beginning to impact on the nature of contemporary work. Industries such as circuit-board manufacturing and underground mining now rely on automated, mechanized robots. Elsewhere, intelligent systems are prompting forecasts of the ‘end of the professions’ and declining need for human doctors, lawyers and accountants. High-tech automation is now a real proposition across many sectors of work and employment”.

And he also reported that “one notable exception to this trend is education. Despite occasional speculation over ‘robot teachers’, it is generally assumed that education is an area of work destined to remain the preserve of humans. While disagreeing on many other points, education experts broadly concur that learning is a social process dependent on interactions with more knowledgeable others. All told, the belief persists that learning is something best guided by expert human teachers in socially rich settings”.

4. Recommendations

My recommendations are fully to the lecturers and teachers. Teachers should know that: there are top five unexpected benefits has seen in students who use robotics in the classroom.

- 1- Teachers should collect lessons for their lectures combined with one or two tools of the fourth industrial revolution.
- 2- Teachers should know that motivation of learning is more important than learning itself because high level of motivation can create long-lasting learning than just learning and ability to

just pass the needed course.

- 3- All syllabus of English specialization courses are courses taught during foreign language, and this aspect is a great challenge to both teachers and students, but by using robots or any tool through teaching English can create an interesting environment for both.
- 4- Teachers should create new syllabus through instructional design which is the latest kind of educational technology tool used to design syllabus.
- 5- All colleges, universities and institutions in Libya should prepare smart classes at their communities, this will help to expand the size of well taught generations, and having good experiences to a big number of well trained teachers.

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The Influence of Zoom on The Teaching Process During The COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Most industries were affected by the pandemic caused by the coronavirus epidemic (COVID-19). This involves the educational industry, which includes thousands of registered students and active lecturers who formerly attended regular lectures in their organizations but were forced to stay at home due to the epidemic. To continue the educational process in Libya, many universities were forced to change from face-to-face (FTF) teaching classrooms to remote teaching classrooms in the midst of the spring 2020 semester because of the COVID-19 epidemic. Both teaching and learning occur in this modality using electronic devices that are relatively new to the teaching-learning community. Zoom was widely utilized as a distribution platform by many organizations.

The objective of this study sought to ascertain how online classrooms performed for lecturers and students. This study aimed to investigate students' perspectives regarding the usage of Zoom in remote learning, as well as their impressions of how it affects their education and participation compared to traditional face-to-face classroom instruction. Furthermore, it attempted to comprehend the users' experiences as well as the specific set of obstacles that this style of teaching entails.

This research involved 30 university students. A 5-point Likert-type questionnaire was used to obtain the data. According to the findings, students had a positive attitude regarding the usage of Zoom and found it to

be beneficial to their learning experience and motivation to study, although there were some challenges like their poor skills in using technology, power outages, and Internet disconnection.

Keywords: Zoom, COVID-19 pandemic, Remote education, Perceptions, Teaching and learning, FTF classroom.



Introduction

It is well noticeable that the COVID-19 crisis has led to changes in society and the economy that the world is still suffering from. In educational institutions, where transitions are often quite slow, this has also caused significant changes. Many government organizations, academic institutions, non-profit groups, and private citizens chose Zoom during the COVID-19 epidemic. In 2011, Eric Yuan launched Zoom. It is a web-based participatory video conferencing solution that offers high-quality sound, visual, and screen sharing, making it perfect for online meetings, webinars, online classes, and other types of remote meetings. It has become easily accessible for academics, staff, and learners in several universities. The many Zoom characteristics might be used by teachers to design engaging educational experiences. A virtual white board with annotation capabilities to clarify topics, getaway rooms to facilitate small cooperative group work, elections for student input, and chat to support classroom activities are some of these characteristics. Zoom sessions can also be videotaped and allowed access for later use.

Literature Review

It's not new to employ distant learning methods like videoconferencing. They have been used for many years by professors in higher education to interact with students instantly. Several studies have been conducted to investigate the use of video conferencing equipment. The application of Zoom in the class was the subject of certain research. Particularly within the preceding six months, academics have been looking into distance classes during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Knipe and Lee (2002) investigated the argument that online conferencing learning and education are of a different standard than in a traditional classroom setting. The findings suggest that remote students obtain lower-quality teaching and learning than learners in the typical classroom.



Candarli and Yuksel (2012) investigated learners' perspectives of videoconferencing in university education in their study. The study's participants were second- and third-year university students who took a thirty-minute videoconferencing English lesson. According to the findings of the study, students have a bad attitude regarding the use of videoconferencing in the classroom.

Giralt and Jeanneau (2016) stated that the use of video learning in the classroom can assist in the development and improvement of intercultural competency. According to Lim and Pyun's (2016) earlier videoconferencing studies, video lectures can help students improve their speaking and listening abilities. According to research on the benefits of using videoconferencing, the usage of video tutorials, for example, has been shown to significantly increase students' speech fluency and pronunciation.

Sayem et al. (2017) investigated the impact of Zoom on learner achievement in foundation engineering classes. The quantity and types of postings to the Moodle Q&A Forum and the number of learners joining Zoom visual sessions were used to determine student participation in the program. The researchers discovered that using Zoom digital lessons boosted the satisfaction of students while reducing teacher effort by around 25%.

Song and Gwon (2017) observed the association between whole lectures, teaching strategy elements, and learning approval level when assessing the education approval level related to distant video lectures. The elements that had a significant impact on the lower levels of satisfaction related to remote video lectures were subsequently investigated by the researchers. Their research revealed a strong relationship between total lectures, instructional strategies, and learning approval, with total lectures having the most influence on learning approval.

Wang et al. (2018) studied a hybrid synchronous learning environment in their study (BSLE). Many students joined the FTF program, while the remainder participated through two-way videoconferencing (Zoom). The article's goal was to look at the learners' educational experiences as well as their impressions of the mixed synchronous learning technique. The research included twenty-four students participating in an optional course at a teacher education school. According to the research authors, learners appreciated the simplicity and flexibility of taking classes through Zoom from remote locations.

The researchers did notice, however, that student involvement through Zoom was minimal. Students often turned off their cameras and did not react when summoned. Furthermore, the researchers did not discover any severe technical issues, and the learners did not mention any serious connection problems when using Zoom, and it appeared that all online learners could readily attend the Zoom classes. In their final result, the researchers recognized the following elements for achieving a positive BSLE experience: active communication between online students and the teacher, as well as between online students and classroom students; participation of online students; reshaping of classroom practices, teaching methods, and sound quality.

Maul et al. (2018) analyzed the perceived usefulness of dissertation chairs using Zoom to train and instruct doctoral students. The contributors to this research were doctoral chairs and postgraduates at a university in the southern United States. A researcher-created survey was produced to gather demographic data on the university's dissertation chairs in addition to statistics on their usage of Zoom with their doctoral students. A 19-item Likert-style analysis was conducted to gather the data. The questionnaire was divided into five segments: demographic data, monthly Zoom engagement, and how doctorate chairs utilized Zoom with their doctorate students. Furthermore, the researchers conducted interviews with four dissertation chairs and four doctoral students. The researchers discovered that the application of Zoom was appreciated by both staff and students. They stated that Zoom allowed students to develop meaningful relationships with their mentors and enhanced their creativity.

The use of videoconferencing and its practical consequences in language acquisition have been examined by Vurdien (2019). For instance, research investigating how videoconferencing may assist students in developing their communication skills used task-based exercises on an online platform through Zoom. The study's results showed that the group utilizing Zoom to engage virtually did better than the group using face-to-face discussion. As a result, this study came to the conclusion that Zoom-based videoconferencing is an easy method for assisting students in communicating ideas and improving their communication skills.

Archibald et al. (2019) investigated the feasibility of utilizing Zoom for



qualitative data collection in a health research environment. The data was gathered through online interviews conducted with 16 female nurses. The interviews lasted between 50 and 92 minutes. Researchers discovered that 69% of participants chose Zoom as an interviewing strategy over FTF, phone, or other audiovisual options. Furthermore, participants mentioned the following benefits of adopting Zoom for qualitative interviews: rapport, ease, flexibility, and user-friendliness. The researchers discovered that Zoom may be an excellent venue for obtaining qualitative interview data. They attributed this to the following factors: convenience of use, purchase price, data processing tools, and privacy alternatives.

According to Guzacheva (2020), the benefits of online educational classes include: they can facilitate easier access to class materials. Moreover, it provides greater convenience for the English teacher and students and offers scheduling flexibility. It can also be individualized, meaning English teachers can address the unique requirements of each student. Providing various online materials to specific students enables them to achieve their skill level and learning objectives.

As a result of the COVID-19 epidemic, Agarwal and Kaushik's (2020) FTF lessons were substituted by 40-minute Zoom lectures as a result. At the conclusion of the lecture series, 77 students wrote down their impressions. The majority of students (97%) said the courses related to their medical practice and learning requirements, and 99% said the courses were appropriate for their education level. Each of the respondents believed that adding Zoom sessions to the medical program would be a good idea. These findings led the researchers to the conclusion that doctoral education in future classrooms should include online instruction.

Demuyakor (2020) looked at how satisfied Ghanaian overseas students were with their virtual learning experiences at Chinese higher education institutions. According to the study's findings, students were in favor of using online learning tools. When switching from FTF to online, they were happy with their online educational experience and thought the sessions were worthwhile. In contrast, students who took the classes while they were outside of China said they had to pay a great deal of money to preserve internet access

for their online classes. Additionally, students who were in residence halls said that internet access was extremely poor.

Consequently, many colleges switched from FTF classroom education to online education as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak; others adopted Zoom as their transaction medium. This study's goals included examining students' views regarding utilizing Zoom as well as how they felt about participation and learning experiences when using Zoom as opposed to conventional FTF classes. The following five questions were the focus of this study's intent:

1. How do students feel about using Zoom for education?
2. How do participants feel utilizing Zoom has affected their studies?
3. How engaged do the students feel in the classroom when utilizing Zoom?
4. Do students favor the Zoom lecture over the conventional FTF lecture?
5. What do they think about the online exams and their response to the evaluation?
6. How do the students feel about Zoom's benefits and drawbacks?

Procedure

This study focused on the researcher's teaching literature subjects (introduction to literature, short stories, drama, novels, and poetry) on Zoom during COVID-19. Two hours a week were given online for each subject. During twelve weeks, students were taught, quizzed, given assignments, and took the mid-term exam. The Zoom video lectures provided information on the content, description, and analysis of each subject. There was also interaction and communication between the students and the lecturer. The given mid-term exam was divided into two parts. The first part was multiple choice, True/False, and completion with limited time of 45 minutes, while the second part was a take home exam (ex. writing a critical essay about a character or theme) with limited time of 48 hours. The questionnaire was given in the last lecture of the twelfth week. Then it was calculated by the



fifteenth week. The reliability coefficients, percentages, and frequencies are all analyzed using SPSS.

The Method

A quantitative analytic method was used. Thirty students from the English Department of the Faculty of Human Sciences for Girls, Alasmarya Islamic University, took part in this investigation. Until the middle of March, the students took FTF lectures during the spring 2020 semester before being forced to transfer to a new remote learning setting that used Zoom. On the basis of a literature analysis and the study's objectives, the researcher formed a 5-point Likert-type-item survey, which the participants completed. The survey answers were rated on a scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). A five-point Likert scale is used, with the following values: strongly disagree: 1-1.8, disagree: 1.9-2.6, neutral: 2.7-3.4, agree: 3.4-4.2, and strongly agree: 4.3-5. The survey was divided into five categories: students' attitudes about Zoom usage; students' evaluations of Zoom's effects on learning; students' opinions of their participation in Zoom classes; students' perceptions of the differences between FTF and Zoom lectures; and students' assessments of Zoom exams. The purpose of this division is to investigate how the Zoom lectures have affected students' learning processes. The survey also contained two open-ended inquiries: What benefits does using Zoom offer? What drawbacks are there to utilizing Zoom?

Results and Discussion

Students' attitudes toward using Zoom, their judgments of how utilizing Zoom has affected their learning, how engaged they feel in class when using Zoom, and their comparisons of face-to-face and Zoom sessions were all included in the replies to the 5-point Likert-type survey topics. Additionally, the answers given by the students to the questions on Zoom's benefits and drawbacks were tallied. In the discussion that follows, "agree" refers to any "agree" or "strongly agree" response, while "disagree" refers to any "disagree" or "strongly disagree" response. Regarding their attitudes about utilizing Zoom, students responded to the first study question in the affirmative with 75%, and in the negative with 20%. Only 26.67% of respondents said they

would not want to employ Zoom in other classrooms, while 66.66% said they agree. The five survey questions received average replies from students ranging from 3.67 to 4.17 out of 5, indicating a more positive degree of support for the usage of Zoom. (see Table 1).

Table 1. Illustrates students' attitudes towards using Zoom

Item	Mean	SD
1. I was at ease using Zoom classroom.	4.03	0.993
2. I want to utilize Zoom in more classrooms.	3.67	1.089
3. My learning schedule was flexible because of Zoom.	3.93	1.018
4. In general, I liked how we used Zoom in the classroom.	4.17	0.959

Dissimilar findings were made by Candarli and Yuksel (2012), who discovered that students frequently had a negative opinion of utilizing video conferencing. The findings, however, are similar to those made group by Wang et al. (2018). In their study, students' sentiments about the employment of Zoom in their classes were favorable. Despite some technological difficulties, they saw it as a useful tool for assisting instruction, as seen by this student's comment: "Even if there were some early concerns and technical problems, I enjoy the positive spirit that [the teacher] has displayed throughout the session" (p. 10). The results also agreed with Demuyakor's (2020) study findings that students were happy with their online educational experience and thought the sessions were useful.

66.66% of students felt that utilizing Zoom helped their studies, while only 26.67% disagreed when it came to the benefits of using Zoom in their education during class discussions. Similarly, 83.33% concurred that using Zoom increased their comfort level with the material, while 10% disagreed. The averages for the replies from the students varied from 3.63 to 4.3 out of 5, indicating that they thought using Zoom had a beneficial influence on their education (see Table 2).



Table 2. shows how students feel Zoom has affected their learning.

Item	Mean	SD
1. The usage of Zoom helped me learn more.	3.63	1.102
2. I was able to learn the course material with the aid of Zoom.	4.03	0.993
3. Using ZOOM allowed me to gain confidence in the material.	3.97	1.008

In response to the third research question, which examined how students felt employing Zoom impacted their participation in class, 76.106% of respondents agreed with this statement, while just 16.67% did not. 66.66% of participants in the Zoom-enabled classroom felt that their contact with the lecturer had improved, whereas 26.67% felt the opposite. The median of the students' replies varied from 3.59 to 4.21 out of 5, indicating that they thought using Zoom had largely a positive effect on their level of involvement in class and had no negative effect on it (see Table 3). Students had more engagement and experience in the Zoom classes than they would in a traditional classroom. This study's findings were consistent with those of Archibald et al. (2019), who discovered that 69% of participants preferred Zoom as an interviewing strategy over FTF, phone, or other audiovisual options. Furthermore, participants mentioned the following benefits: convenience of use, purchase price, data processing tools, and privacy alternatives.

Table 3. Shows how students feel about their participation in class.

Item	Mean	SD
1.By using Zoom, I was able to engage in the class in ways that improved my understanding.	3.93	1.018
2.Using Zoom inspired me to participate fully in classroom activities.	3.93	1.018
3.Using Zoom enabled me to participate more actively in classroom discussion.	3.83	1.044
4.Using Zoom improved my communication with my teacher.	3.59	1.114

Item	Mean	SD
5.Using Zoom helped me engage with my colleagues more.	4.21	0.95
6.The usage of ZOOM encouraged me to ask lecturers and colleagues for assistance.	3.99	1.003

70.668% of students preferred Zoom video lectures to traditional FTF classroom instruction, while 21.99% did not. According to the means of their replies to the fourth study question about their comparisons of FTF and Zoom sessions, which varied from 2.63 to 4.07 out of 5 (see Table 4). This result is dissimilar to Roy's et al. (2020) study finding that after the COVID-19 lockout, students chose to return to face-to-face education. Similar findings were observed by Doggett (2007); 80% of the students said they would have felt more at ease in a regular classroom setting. As Thamarana (2016), who claimed that e-learning allowed academic tasks completed at academic institutions to be transferred to the home setting. In a virtual setting that enables them to interact, simulate, and cooperate, students may design a place that contains anything they can conceive.

Table 4. Compares students' performance in FTF and Zoom classes.

Item	Mean	SD
1. The exercises we did in Zoom classes encouraged me to study more and put more emphasis on class material than in typical FTF instruction class sessions.	4.07	0.983
2. As compared to the Zoom discussions, I participated more in conventional in-person class sessions.	3.9	1.026
3. During the Zoom classes, I paid close attention to the assignments in class compared to the usual face-to-face lessons and discussions.	4.07	0.983
4. In the Zoom class, it was simpler to take part in group discussions compared to a regular FTF lesson or session meetings.	3.9	1.026
5. I think I'd do better in the class if it were taught without utilizing Zoom, the conventional FTF class style.	2.63	1.521



Several Zoom characteristics might be used for different proctoring techniques. The majority of students, 71.996%, thought online testing was beneficial for learning and reinforcing both vocabulary and grammar, while 20.67% disagreed. The averages for the replies from the students varied from 3.43 to 3.93 out of 5, indicating Zoom's exams were simpler and less stressful than paper exams. 66.6% of students thought online tests were useful for reviewing grammar and vocabulary. This is similar to Vurdien (2019), who investigated how videoconferencing can assist students in developing their communication skills using task-based exercises on an online platform through Zoom. 83.33% of students supported the take-home exam more than the traditional exam. This was matched by Harper (2018), who observed that the take-home test helped to improve student-teacher contact, a crucial sign of a successful distance education program. Furthermore, the assessment criteria and score were visible to the learners. As was previously said, the study's findings revealed that students had a high degree of perspective on their test outcomes and thought the take-home exam results were accurate and unique.

Table 5. Shows students' assessments of Zoom exams.

Item	Mean	SD
1. I liked taking Zoom exams.	3.88	1.044
2. It is simpler to take tests on Zoom than on paper.	3.87	1.034
3. Exams on Zoom are less stressful than exams on paper.	3.43	1.166
4. Online quizzes are helpful for learning and reviewing vocabulary and grammar.	3.67	1.089
5. The take home exam was more flexible and effective than a classroom exam.	3.93	1.017

The students' comments (30) to the sixth research question, which asked them to describe the benefits and drawbacks of using Zoom as they experienced them, were tallied based on similarities. Tables (6 and 7) show the percentages of students' replies, which were computed.

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Table 6. Students' impressions on the merits of using Zoom in the learning process

Motivation for interest and independent learning	
Item:	Value (%)
It was intriguing since it offered an innovative approach to learning.	26.67
Being able to listen to lectures more comfortably than in FTF lectures was great and enjoyable.	
It was fantastic to be able to focus effectively and feel more at ease than when taking lessons in a traditional class.	
By watching the video lectures in advance, it was simple to comprehend the course material.	
Finding relevant videos that the lecturer suggested among the things I learnt was so much fun.	
If I had seen a lecture that had been uploaded before taking the Zoom lecture, I would have comprehended it much better.	
Flexibility and Accessibility	
Item:	Value (%)
I liked how the Zoom sessions seemed like FTF classes since I could see the lecturer's face.	33.33
It fitted my timetable throughout the epidemic the best.	
You could do it in the comfort of your own home.	
Facilitates attendance at classes and accommodates the schedules of almost everyone.	
I was not required to reveal my face at all times.	
I could attend class and engage without having to travel to a real site.	
The ability to work from any location.	
It was beneficial since it appeared to be a specialized class for me.	



Simple Communication:	
:Item	(%) Value
Smaller courses encouraged greater communication. It was easy to ask questions, and several lecturers ended up scheduling Zoom sessions, which was convenient since I could connect in online rather than come to their actual office.	33.33
When questions are raised, you might ask them instantly.	
It was valuable to connect with the lecturer, as well as beneficial that the lecture listened to my viewpoint.	
Asking questions privately through group or individual chat instead of out loud.	
I was a bit afraid to ask questions in FTF sessions, but it was amazing to be able to ask questions and listen to responses at any moment through the Zoom dialogue box.	
Despite the fact that it was a Zoom online lecture, it was fantastic to be able to participate in group activities.	

Utilizing audiovisual aid	
:Item	(%) Value
The distribution of notes and digital materials via interactive media was strongly encouraged by the program.	6.67
This was a significant step in the proper way for paper resource preservation.	
I could go back and listen to a video lecture again if I didn't completely comprehend some of the material discussed in it the first time.	
Due to the screen sharing capability, it was simple to learn the subject by taking courses while looking at presentation slides and lecture content together.	
It was beneficial to comprehend the material since I could easily discover the information I needed to know when attending Zoom sessions because it appeared a bit obvious to look for data on a mobile phone in FTF lessons.	
It was convenient to have a distinct group area on the Zoom screen where our teams could readily discuss ideas.	

Students cited motivation for interest and independent learning (26.67%), flexibility and accessibility (33.33%), simple communication (33.33%), and the utilization of audiovisual aids (6.67 %) as benefits of applying Zoom.

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These results concur with those from the research by Wang et al. (2018). The flexibility and ease of attending courses through Zoom at distant locations were well liked by the study's participants. When compared to traditional classroom settings, students considered Zoom classes to be much more flexible since they could attend courses from any location. As a result, the use of Zoom online lectures improved students' motivation and excitement in their studies as well as their ability to study independently. These reviews unambiguously demonstrate the effectiveness of Zoom video courses. According to students' attitudes, Zoom video lectures provide special advantages in terms of accessibility and material searching; thus, lecturers should make the most of these features while using Zoom lectures. The results also matched with Guzacheva (2020), who showed the benefits of online educational classes included facility, accessibility, and simplicity.

Table 7. Students' impressions on the demerits of using Zoom in the learning process

Interruptions	
Item:	Value (%)
It was hard to focus when there were additional disruptions within one's house.	26.67
My family, phone, or anything else that wasn't related to a classroom atmosphere caused me to pay far less attention to anything.	
Although I liked the Zoom video lectures, it was still preferable to attend FTF classes and interact with classmates.	
I lost interest in studying, and I didn't comprehend the material as effectively as I might have with a lecturer there.	
Technical Challenges	
Item:	Value (%)
The Zoom contact ended if my laptop paused till it restarted. An FTF class schedule is more reliable than Zoom since it doesn't rely on as many parts of contemporary technology to function effectively together.	66.66
The screen quality was poor, so I felt uneasy throughout every class.	
I arrived for class on time, but I didn't enjoy that the loading was so long.	
The screen would frequently freeze, which was uncomfortable. When the lecturer said anything crucial, the screen would abruptly freeze, which was very annoying.	



Requirements for effective teaching functions	
Item:	Value (%)
Downloading course materials via e-Campus was challenging and not part of the Zoom video session.	6.67
I wish the Zoom video lecture included an immediate download option for the course contents.	
It would be convenient if the presenter's screen could be immediately expanded and presented if students had to give a presentation or remark.	
It took some time for me to join e-Campus and validate my participation. I wish Zoom video lectures included a feature that made it possible for attendance to be processed instantly.	

However, students cited the following as the main demerits of utilizing Zoom: interruptions (26.67%), as well as requirements for effective teaching functions (6.67%), and technical challenges (66.66%). These results suggest that students considered technological issues to be a significant disadvantage. The technical flaws, such as blurry images, long loading times, and frozen screens, made learners uncomfortable. Additionally, students said that Zoom technology was required to have more effective features specific to each class, such as instantaneous downloading of course materials, automated screen magnification, and attendance system processing. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, remote classrooms employing Zoom must be updated and these mechanical flaws must be corrected. Additionally, teachers must communicate this input to Zoom application developers so that Zoom video lectures can have the useful features that students need.

This result matches what Wang et al. (2018) discovered in their investigation. The researchers found there were important technical challenges with Zoom. The Internet connection is the main significant issue for online learning. Although the number of people using the internet has increased dramatically over the past few years, it can be difficult to get a reliable connection with enough speed in smaller cities and towns. A student's learning may not be continuous if there isn't a reliable internet connection for them or their lecturers. The educational process will be affected by this.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 epidemic had an impact on instruction and learning during the spring 2020 semester at several colleges across the globe. Many colleges have resorted to online education to overcome this challenge. Some people used Zoom in place of their FTF lessons. The transition was not simple for lecturers or students who were unprepared for it. Many colleges offered technology assistance to both lecturers and students; some offered internet connections and laptop loans. This study compared FTF sessions to Zoom sessions to examine how students felt about their learning and participation. The findings of this study demonstrated that Zoom lectures have a positive impact on students' English proficiency. Most of the students were satisfied with their educational experiences during this transitional time, though there were some obstacles like technical problems.

However, communication between students and lecturers must be encouraged in order to create successful online classrooms in the university system. When created to effectively utilize the many interaction tools and resources, online learning platforms frequently provide students with a more engaging, interactive, and effective educational setting than traditional classroom instruction. From the viewpoints of both students and lecturers, Zoom must be enhanced with an automated attendance method, simple data uploading and downloading, and better video screen control features. The effectiveness of Zoom technology in the EFL classroom has to be better understood by instructors. If remote lessons must continue due to the growth of COVID-19, lecturers must learn how to use technical tools like Zoom and build lesson plans and teaching techniques that are appropriate for Zoom lectures that can motivate students to actively participate.

Thus, this study encourages the application of online education in higher education institutions, thereby providing its many benefits. Online learning platforms promote student-centered education and are convenient to use in a lockdown situation.

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Appendix Survey Items

Items	S.A. (5)	A. (4)	N. (3)	D. (2)	S. D. (1)
1. I was at ease using Zoom classroom.					
2. I want to utilize Zoom in more classrooms.					
3. My learning schedule was flexible because of Zoom.					
4. In general, I liked how we used Zoom in the classroom.					
5. The usage of Zoom helped me learn more.					
6. I was able to learn the course material with the aid of Zoom.					
7. Using ZOOM allowed me to gain confidence in the material.					
8. By using Zoom, I was able to engage in the class in ways that improved my understanding.					
9. Using Zoom inspired me to participate fully in classroom activities.					
10. Using Zoom enabled me to participate more actively in classroom discussion.					
11. Using Zoom improved my communication with my teacher.					
12. Using Zoom helped me engage with my colleagues more.					

The Influence of Zoom on The Teaching Process During The COVID-19 Pandemic

13. The usage of ZOOM encouraged me to ask lecturers and colleagues for assistance.					
14. The exercises we did in Zoom classes encouraged me to study more and put more emphasis on class material than in typical FTF instruction class sessions.					
15. As compared to the Zoom discussions, I participated more in conventional in-person class sessions.					
16. During the Zoom classes, I paid close attention to the assignments in class compared to the usual face-to-face lessons and discussions.					
17. In the Zoom class, it was simpler to take part in group discussions compared to a regular FTF lesson or session meetings.					
18. I think I'd do better in the class if it were taught without utilizing Zoom, the conventional FTF class style.					
19. I liked taking Zoom exams.					
20. It is simpler to take tests on Zoom than on paper.					
21. Exams on Zoom are less stressful than exams on paper.					
22. Online quizzes are helpful for learning and reviewing vocabulary and grammar.					
23. The take home exam was more flexible and effective than a classroom exam.					



S.A. Strongly Agree;

A. Agree;

N. Neutral;

D. Disagree;

S.D. Strongly Disagree.

Open- ended Questions:

1. What are the merits of using Zoom?

.....
.....
.....

2. What are the demerits of using Zoom?

.....
.....
.....

Teachers' and Students' Perspectives towards the use of Electronic Dictionary in Teaching and Learning Reading and Vocabulary at Faculty of Education, Nalut University

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Abstract

Technology use in the process of learning a language has become a necessity since EFL learners are trying to improve their level in the English language by the use of one form of those technological formats. This format was represented in the current study by the use of e-dictionaries, which has the potential to be a powerful language learning tool among EFL learners. At the same time, the use of e-dictionary may be seen as an obstacle to achieving complete comprehension, a waste of classroom time, and a source of conflict views between foreign-language learners and teachers. Consequently, this study aims at discovering the perspectives of teachers and students toward the use of e-dictionary in teaching and learning reading and vocabulary at the Faculty of Education at Nalut university. This research used qualitative and quantitative approaches to address this issue. Four assistant professors were interviewed and requested to participate in answering the teacher's questionnaire, and 20 students were subjected to provide their perspectives by answering the student's questionnaire. The results reveal that although both teachers and students held a positive attitude toward the use of e-dictionary as a useful tool in learning a language, teachers of reading and vocabulary classes declared important considerations or precautions about how and when the dictionary should be used. Therefore, it is suggested that the students should consider the use of e-dictionary in reading and vocabulary courses to achieve the intended object of that course. Teachers, otherwise, should monitor the



use of that technology in their classes. They also should assert when and how that device should be utilized. If both teachers and students manage to do so, the objectives of reading and vocabulary courses then will be highly accomplished and achieved.

Key words: E-dictionary - Perspectives - Reading strategies.



1. Introduction:

1.1. Research Background

The use of technology has become an urgent need in teaching and learning in general, especially in teaching and learning the English language. Recently, and with the development of technology, the use of paper dictionaries has slowly declined due to the remarkable advancements in computer-mediated aids. Consequently, various types of electronic reference materials have become increasingly available to L2 learners, offering more options for coping with unknown words. These materials, including pocket electronic dictionaries, CD-ROM dictionaries (CDs), and online dictionaries, have a vital effect on enhancing L2 learning significantly with their features such as the speed of look-ups, the quantity of information, the variety of search roots, and multimedia capacity (Nesi, 1999). The use of e-dictionaries is one application of blended learning which focuses on the idea that learning happens both through face-to-face interaction and through electronic means. In teaching reading, several different strategies are needed to be thought related to finding out the meaning of the unknown vocabulary, and by using dictionaries (EDs or PDs) the intended meaning of teaching could not be achieved. Because the use of electronic dictionaries has added a new resource for vocabulary learning, learners of a foreign or a second language tend to use dictionaries to enhance their understanding and to find out the meanings of unknown vocabularies (Asgari & Mustapha, 2011). Although this technology has affected positively, the number of learning routes related to language performance, it could be seen as an obstacle that hinders the processes of mastering the objectives of some language courses such as reading and vocabulary learning.

Research Problem

It is widely known that using technology in teaching and learning L2 or FL enhances the process of learning. In the context of learning vocabulary

and reading comprehension, applying technology could be seen as the use of e-dictionaries by the students to enrich their vocabulary capacity and reading proficiency. Although the use of e-dictionary is easy and helpful in reading, teachers view this advancement as a barrier to achieve the intended objectives of those courses. Therefore, teachers should monitor this use depending on his/her lesson aims. For example, in teaching the strategy of guessing the meaning from the context, students should not be allowed to use their dictionaries as well as in using clues to find out the meaning of unknown vocabulary. Thus, the current study aims to find out the perspectives of both teachers and students regards the use of electronic dictionaries in reading and vocabulary classes.

2. Aims of The Study

Therefore, the study aims at answering those research questions:

- 1) What is the perspective of teachers towards the use of electronic dictionaries in teaching reading?
- 2) What are the beliefs of students towards the use of e-dictionaries in reading comprehension?
- 3) What are the main reasons for these views regarding the use of electronic dictionaries in classes of vocabulary and reading comprehension for both teachers and students?

2.1. Significance of The Study

The result of the study will contribute to find out the answer of the research questions as well as highlight the attitude and perspectives of both teachers and students towards the use of EDs in reading and vocabulary classes. It will also shed light on the choice of using EDs regarding the reading curriculum and vocabulary learning. The findings of the study will serve both teachers and learners by knowing their perspectives regards the use of EDs as a technological tool in teaching and learning reading and vocabulary. For learners, it is hoped that the result will help to understand when and how to use this device to get a potential goal from using this format. Moreover, it is important for teachers to achieve the aims of their courses and to adjust the learners with the perfect and correct use of EDs which serves the process of learning a foreign language.



3. Study Hypotheses

The study hypothesizes the following:

- 1) The use of e-dictionaries simplifies the process of learning vocabulary and reading comprehension.
- 2) Students believe that the use of an e-dictionary saves their time which reflects positively on their learning performance.
- 3) Teachers think that the meaning of unknown vocabulary should be thought of within the context.
- 4) It is hypothesized by the teachers that the use of an e-dictionary decreases the choice of practicing reading strategies related to finding out the meaning of the new vocabulary.

The current study follows this outline starting with a comprehensive literature review followed by a full description of the methodology used. Results related to research questions are presented and analyzed, and the discussion of these results and the recommendations based on them are included at the end of the study.

4. Literature Review

5. Concepts Definition

ED is a dictionary whose data exists in digital form and can be accessed through a number of different media, and it could be found in several forms including software, table, desktop computer, mobile apps, web applications, and E- readers. (Wikipedia wiki, <https://en.m.wikipedia.org>)

Perspective is a particular way of considering something or it means the ability to consider things concerning one another accurately and fairly. (Cambridge dictionary, 2018)

Reading Strategies

Learning to read is challenging for learners of a new language and is even more so when the process is unclear. Without effective reading strategies, many students struggle when they are unable to acquire the skills necessary to read.

There are many types of strategies that it's common for teachers and

learners to feel overwhelmed. There has been a great deal of research and substantial evidence from classrooms to identify the reading strategies and instructional components that produce the best reading outcomes.

Brown (2007,119) has defined strategies as “the specific methods of approaching a problem or task, modes of operation for achieving a particular end, planned designs for controlling and manipulating certain information”.

Reading strategies is a wide term used to describe the planned and explicit actions that help readers translate print to meaning. Strategies that improve decoding and reading comprehension skills benefit every student, but are essential for beginning readers, struggling readers, and English Language Learners. Brown (2001) points out that “reading comprehension is a matter of developing appropriate, efficient comprehension strategies” (P. 306). He goes on to enumerate ten such strategies:

1. Identify the purpose of reading.
2. Use graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up reading.
3. Use different silent reading techniques for relatively rapid reading.
4. Skim the text for the main ideas.
5. Scan the text for specific information.
6. Use semantic mapping or clustering.
7. Guess when you aren't certain.
8. Analyze vocabulary.
9. Distinguish between literal and implied meanings.
10. Capitalize on discourse markers to process relationships.

Teaching and learning the English language have been a considerable issue since both teachers and students try to utilize technology to enhance the process of teaching for the former and to achieve better levels of performance for the latter. Reading comprehension requires knowledge of the meaning of many different vocabularies and that for the students could be achieved by the use of a dictionary in the class. With the huge jump in technology, e-dictionaries have replaced paper dictionaries allowing enough time for the students to understand and for the teachers to manage the class. This use of



e-dictionaries has dominated the process of teaching and learning a second or a foreign language especially in reading classes offering easy access to the meaning of the new words.

One of the most significant challenges that learners face during the process of foreign language learning is learning vocabulary. Vocabulary has been known as a central point in any language learning in which inadequate vocabulary knowledge of the learners led to problems in foreign language use (Asgari & Mustapha, 2011). Students are noticeably affected by the technology that has driven the world and got interested in the latest technological products. Electronic Dictionaries (EDs) are becoming widespread as new technological tools for vocabulary learning among L2 and FL learners will be used more broadly by language learners. Since E-dictionaries have not been searched at Nalut University, research into the use of dictionaries caught the researchers' attention and urged her to explore students' perspectives and teachers' beliefs toward the use of E-dictionaries in learning and teaching reading and vocabulary. It will also help in filling the gap in the literature as no previous study has been done on this topic in the current context.

5.1. Advantages and disadvantages of E-dictionary

Several unique features of the e-dictionary that cannot be found in the paper dictionary are interactive learning functions such as vocabulary games, speech features, and reference books. E-dictionary is faster in search speed, lighter in weight, smaller in size, and more mobile than the paper one. As Amiran & Heshmatifar pointed out that "an electronic dictionary offers immediate access to reference information with a clear and direct return path to the target information". (2013:36)

Some researches reveal that electronic dictionaries do have positive effects on FL learning. Korat and Shamir (2006) declared that students' use of electronic dictionaries demonstrates a positive effect on language learning in a read-with-dictionary task compared to a read-only task. Another study conducted by Park (2006) among university students in Korea found that teachers' guidance on how to use electronic dictionaries has an important impact on students' positive attitudes towards the use of EDs.

However, Electronic dictionaries can prevent students from guessing skills and contextualized thinking in vocabulary acquisition. FLL learners

tend to separate words from the context, and they do not realize that using the context would help them understand the meaning of that words. With the fast-speed search functionality of electronic dictionaries, they would immediately look up the meanings of all unknown words and phrases in a sentence while getting the meanings of those words by guessing meanings from the context that would serve the purpose in the same way. Peters (2007) concluded that words that are not related to the focus of the lesson in most cases might be ignored by the students using e-dictionaries resulting in paying little attention to the lesson. In addition, electronic dictionaries can also be very disturbing when students use them in the classroom due to their voices that suddenly occur, which leads to annoying the teachers and the students engaged in doing their tasks. As a result, it might be a great disturbance for both teachers and students during the learning process. On the other hand, students might experience confusion as a result of the differences in pronunciation between their teacher and the e-dictionary. Midlane (2005) carried out an international online survey of EFL learners' use of electronic dictionaries in the classroom and found that students from eastern Asian countries were keen on the use of electronic dictionaries in class. Similarly, a study done by Tang (1997) conducted on the use of electronic dictionaries revealed that among 254 Chinese immigrant or international students in Vancouver, 87% of them had electronic dictionaries which could be reflected in the preference for the use of EDs among FL and SL learners. In the study done by Reza Dashtestani (2013) entitled *EFL teachers and students' perspectives on the use of an electronic dictionary for English learners*, where the participants were 126 EFL students and 73 teachers and the use of the questionnaire was applied, revealed that the majority of Iranian students use EDs and teachers held a positive attitude towards the use of EDs despite the challenges regarding the lack of training and the use of an unsuitable version of EDs. In another study done by Alikah Wati (2020) on students' perspectives on the use of EDs in EFL context lessons learned from Indonesian vocational high school, 19 students participated from a private high school in Indramayu revealed that 63% of the students agreed that EDs helped them to understand the importance of learning whereas 37% reported that EDs enhance the efficiency of studying English, motivates and improves their English.

Along the same line, a study conducted by Kefah Barham (2017) entitled *the use of EDs in language learners at the Faculty of Education and Science*



and teacher training showed that students held positive beliefs toward the use of the mobile dictionary as one form of EDs. The review of literature on the perspectives of teachers and students on the use of electronic dictionaries in FL contexts related to teaching and learning reading illustrates that there is very limited research conducted on the provided issue. The comparison of FL teachers' and students' attitudes toward the use of electronic dictionaries for learning FL would present valuable findings based on which FL teaching and learning courses can be improved and redesigned.

6. Methodology

6.1. Participants

The participants of this study are 20 female English Language students at the Faculty of Education in Nalut, where the study was conducted. Eight students were in their first year of study, seven of them were year two students, five students were year three students, and three students were graduating students. All of them have used EDs during their reading classes as well as 4 teachers of Reading Comprehension at Nalut university were involved in the interview and subjected to answering a teacher questionnaire. Those teachers teach Reading and vocabulary to four different levels of English learners.

6.2. Instruments

The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to collect data for this paper. First, the qualitative approach consisted mainly of teachers' interviews because interviews investigate issues in depth. Second, the quantitative approach consisted of two questionnaires filled in one by the teachers and the other one by the students. The questions were designed using a Likert scale to get information from the participants. Bertram (2006) states that the Likert scale is a psychometric response scale primarily used in questionnaires to obtain participants' preferences or degrees of agreement with a statement or a set of statements. Moreover, the questionnaire was used as it is one of the most common instruments for collecting data on attitudes and opinions from a large group of participants.

6.2.1. The Questionnaires Design and Procedure

Two different questionnaires were designed to investigate the issue related to the perspectives of both teachers and students towards the use of EDs in Reading. The teachers' questionnaire consists of 17 questions whereas the

student's questionnaire contains 18 different questions on the same topic of the current research. Teachers' and students' questionnaires were designed using the Likert Scale so students and teachers were required to choose one option from (agree-strongly agree- I do not know- disagree- strongly disagree). The questionnaire of the students has been distributed within the classes of reading comprehension for the first, second, third, and fourth years of the English language department at Nalut university. Whereas teacher's questionnaire has been filled by four teachers of reading after finishing their classes.

6.2.2 The Interview Design and Procedure

According to Anderson and Aresenault (2008), "an interview is a specialized form of communication between people for a specific purpose associated with the agreed subject matter" (190). Therefore, four teachers of reading classes were involved to participate in a structured interview and they were required to answer seven questions on the topic of the research. A structured interview was employed in this study to gather the data and the information needed to investigate the attitude of teachers and students regarding the use of EDs in reading. The interview consists of seven questions related to the teacher, the effect of EDs on reading strategies when to use EDs, and when to reject their use. Having a structured interview enables the researchers to focus on examining the issue (Cohen, 2007).

Four assistant professors of Reading comprehension and vocabulary courses at the Faculty of Education in Nalut were interviewed. Those assistant professors are supposed to help in developing the performance of the learners in reading by and without using EDs. The interviewees were asked to answer seven questions and before starting the interview, the researchers sought permission from the respondents to record them to facilitate the analysis of the gathered data. The interview took one hour, and the context of the interview was at the Faculty of Education in Nalut.

6.3 The Study Context and Limitation

The study took place within the academic year 2021-2022 to investigate the views on the use of EDs for both teachers and students at the college of education at Nalut University.

As with any research, this study has been subjected to several limitations.

First, although the number of participants was small which could affect the validity of the findings, the intended findings were achieved and could highly contribute to understanding when and how to use EDs in classes of reading and vocabulary learning. Second, the use of observation should be included to obtain more valid data regards the perspective of teachers and students towards the use of EDs in learning generally and learning and teaching vocabulary and reading specifically. Time management was one of the obstacles facing the researcher as it was time for exams, but the researcher manages to get through by sitting the questionnaires and the interviews on free exam day.

7. Data Analysis

7.1. Student's Questionnaire

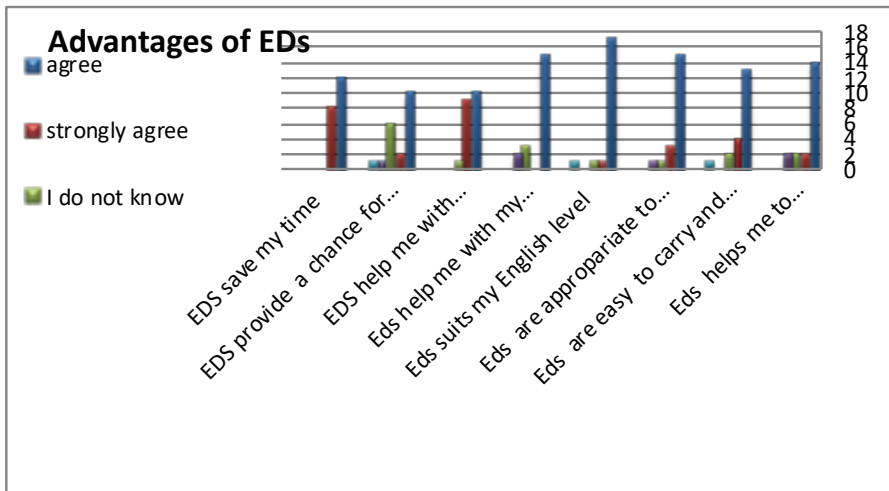


Chart (1)

This chart illustrates the perspectives of the students towards the use of EDs which could be seen as advantages of using EDs in learning reading and vocabulary. The big majority of the students showed a positive attitude regards the use of EDs about 75% agreed that the use of EDs is appropriate to their English needs whereas 85% declared that EDs suit their English level. 100% of the participants between agreeing and strongly agreeing confirmed that the use of EDs saved their time when looking up the meaning of new vocabulary and about 95% showed their agreement regarding the use of EDs helping students with the pronunciation of the word.

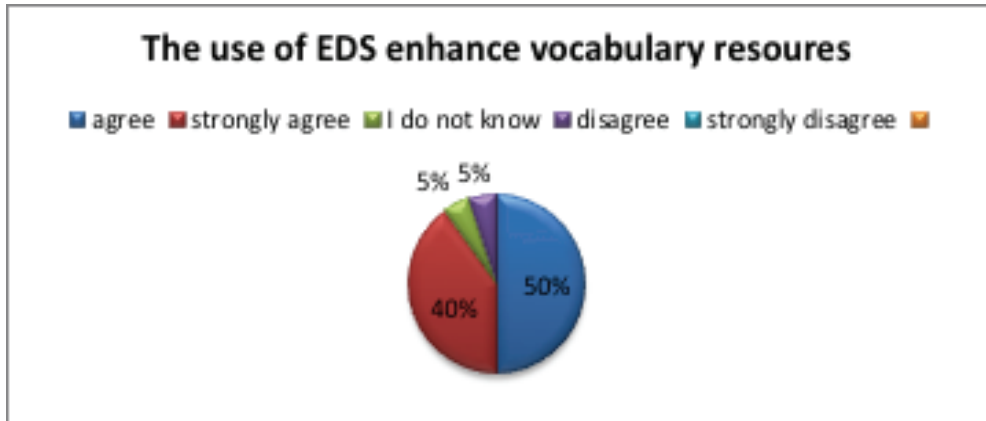


Chart (2)

This chart showed a noticeable agreement among the students towards the use of EDs and its effect on the development of vocabulary capacity. About 90% of the participants declared that the use of EDs enhances their vocabulary recourse. Whereas the choice of (I do not know) and (disagree) accounted for just 5%

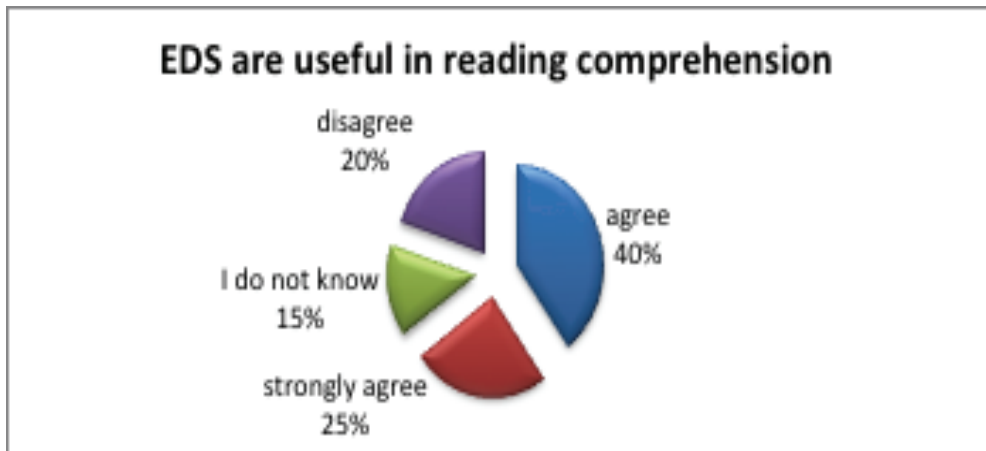


Chart (3)

In this chart, although about 65% of the participants declared their views between agreeing and strongly agreeing with the question EDs are useful in reading comprehension, 15% stated that they do not know.

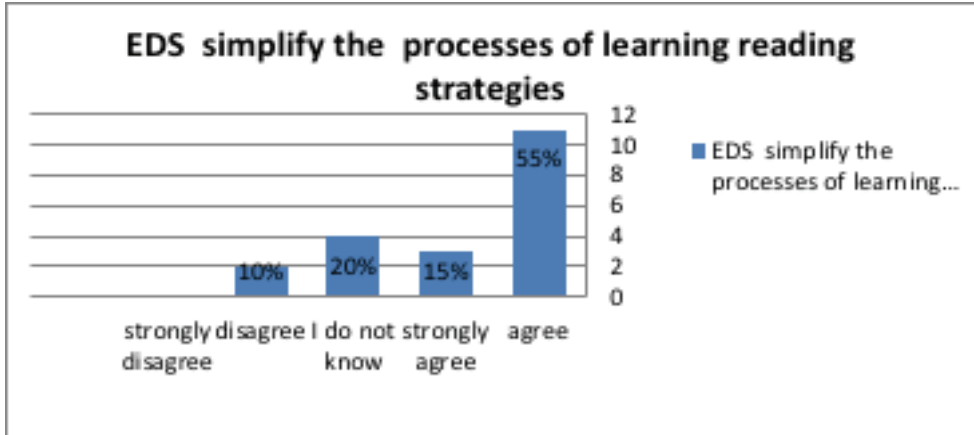


Chart (4)

This chart pointed out the students' agreeing views towards the use of EDs to simplify the processes of reading strategies. A big percentage of about 55% of the participants confirmed that the use of EDs helps them in the process of reading strategies.

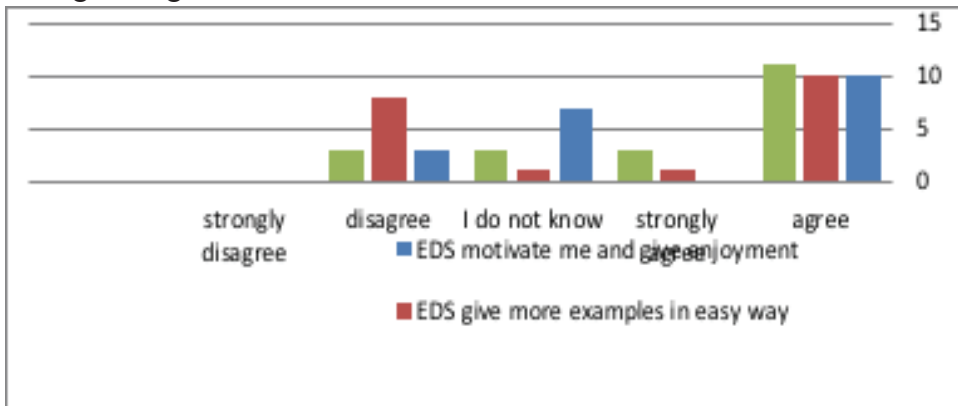


Chart (5)

This chart illustrates the perspectives of students regarding the effect of EDs on motivation, a variety of provided examples, and meanings. In those questions included in this chart, almost half of the total number of the participants showed their agreement making 50% for the first and second questions whereas in question three 55% declared their agreement.

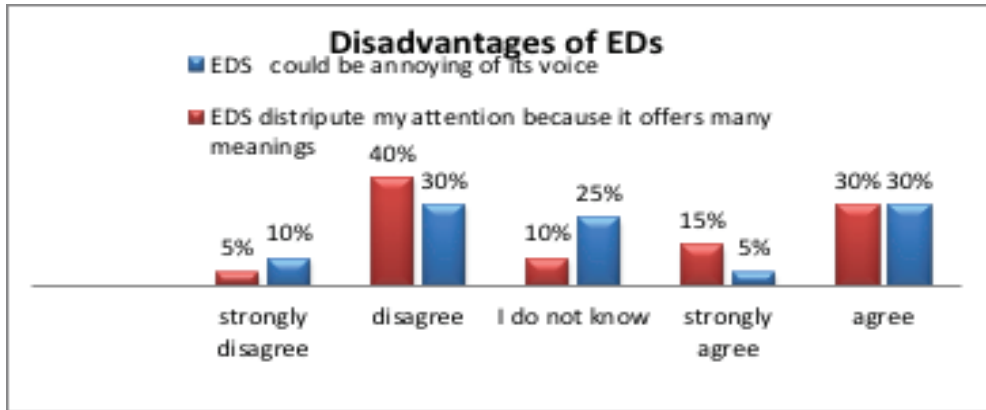


Chart (6)

This chart represents the disagreement of the students regards the disadvantages of EDs. 40% of the sample declared their disagreement with the choice that *EDs distribute my attention because it offers many meanings* whereas the same percentage about 30% accounted for agreeing and disagreeing reflecting a conflicting view with the choice that *EDs could be annoying of its voice when looking up the pronunciation of the new words*.

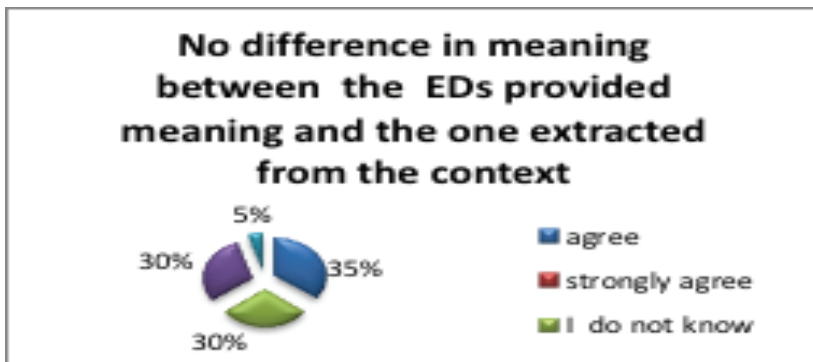


Chart (7)

In this chart, 35% of the participants showed their agreement with the question which stated that *no difference in meaning between the EDs provided meaning and the one extracted from the context*, whereas 30% of the same sample confirmed that they do not know making the same percentage for the disagreeing choice with the same question.

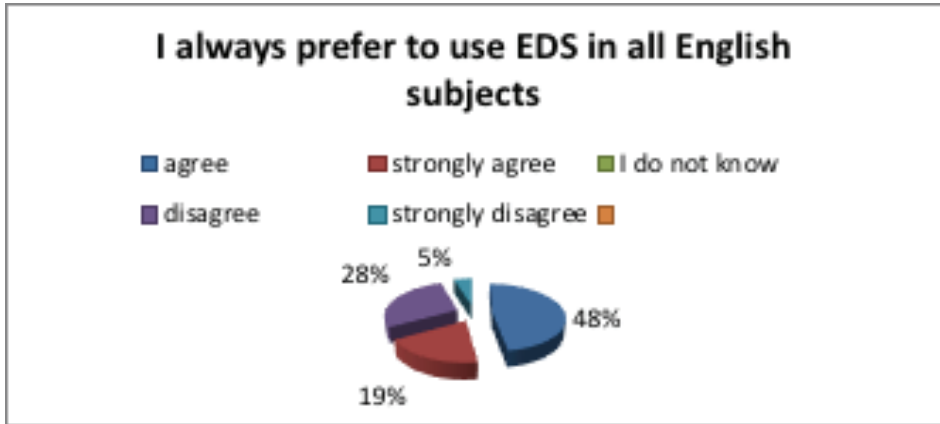


Chart (8)

This chart gives a positive view regards the use of EDs in all English subjects among the students involved in the study. Almost half of the sample about 48% declared their preferences for using EDs in their studies along with 19% of the students confirmed their strong agreement with the question *I always prefer to use EDs in all English subjects*.

7.2. Teacher's Questionnaire

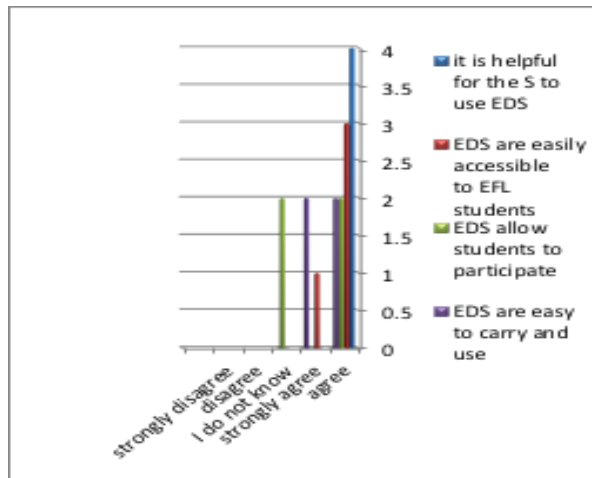


Chart (9)

This chart represents the perspectives of the teachers toward the use of

EDs among students. 100% of the participants agreed that it is *helpful for the students to use EDs* whereas 75% declared their agreement with the question saying *EDs are easily accessible to EF learners*. With regards to the question *EDs allows students to participate*, 50% went for both choices agree and I do not know. Whereas 100% between agreeing and strongly agreeing with the question *EDs are easy to carry and use*.

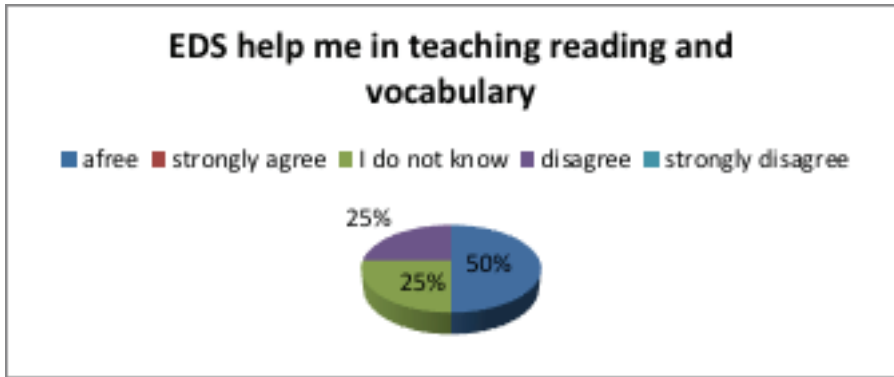


Chart (10)

In this chart, although the views of the teachers took a form of agreement making 50% with the question *EDs help teachers in teaching reading and vocabulary*, 25% of the teachers confirmed that they do not know which was the same percentage for the option disagree.

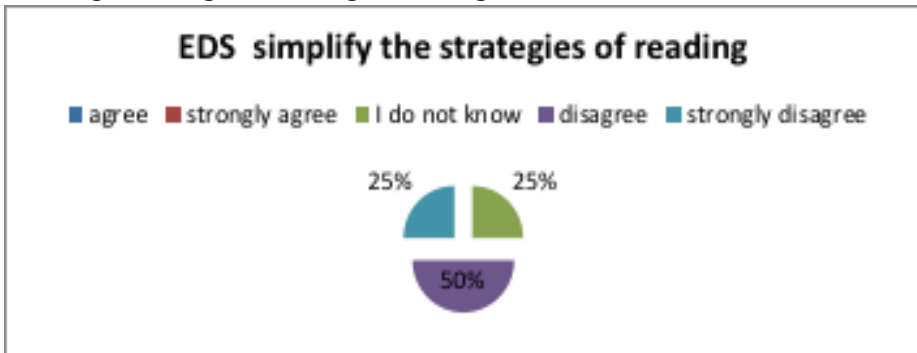


Chart (11)

This chart reflects the views of the teachers involved in the current study regards the simplicity of teaching the strategies of reading by the use of EDs

to the students. 75% of the teachers showed their disagreement and strong disagreement with that question whereas 25% of the same sample chose the option *I do not know*.

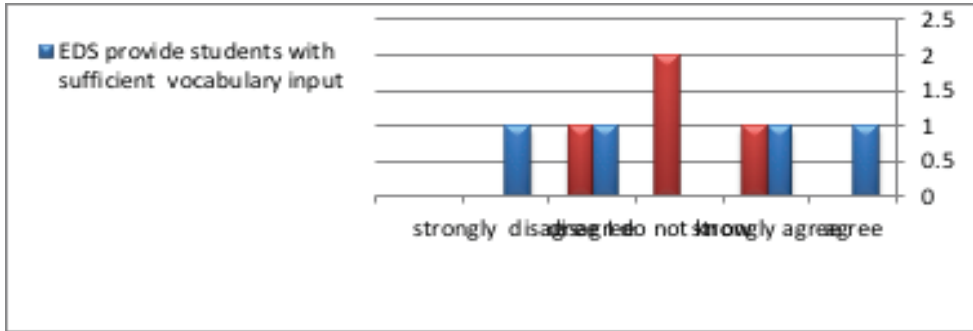


Chart (12)

This chart included two questions, in the question said *EDs provide students with sufficient vocabulary input*, and teachers' views were divided equally between agree, strongly agree, disagree, and strongly disagree making 25% for each. The question says *EDs provide the exact meaning of the word within the context*, teachers views were fluctuating. The choice *I do not know* accounted for 50% which was a total percentage for both choices *strongly agree* and *disagree* making 25% for each.

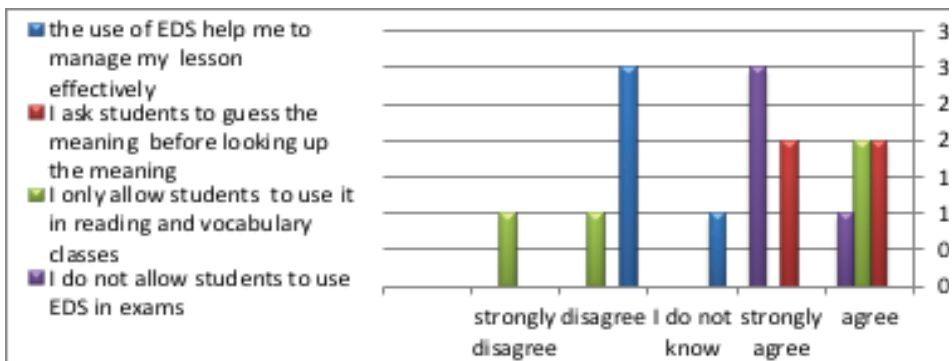


Chart (13)

This chart illustrates the analysis of four questions. In the first question which says *the use of EDs helps me to manage my lesson effectively*, 75% of the involved teachers declared their disagreement whereas in the question

that says *I ask students to guess the meaning of new words before looking up the meaning*, 100% between agreeing and strongly agreeing went to this question revealing similar percentage about 50% for each. In the last question says *I do not allow students to use EDs in exams*, 75% of the choice strongly agree and 25% of the option agree the analysis of that question reflects the teacher's rejection of the use of EDs among students in exams.

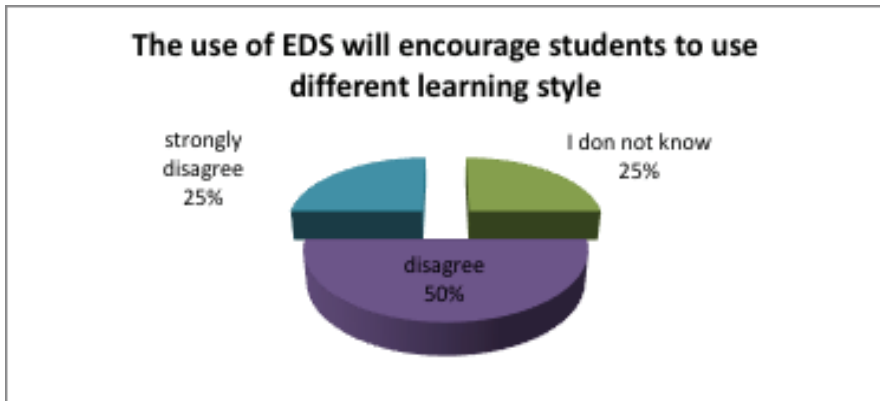


Chart (14)

In this chart, it is clear that the question saying *the use of EDs will encourage students to use different learning styles* was met with disagreement by the teachers making 50% of the choice *disagree* and 25% on the option *strongly disagree* whereas the choice *I do not know* accounted for 25%.

7.3. Teachers' Interview Analysis

The interview consists of seven questions related to the topic of the research which is Teachers' and students' perspectives on the use of electronic dictionaries in Teaching and Learning Reading and Vocabulary at the Faculty of Education at Nalut University. Four teachers were involved to answer the questions of the interview and the collected data were analyzed as the following:

With regards to the first question which was *Do you use EDs in preparing the reading and vocabulary lectures?* Teacher, one said that she uses the electronic dictionary to find out the exact meaning of the word in case students asked her to give them synonyms. While the second interviewed teacher agreed with the first teacher on the use of EDs in preparation for the



lesson reasoning that using EDs in preparation saves my time and helps me to find the meaning of unknown vocabulary easily. However, the other two interviewed teachers declared that they do not use it and do not put them into consideration, stating that there is no need to understand each word since the whole meaning of the passage is clear.

Question two was *Do you think that having EDs helps your students in the class reading or vocabulary learning?* revealed different views regarding the use of EDs in reading. Teacher one said that it is helpful as it is quick and easy to find out the needed meaning, whereas teacher two gave the opposite view declaring that “I do not think the use of EDs will help in literary reading” stating that the hidden meaning of the word could not be achieved by using EDs. In that, she added that literary reading contains different Latin vocabulary which could be translated wrong or translated word by word, which does not serve the purpose of the passage if the type of that device was not provided with Latin meanings. In the same view, teacher three said that it depends on the necessity of using it in the class pointing out that if the students get stuck and they could not understand her explanation, she would allow them to use it in the class. The fourth interviewed teacher answered this question by stating yes, the use of EDs helps my students to understand the meaning of difficult vocabulary, but it does not help the teacher if she/he teaches reading strategies, explaining that by saying if the topic of the lecture of reading is getting meaning of the word from the context, then the use of EDs could be a barrier to the object of the intended lesson. So, the choice of using EDs depends on what you want to teach.

In question three where the interviewed teachers were asked *When do you allow your students to use EDs and when not to use it?* Interviewee one answered that in the exam if the students were asked to answer the comprehension questions of the passage. That was opposite to the view of the second teacher who stated that in the exam, there is no way to allow students to use their EDs reasoning that the exam is the way of assessment so how can I let my students use it, especially if the questions of the exam were related to the reading strategies such as using clue to find out the meaning.

Teacher three said that if the overall meaning of the passage was not clear, I would allow the use of EDs more than that I do not think there is any need to use EDs in classes of reading and vocabulary. The last interviewed teacher

said that “*I may allow the use of EDs if I feel that the unknown vocabulary is essential and affect the whole meaning of the passage and that of course if the students have not understood my explanations*”.

With regards to question four which says *Do you think that using e-dictionary will distribute your class's attention?* The first teacher said yes, it will make students not focus on my explanation, and then it will affect their comprehension. Teacher two however confirmed that it will not affect the attention as it offers a chance for the students to work in pairs or groups. Teacher three on the other hand declared that it will not impact the attention as students are working individually, whereas teacher four argued that the use of EDs will affect the attention of the class if the class is big explaining that, allowing students to work in groups or pair will negatively affect on the time management as she might lose control on her big class. She also added that EDs provide many meanings so it could be challenging for the students to choose the best one which could be easily done if the meaning has been extracted from the context.

Question five was *about how your students need to own and use EDs in their studies*. Teacher, one said that it is important, but it should be English-English dictionary reasoning that this type of dictionary allows students to learn synonyms and learn new vocabulary. More importantly, she added that English- English dictionary reduces the choice of getting confused and decreases the inter-language chances by translating from Arabic to English and vice versa. Teacher two said that it is helpful as it saves their time to find out the meaning, and it simplifies their studies by understanding the unknown vocabulary which might make confusion if they do not understand them.

I do not think my students need to use it in reading classes. If they face an unknown word that I think is important and cannot be neglected and affect the meaning of the lesson, I would allow them to work in pairs or in a group to apply what has been learned from the strategies of reading. It would be for me the last solution to use EDs in my studies if I were a student. That was the view of teacher three. However, teacher four said that it is important if they study at home but within the classes of reading and vocabulary, there is no need as their teacher is there to explain and simplify the process of learning. She added that the topic of the lesson determines the choice of using EDs, especially in reading classes.



Question six, however, gives interesting perspectives of the teachers when they were asked *Do you think that the meaning offered by the e-dictionary is different from the one extracted from the context?* Teacher, one said yes pointing out that EDs cannot provide the same meaning as the paper dictionary. She claimed that a paper dictionary contains a wide range of vocabulary used in different examples where students can recognize the difference in the meaning of the intended word. Moreover, teacher two confirmed that learning the meaning of the word from the context is much easier than using a dictionary to look up the meaning stating that students would not forget the meaning of the word that has been learned from the context. On the other hand, teacher three declared that « not exactly different” reasoning that although using EDs might be easier and quicker than using context clues and vocabulary strategies, getting meaning from the context will be more precise than using EDs. In addition, EDs provide different choices of meaning especially those Arabic meanings. As a result, this will lead students to be more confused about the appropriate meaning of an unknown word in the context. Lastly, teacher four affirmed that learning words from the context are effective since learners will acquire many different strategies of reading which helps students to improve their cognitive ability.

When asking teachers, the last question was *whether EDs provide students with a variety of different meanings, and according to your experience, would it be easy for the students to find out a suitable meaning for the given context?* Teacher, one said yes, it depends on the type of the dictionary whereas teacher two confirmed that if the e-dictionary is advanced and offers examples of all the meanings included then she would say that EDs will help students in finding out the meaning within the context. Adding on that teacher three stated that getting meaning from the context is much easier than using a dictionary if the students are used to using the strategies of reading effectively pointing out the importance of practicing the use of these strategies by the students themselves. Finally, the last interviewed teacher claimed that if the word is difficult and its meaning cannot be reached from the context, then the choice of using a dictionary would be the solution.

8. Findings and Discussion

The use of modern technology has been driven to domain all aspects of life including education where one of these forms has been inserted to help

the learners to enhance their acquisition of the language. This form has been represented in the current study by the use of E-dictionaries in teaching and learning reading and vocabulary. The study used both qualitative and quantitative approaches to address the research question which was what are the prospects of teachers and students at Nalut University towards the use of E-dictionary in learning and teaching reading and vocabulary.

The findings of the study revealed that students and teachers held a positive attitude towards the use of technology in learning a new language (English) which agreed with the first hypothesis.

The results of the teacher interview were consistent with the result of the teacher questionnaire in many aspects and conflicted with the result of the student questionnaire. It seemed that the students were eager to use electronic dictionaries while the EFL teachers showed hesitations regarding the use of electronic dictionaries. Teachers always get perplexed about the role of dictionaries in reading. Many teachers discourage the use of dictionaries reasoning that dictionaries do not help students to understand an unknown word in context and because students overuse them at the expense of developing their self-confidence and the ability to guess from context (Bensoussan, Sim & Weiss, 1984), that, of course, was a third hypothesis in the current study. Similarly, the wrong way of learning a new vocabulary may result from students using bilingual dictionaries too blindly, or from students expecting a one-to-one correlation between their language and English (Stein, 1990).

The big majority of the students showed their positive attitude regards the question that the use of EDs is appropriate to their English need and level, and E-dictionary saves time and helps with the pronunciation, third hypothesis. On the other hand, teachers declared that the advantages of using E-dictionary could not be denied since students utilize it in their studies of a foreign language, but that use would be helpful in other subjects except reading and vocabulary. Teaching reading comprehension, literary reading and vocabulary rely on number of strategies, that could simplify the understanding of the intended meaning of the vocabulary, since the objectives of the reading and vocabulary course is to find out the meaning of the word by using reading strategies.

With regards to the time management, students confirmed that the use of EDs saves their time which was opposite to what teachers declared, they



disagreed that the use of EDs helps in managing the class effectively making 90% of the total.

About 65% of the participants declared their views between agreeing and strongly agreeing with the question *EDs are useful in reading comprehension* which was opposite to the perspective of 75% of the teachers of reading regarding the use of E-dictionary helps in learning reading strategies.

That result was similar to the one obtained by the interview with the teachers when asked *Do you think that having EDs helps your students in the class reading or vocabulary learning?* half of the teacher participants confirmed that the use of EDs could be useful in reading classes whereas the other half opposed this view stating that the choice of using EDs depends on the object of the lesson and the level of the students. If the class was to teach students the strategies of reading, the use of the EDs could be a barrier, especially, if the lesson is literary reading where students are required to figure out the hidden meaning of the word. Last hypothesis.

Therefore, if technology is supposed to be used in EFL courses, students should feel that technology is useful and interesting for their learning (Jones, 2001). The EFL teachers were aware of the challenges and barriers to the use of electronic dictionaries since they pointed out the relevant benefits. Taking into account students' interest in the use of electronic dictionaries and their benefits for EFL learning, the use of electronic dictionaries would improve students' motivation to learn EFL and that was one of the research findings. EFL teachers, in that vein, can play a vital role in raising students' awareness of the appropriate use of electronic dictionaries to maximize the effects of the affordances which were perceived by the EFL students. With regards to providing students with a considerable input of vocabulary, a current study revealed that a high percentage of the participants about 90% declared that the use of EDs increases their vocabulary capacity. Golonka et al. (2012) assert that EFL students can receive elaborated and individualized input when they use electronic dictionaries for their English learning.

Resulting in EFL students will be less dependent on their teachers since they can check and learn different aspects of a new vocabulary item on their own.

Another finding was related to whether there is a difference between

the meaning provided by the EDs and the one extracted from the context, the student participants were not sure making a percentage of 35% of each agreeing and disagreeing with the statement. That was the same result obtained from the teacher questionnaire where 25% accounted for each agree and disagree on the same item. Those teachers who stated that they do not know in the questionnaire were interviewed to know why declared that learning the meaning of the word from the context is much easier than using a dictionary to look up the meaning adding that students would not forget the meaning of the word that has been learned from the context. Moreover, EDs provide different choices of meaning especially those Arabic meanings. As a result, this will lead students to be more confused about the appropriate meaning of an unknown word in the context. Based on that, Boonmoh (2010) suggests that EFL teachers should help students to choose suitable electronic dictionaries and train them to use electronic dictionaries effectively.

More importantly, learning words from the context is effective because learners will acquire many different strategies of reading which helps students to improve their cognitive ability.

With regards to when EDs should be used, students prefer to use them in all their subjects making 76% of agreement, teachers otherwise declared that, in the interview, there is no need to use EDs or to understand the meaning of each vocabulary if the meaning of the whole passage is clear. While in exam time the use of EDs seemed to be forbidden by the teachers making a percentage of 100% between disagreeing and strongly disagree as it is time for assessment.

Another conflicting finding was represented when asking students that EDs simplify the process of reading strategies making 70% agree and strongly agree. That was, however, different from what teachers stated when asked EDs to simplify reading strategies making 75% of disagreement and strongly disagreement reasoning that, in the interview, the intended aim of the lesson of teaching reading strategies could not be achieved if students are allowed to use their E-dictionaries to find out the meaning and that, of course, depends on the level of the students. If the students are in their first stages of learning English, where it is enough for the learners to learn the meaning of the word, then the use of EDs would help them, but with advanced learners of the language, the concept of using EDs could be a barrier because, in this stage, learners are supposed to



learn reading strategies. Supporting that view, Wang (2012) examined Chinese students' use of e-dictionaries to read Chinese electronic texts and concluded that although the use of e-dictionaries had some benefits for intermediate students' reading comprehension improvement, it was less effective for the improvement of advanced students' reading comprehension proficiency.

Lastly, although there is evidence that dictionaries facilitate not only vocabulary acquisition (Hulstijn, Hollander, & Greidanus, 1996; Knight, 1994; Luppescu & Day, 1993) but also comprehension of texts (Knight, 1994), teachers and students should be aware of its advantages and disadvantages regarding when and how to use it during and outside the classes. In addition, EFL teachers of reading and vocabulary classes can assign tasks that require students to use electronic dictionaries at home, and they can foster EFL students' awareness of the use of electronic dictionaries by providing them with guidance on how to use electronic dictionaries wisely for their learning experiences. EFL teachers also should have the required knowledge of using electronic dictionaries and training students to use electronic dictionaries efficiently.

9. Conclusion

With the rapid development of technology, the number of benefits has also increased reflecting the importance of technology in all aspects of life. In education, for example, learners and teachers are trying to utilize it by applying all its formats such as e-dictionaries, smart boards, and so on. In the current study, the use of EDs was employed to be one of those technology formats to answer the research question. The main aims of the use of EDs among FL learners vary between learning specific looked-up information, understanding some lexical information, or simply satisfying curiosity. Learners of a second or a foreign language seek whatever could help them to improve and to acquire the intended language effortlessly with a high level of performance. This however could be the case if that device has not been used effectively, especially with English language learners, whom they are supposed to learn new vocabularies and apply them in all skills of the language. Using a dictionary in learning a language could be seen as an advantage from the learner's view and a disadvantage if considering the teacher's perspective.

Therefore, the current study is desired to investigate teachers' and learners' beliefs about the use of EDs in reading and vocabulary learning. The findings revealed many considerable results relating to the study. Firstly, although

teachers and learners of a foreign language held a positive attitude regards the use of EDs in enhancing language performance, teachers of reading and vocabulary courses declared important considerations or precautions about how and when that dictionary should be used. Teachers of those classes confirmed that the choices of using this device will be based on the level of the learners, the type of this dictionary, and the object of the intended course. An important rule of the teacher then is to help students to improve their levels and to gain the greatest benefit from the language learning resources.

It is highly recommended that teachers should be acknowledged the use of this device and monitor its use among the students to achieve the aims of the course. As well as, they should encourage the learners to be self-dependent and to stretch students' electronic dictionary use abilities with teachers' supervision on when and how e-dictionary should be utilized.

So as college students, they are supposed to integrate practice and process of reading as a whole to meet the standards of the syllabus. They need a lot of help to improve their reading ability, among which a dictionary is a necessary tool. Dictionaries provide abundant information for learners from finding specific word lists to enrich their vocabulary to find out the meaning of notes about cultures, and societies to improve their English literacy. This embodies the practice perspective of reading in terms of dictionary use. More importantly, they should compare different types of dictionaries and pick up one suitable for their current language proficiency.

In conclusion, findings from this study suggest that many language students may fail to exploit the potential of electronic dictionaries to be powerful and effective language learning tools in some courses of learning a language. Language teachers, too, may fail to provide support on how this device should be used. Therefore, many suggestions have been drowning to address this situation, so that language learners may become more effective electronic dictionary users, and teachers may gain useful impacts on the course and important influence on electronic dictionary use in the class through rules regarding students' use, guidance or training, encouragement or prohibition of that use among the learners. If these precautions and perspectives have been taken into consideration, both teachers and learners will gain high advantages from using EDs in learning and teaching reading and vocabulary which serve the processes of acquiring FL or SL efficiently.



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Going Online: A Case Study of Virtual Graduation Project Discussion

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Abstract

Due to changes brought by COVID-19 pandemic, the English department launched a programme of online research project poster presentation and discussion. This shift of medium has proved to be more challenging due to technological and organisational constraints, but it has provided new opportunities for participants to critically respond to each other's research poster.

The virtual mini conference was an exciting showcase of the fourth year students' research projects and considered as an essential part of the overall score of the subject. The commencement of the students' poster presentations and showcase of their projects was started on 27 October 2020 at 9:00am on Google Classroom and lasted for two days. A total of 22 individual and collaborative student projects were presented from three disciplines namely, literature, applied linguistics and translation. The event ran entirely in English and the communication was synchronous. The online version is now in its third year. The English department instructors and guests from other universities were invited to the online event. The presence of the instructors as well as the guests and their feedback and questions on the students' projects provided insight and serve as a motivation to the aspiring graduates who were about to embark upon their professional careers.

This paper reported on findings from a qualitative analysis of the transcripts

of twenty two online poster presentation feedback and questions responses. A special attention was given to the types of interaction during the virtual mini conference and the assessment criteria. Thematic analysis was used to investigate the following areas: How does online research project presentation differ from face-to-face one? What is the nature of online synchronous communication? Appropriate pedagogical implications were explored and a need for online support in an era of uncertainty and the potential of such support to be implemented in Libya Higher Education was discussed and recommended.

By bringing this experience and some possible suggestions to the conference I hope to engage in conversation with similarly concerned colleagues.

Key words: graduation projects, virtual poster presentation, online discussion



Introduction

With the innovations of technology, much of the way in which we interact and teach has been modified today. Generally, the virtual world has provided teachers, learners, educationalists and researchers with a new environment to teach and test and analyse interactions. Google Classroom (GC), in particular, provides streamlined feedback and online collaboration needed for research project discussion. It has thus become a place to gain a greater understanding of student-to-student as well as student-to-teacher interaction styles.

This study takes place in the context of an English Major Department, Faculty of Arts and Education at Sabratha University that has sought to fully integrate digital technology into the department curriculum during the Corona virus pandemic. Thus, a number of modules were changed to the online mode using GC. The basis for the introduction of digital learning into the English curriculum stemmed from the desire to not only connect students during quarantine but to also further strengthen and support the concept of self-directed learning and student autonomy. As with the other modules, the graduation project was bound to transfer to online platforms. To graduate from university, students have to conduct a research project and pass a mini-viva, outlined by the English Department Framework.

As of October 2020 all fourth year students were invited to attend a workshop



on how to design a research poster. They were provided with poster templates and poster examples and some guidance about GC. This online platform was chosen because it is familiar to students and teachers and was already installed in their gadgets. In addition, project supervisors were presented and gave practical advice on the use of the GC as an educational platform where the students are expected to present their research as a poster in a mini-conference style.

However, as the use of GC as an educational platform is fairly recent, particularly in the Libyan higher education, there are limited data on the exact nature of online synchronous communication needed for graduation projects mini viva. This study seeks to shed some light on this sociolinguistic development, highlighting the difference between online research project presentation and a face-to-face one.

The purpose of this research is to explore the experience of English major students using GC as a discussion forum to present and discuss their graduation projects for the first time in Libya. The idea is that shifting to the virtual poster presentation can help the student achieve their learning goals when Covid-19 hit and going online was the only option.

I have found it difficult to find actual studies on this exact topic, and whilst I feel it would be too bold a claim to say I am the first, finding papers and texts that cover this quite specific area has proved problematic. There is a dearth of research on the virtual poster presentation and discussion for graduation projects and the online synchronous and asynchronous modes of project discussion. There have undoubtedly been various studies undertaken on e-learning in general, the effectiveness of Google Classroom, students' perception toward online technologies, and viva voce through video conferencing; and it is against and with these that I place my own research.

Literature Review

Online Learning

Information and communications technologies have developed progressively more powerful, worldwide and all-around in the 21st century. They affect the way we live and most importantly how we learn. However, the spread of Covid 19 has forced educational institutes to opt for the e-learning mode. Such a sudden change in pedagogy has challenged the students and

tutors' technical ability, knowledge, expertise and readiness for such advances. According to Setiawati and Prakarsa (2020) online platforms have captured the educational market worldwide with their potential in education leading to an increase in academic performance. Redecker and Punie (2010:4) refer to as the “limitless opportunities for formal and informal learning” or the ability to motivate students from an exhausted educational system.

In spite of the vast development in online technology as a means to increase academic performance and the motivation to learn, one must acknowledge that the most important factor in learning is not merely introducing such online technology rather how such technologies are used. Regardless of the limitless potential offered through the introduction of the GC, it is vital that we gain a better understanding of how we as tutors and in turn our students use it as a learning platform.

Online Teaching and Learning Challenges

According Dhawan (2020), virtual learning encounters a number of challenges ranging from students' issues, tutors' issues, and content issues.

Students' issues

The rapid and sudden introduction of online technology creates new problems regarding the learning experience. Lacking experience with online learning and teaching environments may negatively affect learners' motivation (Yusuf and Al-Banawi, 2013). In a study conducted by Parkes et al (2014), students were found to be poorly prepared for several e-learning competencies and academic-type competencies. Inadequate skills to understand and teach with such emerging technology are yet another challenge that Karesenti (2013) refers to as the “digital underclass”. Thus, lack of confidence to utilise technology for new teaching approaches is still an issue to be addressed. Concerns were also expressed over the implementation of two-way interaction that is desired by students. In order for the learning process to be fulfilled, students need to practise what they learn. However, online content tends to be more theoretical which prevents effective practising and learning (Song *et al.*, 2004).

Tutors' issues

Voogt and Pelgrum, (2005) cited in Levin (2008: 235) state that there is



a gap between the technology available and the unwillingness of teachers to take advantage of it which stems from an “incompatibility between the goals of education and interactions between teachers, students, educational and informative resources and curricular goals and materials”. Therefore, it can be concluded that there must be some involvement from the tutors’ part in what Scrimshaw (2004) refers to as radical changes such as learning to use the technology and the way they teach. However, Mills and Tincher (2003) state that it is evident that whatever changes tutors’ practices is a complex task. There is a fear that traditional interpersonal relations between the tutor and the student will be destroyed by the virtual learning and that peer retaliations will be preferred and fostered over hierarchical ones (Mouissset-Lacan, 2012). It is claimed that tutors are unhurriedly “incorporating a smattering of technologies into their repertoire” as they are merely used for presentations, information delivery or as a management tool (Yildirim, 2000 cited in Levin, 2008: 235) regardless the availability of new applications. Thus, technology is used when it fits well with more traditional teaching practice (ibid).

Literature also reveals that increasing motivation to learn and study is not bound to technology alone; rather, it is how it is introduced and used by both tutors and students. Drawing on this, Levin (2008) affirms that it is the ability and the responsibility of tutors to find the precise way to make use of the tremendous online technology resources available. Yet, it is evident that numerous universities were not prepared for exclusively online learning, particularly those located in the developing countries (Coman, et al, 2020; Dhawan, 2020). Only throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, tutors began to offer online instruction for the first time (Aboagye; Yawson; Appiah, 2020).

Content issues

Developing content that covers the curriculum as well as engages the students at the same time is another issue (Kebritchi et al., 2017). The importance of the quality of e-learning programs is also highlighted by Dhawan (2020:15) who states that “there is a lack of standards for quality, quality control, development of e-resources, and e-content delivery”. It is because of the central importance that the government in their educational policies must set the requirements of e-learning programmes. Cojocariu et al. (2014) recommend addressing this issue urgently so that the benefits of

quality education via e-learning can be benefited by everyone.

Google Classroom

Online teaching and learning platforms have become a popular educational mode of communication worldwide. Each online platform has designated a range of features in which users create a virtual educational community. However, the sudden changes brought about by the pandemic make such use of online platforms a necessity.

According to Magid (2014), GC was initiated in 2014 and introduced to public in 2017. With a Google account one can create, teach, and join a class as well as be connected with other Google services such as Google Docs, calculations' sheets, online presentation tools (Ressler, 2017). In order to initiate a virtual class, the tutor needs to create a GC and invite the students via their Gmail or send them the class code. Once students join the class, they can submit their assignment and participate in the online discussion. It "accelerates interaction among students and teachers, facilitates peer feedback features, and includes teacher response at the same time" (Hastomo, Istiara, and Nurchurifiani, 2021: 302). These features make GC a straightforward choice for university courses.

Proffitt (2008) highlights the importance of such emerging technology claiming that the introduction of the e-learning platforms such as GC has near limitless potential which opens a new horizon of possibilities for teaching and learning in higher education. The aim, therefore, must be to encourage the tutor to exploit the new opportunities that such online technology has to offer to make it more meaningful and rewarding for the student learning.

A number of recent studies have reported on the positive effects of using GC in the L2 classroom. One study found that GC activities contributed to students' overall learning motivation and facilitated the students' interaction with the teacher when discussing online assignments (Saputri, 2020). In their study, Lee and Cha (2021: 65) also ascertain that the use of GC in a virtual educational setting accomplishes two purposes; it facilitated the development of students' English proficiency, and offered interesting activities, which in turn "stimulates students' self-learning spirit". Hastomo, Istiara, and Nurchurifiani (2021) along with Azhar and Iqbal (2018) note that GC had a



positive impact on students' writing ability as it allows for streamlined peer feedback that supported collaborative learning.

Despite the well-documented impact GC platform can have on L2 learning success such as boosting the social learning aspect of online education, enabling learners to benefit from the experience and skills of their peers, and allowing teacher to design digital team based learning activities (Gardner, 1982), GC research has yet paid no attention to the use of GC for the presentation and discussion of the graduation projects. It is arguable that the use of such online presentation and discussion could be particularly useful and enjoyable for students having their mini viva due to integrative motivation (Cook, 2008), especially if they ultimately wish to gain access to the academia realm where they are expected to present in national and international conferences. Harmer, for example, notes that "students' motivation is far more likely to remain healthy if they are doing things they enjoy doing and which they can see the point of" (2007: 102).

E-learning vs. face-to-face one

For the purpose of this research the term 'Face-to-Face Learning' is used to refer to any "course with no online technology used" (Allen & Seaman, 2003:6). The term 'Online Learning' refers to "a course where most or all of the content is delivered online. Typically have no face-to-face meetings" (ibid).

There are similarities and differences between interactions in the virtual world and the real world. One of the features of face-to-face interaction is turn taking which is not found in online world. Panyametheekul and Herring (2006) state that non-verbal cues such as pausing, sustained eye contact and signaling gestures of the hand or head are impossible to replicate in a text-only online discussion. Comparing performance and achievement between online students and classroom students, Marold, Larsen, & Moreno (2000) reported that achievement tended to be higher in the Web students. Nevertheless, performance on projects and homework submissions was found to be higher in classroom students. Marold & Haga, (2003) and Kiser (2002) highlight the importance of face-to-face interaction confirming that quality in education can be achieved by incorporating technology and face-to-face interaction.

The nature of online communication

O'Neil (2001) proposed two general categories for e-learning systems. The first is synchronous system where the communication between distance learning players is in real-time using sound, video, or chat. The other is the asynchronous system in which students are not necessarily be online with their tutors as they can work in offline mode and communicate at scheduled times or on-demand. The necessary and most used mode of communication in this kind of system is electronic mail (ibid).

Marinoni; Van't Land; Jensen (2020) and Anwar; Adnan (2020) find that online learning is more flexible than face-to-face instruction as it can be improved by the use of asynchronous and synchronous platforms such as online forums and chats, and videoconferences. Suresh, Priya and Gayathri (2018) claim that online learning gives instructors better control over the content and time of teaching.

Methodology

The study tries to describe a new approach of discussing graduation projects online adopted by the English department during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is a case study that mainly utilised qualitative methodology principles (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). The challenges associated with online learning and possible solutions were also identified based on the data collected from our virtual mini conference and previous studies.

Design of the online project presentation

In order to develop a learning model that allows students to present and discuss their research projects and at the same time provide student-to-student and teacher-to-student interaction, I opted for GC platform to be a forum for project presentation and discussion. GC was chosen as it provides a free online service for educational institutions. This virtual space has a range of features that allow student-to-student and teacher-to-student interaction, grading, submitting assignments and projects anytime and anywhere (Please see Figure 1).



Figure 1. The Main Page of GC

To clarify what they need to do for their poster presentation, instructions were given to the students. Posters are limited to only one slide in which they are expected to show their research question, methodology, a summary of data analysis and interpretation of findings; all presented succinctly. The student full name and enrolment number must be included at the top of the poster. They were also informed on how and when to upload their posters. They were asked to submit their poster as an attachment on the GC in the Stream on the time allocated to each group of students. Samples of good posters were provided.

Beside the poster, students were required to offer some positive comments about other students' poster in their assigned group, as well as asking for clarification about certain aspects, or pointing out if they do not understand something, as well as posing their specific question which could be about their methodology, results or their data collection.

All groups should respond to their classmates and tutors' feedback and questions and email it to the Research project coordinator as one Word attachment within 24

hours. They were told that the poster presentation is part of their assessment and that they have to meet all the deadlines specified by the project coordinator.

Participants

Thirty six English major students enrolled in the research project module at the Faculty of Arts and Education, Sabratha University. Students were given the choice to work individually or in pairs on their projects. Accordingly, there were 22 projects in total divided into four groups and each group consists of five to six projects. The virtual conference lasted for two days and two groups were to present in each day.

Day 1 & Day 2 Presentation

On Tuesday 27 October 2020, Group A1 and A2 uploaded their posters from 9:00am to 12:00 and 3:00pm to 6:00pm respectively. They also read the poster presentations of the students in their group and gave them feedback and asked one question about their research. Tutors commented on the posters and asked questions as well. Presenters responded to the feedback given by students and tutors immediately. On Wednesday 28 October 2020, Group B1 and B2 uploaded their posters from 9:00am to 12:00 and 3:00pm to 6:00 pm respectively and followed the same instructions given to Group A (Please see Figures 2 & 3).

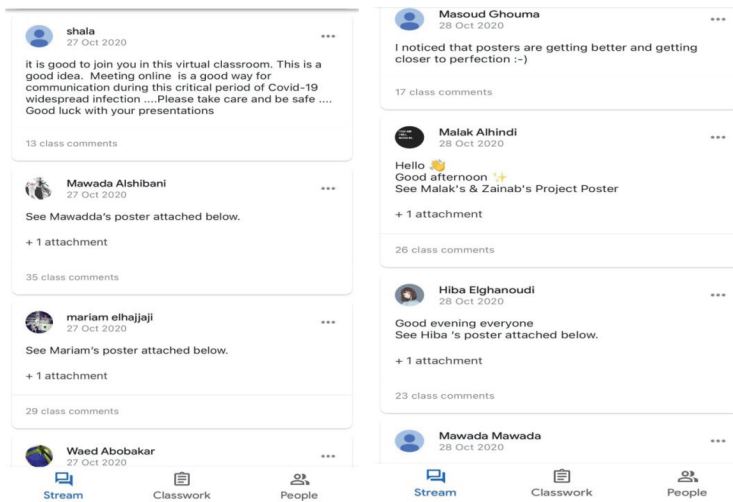


Figure 2. Uploading Posters Group A Figure 3. Uploading Posters Group B



Students were told that there is no particular structure as it is similar to an online discussion. They may comment on the clarity of posters, results, research process and study limitations. Considering the time-scale, students are not expected to give a great deal of feedback. They were informed in advance that their responses to the tutors and their group's questions are what actually assessed. It is important to note that students were advised to use the opportunities afforded by the presentation process to refine the final draft of their written research project before the final submission.

It should also be mentioned that the poster is a crucial part of the assessment. It is the equivalent of the oral presentation assessment in the on-campus version. Thus, the online poster presentation is worth 40% while the research report worth 60% of the overall grade. For the poster presentation, the proportion of marks allocated is 30% to the Poster and 10% to the Feedback and Question.

Data collection

Data was collected through observations of student-to-student and teacher-to-student interactions on the GC website during the discussion of 4th year students' projects. While considering all of the possible methods of collecting data, I found observations to be the most suitable for this study. There are advantages of using observations to collect data. Observations are one way for "researchers to understand more of what goes on in real-world situations than asking questions of those who experience them" (Blaxter et al, 2010, p.198). The information recorded has a value that cannot be attained in detailed questionnaires and interviews. It has also been mentioned that the observer may participate in the events being studied, or may act solely as a 'disinterested' observer (ibid). As a result, observing online is much different to observing in-person. The fear of the observer's presence affecting the responses of those being observed can be eliminated at the discretion of the observer. Therefore, one has the option of reading the exchanges that ensue without influencing or affecting the interactions. Additionally, recording what is observed is easier to do online as the discussions can be copied into a document instantly without losing time in transcribing from a recording device or trying to decipher one's own paraphrased notes.

Qualitative analysis

Table 1: Main Themes Identified and Example Quotations

Pace of learning in an online environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lasted for two days - Should allow more time for reflection - Feedback rushed since students and tutors had short time to reflect. - Should provide more workshops
Learning style preference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compared with on-campus mode of project discussion, more opportunity for giving and receiving feedback from peers and tutors. - Feedback can be used to improve the written projects before submission
Immediacy of feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No reflections from the tutors in the discussion to give direction if students go to wrong direction or missed something
Method of content delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Templates and examples of posters uploaded - Guidance of what to do and when uploaded - Students upload their posters - Peers give positive feedback - Peers ask questions - Presenters respond to feedback and questions
Issues around navigating content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easily found due to clear instruction - Students were familiar with it. - posters and discussion all in one place - Stream
Synchronous communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - synchronous mode of interaction prevail
Asynchronous communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less used – only when sent their answers in Word document via email.



Students-student feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive, serious but rushed - Synchronous
Tutor-student feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Succinct - Both synchronous & asynchronous
Guest-student feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive and concise - Both synchronous & asynchronous
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uploading posters - Provide instantaneous feedback - Questions are repeated - Synchronous responses – no time for editing
General feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspiring, if not breathtaking - Enthusiasm and professionalism - Dedication - Every piece of work is unique - Fruitful discussion consisting of a lot of questions, comments and suggestions - Response to the group’s questions was positive, critical and comprehensive - Virtual classroom (it does sound real!). - Soon presenting posters at real conferences! - Posters are getting better and getting closer to perfection. - Proud of what I’ve seen so far!

Results and Discussion

Due to the lockdown restrictions, only one workshop was carried out prior to the virtual mini conference on the GC. The focus of which was on designing research posters and the online presentation of the posters as well as giving and responding to feedback. By the end of the workshop, it was evident that the majority of students felt that they were prepared and ready for the challenge. This may contributed to the ability of the well organised

workshop to properly introduce students to such online resources. The required application was pre-installed on the students' mobile phones and iPads since they participated in other online modules; this added to their sense of readiness. Although only one workshop was conducted on campus, constant support and access to the relevant materials prior to the mini virtual conference were provided online. By offering such support, it is hoped to use the virtual conference as a productivity tool and minimise issues that may occur during the online presentation.

The results allow us to challenge previous concerns that the introduction of online research poster presentation would lead to chaos and lack of control; it was rather well organised and successful. One must however consider the fact that students took it seriously because it was a part of the module assessment.

As it can be seen from their feedback, students appear to be more motivated and can work better with the technology available than without. This can in part be contributed to the notion that the online technology has contributed towards a change in the dynamics of the tutor-student relationship, with the tutor been better to interact with the student and not tied to their traditional place at the front of the discussion hall. In addition such an increase in motivation may also be attributed to the fact that participants are "Learners of Digital Era" which was of a great advantage when scheduling the online poster conference (Rapetti & Cantoni, 2010 cited in Creighton, 2018: 136). Unlike the face-to-face project discussion, there was no fear of being wrong as students were instructed to give only positive feedback. Hence, they felt they were in a safe environment which consequently reflected in the freedom to express their opinions and the creativity of poster designs.

Regarding the quality of the student's work, it is apparent that the quality of the students' work was competent particularly on the second day of the conference. This could be attributed to the feedback given by those involved. One of the tutors commented, "I noticed that posters are getting better and getting closer to perfection".

One of the principal goals of introducing the virtual mini conference was to give the students the opportunity to present and discuss their research projects during challenging times. Secondly, to increase the amount of collaborative learning taking place on GC, in the belief that by asking the students to



present their graduation projects online, would allow students to build upon their past experiences, while in turn improving their English communication skills through ask and answer question phase.

From the results we see that students view online mini conference as being preferable to traditional face-to-face discussion. When tested against a more traditional face-to-face discussion approach, it could then be determined not only if such an approach were more enjoyable and motivating, but also if it is more effective. The following include feedback regarding the use of virtual presentation and discussion of graduation projects. The views of fourth year students and their tutors as well as the guests appear to support the experience and consider it beneficial to them.

Feedback from Students

“Thank you for believing in us and for all your supportive words and positive evaluation. We appreciate your hard work. We DID it!”

“I really appreciate the unlimited support. I am going to miss this live class.”

“You made us able to continue despite the challenges and circumstances surrounding us.”

“We are definitely honored to have to have such amazing feedback and evaluation from our tutors and guests. We really appreciate your support.”

“We had many obstacles and we went through hard times due to covid, but we all worked hard so you can observe what are we capable of and our department deserves.”

Feedback from Tutors

“That you have responded to the group’s questions positively, critically and comprehensively is undeniable – you have gone to exceptional lengths to fill in the gaps, answer questions and take advice on board – and all with accompanying graphics - your efforts comprise a project in themselves!”

“There are some outstanding pieces of work which reflect your consistent and valuable contributions to this virtual classroom (it does sound real though).”

“I enjoyed taking part in your poster presentation and I am sure you will be

soon presenting posters at real conferences!”

“A medal of commitment and distinction is the least award to every student”.

Feedback from Guests

“I'd safely say that Sabratha University is setting an example of dedication and professionalism. A medal of commitment and distinction is the least award to every student and a member of staff.”

“I am impressed by each and every piece of work you have showed in this class. You've given me a lot of hope for the future.”

“What I have seen here is honorable, inspiring, if not breathtaking for the enthusiasm and professionalism you have shown. This is really very promising and indicative of a brighter future for the country and the new generations.”

“It was not just an ordinary work of students, with a stereotypical nature of merely fulfilling the assignment with the least possible effort as I have seen in traditional face-to-face project discussions where nothing was really worth much appreciation. But having seen your work, topics, feedback and discussions, I would very much like to express my deepest feelings of appreciation and thanks to all of you, students and members of staff.”

However there is a need to provide better support and workshops for both tutors and students.

Conclusion

Virtual poster presentation and discussion are new in Libya, and therefore research in this area is in its infancy. At an institutional level, no formal, standardised support was provided. Management within the Faculty of Arts and Education offered implicit, non-committal support, and adopted a 'wait-and-see approach'. Without support from management, the implementation of online learning and its contribution to improving students' performance during the project discussion and motivation will be hampered. Participation was undoubtedly high because the virtual conference was a part of formal assessment. This is immediately evident when looking at the student-to-student and student-to-tutor interaction. GC provided a platform for students



to interact when all the educational sectors all over the world was affected by COVID-19. This online interaction brought students and tutors together, who would not have communicated otherwise which in turn, improved motivation levels. In a country such as Libya, with limited opportunities to communicate in their L2, learners were also provided with a vehicle that facilitated communication even after graduation. This improvement in rapport between students and tutors then resulted in higher participation in the poster presentations within their groups. Motivation levels would improve further if support was provided at an institutional level. With the hope that the world will be back to normal, it is recommended that e-learning be incorporated into the current curriculum and it is time to view online learning not as a replacement or an alternative to current methodologies, rather as a complementary way to augment current learning methods. Further research would also benefit from a detailed analysis of student discourse over a longer period of time. A prolonged study over a period of an academic year would produce more reliable data that would help determine to what extent the online poster presentation can contribute to L2 acquisition.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations of this study which impact on the ability to draw concrete conclusions and generalisations from the data. Firstly, the categorisation of type of interaction is subjective and other researchers could interpret the data differently. Secondly, and possibly the most significant criticism is that in the online poster presentation and discussion, a student can have another student or a friend to interact with the tutors and students instead of them, and no one would ever know. This concern is also raised by Snekalatha, et al (2021:88) where participants in their study felt that “among the various tools online, viva voce through video conferencing was the most reliable, and cheating was difficult in this assessment form.” With the government support, software that uses technology to scan student’s biometrics could be implemented to ensure that students are who they say they are.

Despite the scarcity of research on online graduation project presentation and discussion, a platform for further research has been firmly established and it is hoped that in the future this can be developed.

The real business of case study is particularisation, not generalisation.

We take a particular case and come to know it well...There is emphasis on uniqueness...we emphasise placing an observer in the field to observe the workings of the case, one who records objectively what is happening but simultaneously examines its meaning and redirects observation to refine or substantiate those meanings. (Stake, 1995: 8-9)

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III

E-learning: Teaching and Assessment Strategies

Online tests as an alternative to paper-and-pen tests in the Libyan context: MA students' perspectives

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Abstract

In recent years, the pandemic of COVID-19 has attracted the attention to the importance of remote teaching and e-assessment, and has shed the light on the lack of e-learning in the Libyan context. This inspired the researchers to investigate the perspectives of 37 MA students (candidate teachers) about their experience in designing and taking online tests. This includes identifying their attitudes and beliefs towards online tests, the challenges they face and their suggestions about these difficulties. The data of the study was collected through an open-ended questionnaire forwarded via a Facebook group established for Language Testing subject, one of the subjects taken by the participants as part of their MA program. Their responses have revealed a mainly positive trend towards online tests, but the majority do not seem to support the idea of online tests as an ultimate alternative to traditional testing; explaining that each has its advantages and disadvantages. Moreover, some local technical and administrative barriers were reported, and, thus, teacher and student training courses for technology integration were recommended.

Key words Online tests, assessment, e-assessment, feedback, open-ended questions,



1. Introduction and Background

The rapid advances in information and communication technologies in the twenty first century have their apparent consequences on the teaching/learning process especially in higher education (Kereluik et al, 2013). For example, Internet, one of the technological tools, has enhanced learning and teaching in a variety of ways. Teachers, for instance, use internet to search for material and communicate with their students through emails, social media and forums. Moreover, supply of digital learning devices including the use of online live lectures and examinations has become popular due to the restrictions imposed by COVID 19 pandemic in the recent years (Schleicher, 2020).

In Libya, the use of technology and particularly the internet in the field of education still encounters some obstacles that are attributed to social, economic and political factors in spite of the modest and scattered efforts made at both individual and institutional levels. This study aimed to explore the possibility of using online tests in the Libyan context. An experiment was conducted that aimed at asking MA students (Candidate teachers) to design and try answering an online test using a specific software and then asking them to participate in responding to a questionnaire to elicit their attitudes, beliefs and reactions towards the experiment and other related issues.

2. Tests and assessment

Assessment as defined by Mousavi (2009, p. 35) is “appraising or estimating the level of magnitude of some attribute of a person”. In the field of teaching, assessment is a continuous process which includes a variety of methodological procedures including tests. So, tests are considered a subset of assessment. As Brown and Abeywickrama put it, “a test is a method of measuring a person’s ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain” (2018, p.3).

For a test to be qualified as a test it should be made up of items that require the testee to perform certain tasks which are to be measured according to rules (Bachman, 1990, pp. 18-19). Although the test aims at testing performance, the results imply testee’s competence in a given domain such as language skills. Therefore, “constructing a good test is a complex task involving both science and art”. (Brown and Abeywickrama, 2018 p. 4)



3. Online tests

The term ‘online tests’ is used to refer to a specific type of e-assessment, which may be used for a variety of purposes: diagnostic, formative and summative (Boitshwarelo et al. 2017). Online tests precisely refer to computer-assisted assessment in which the design, development and scoring of the test is automated (Davies, 2010; Gipps, 2005). In the recent years, the use of computers in assessment has seen a rapid growth and online tests are no exception; more students are sitting online exams nowadays (Stowell & Bennett, 2010). Electronic tests including small scale and large scale tests can be found in a large number of websites. These tests are used by tens of thousands of testees all over the globe. In these online tests, “students receive prompts...in the form of spoken or written stimuli from a preprogrammed algorithm and are required to type (or, in some cases, speak) their responses” (Ibid, p. 21).

Latest technological developments have enabled to create online tests that are more efficient. It is now possible to design online tests that are superior to traditional paper-and-pen tests. One reason for this is the involvement of corpus linguistics through which assessment tools including online tests have been designed; billions of manageable lexical items and sentences are listed into linguistic corpora and which can be retrieved for testing purposes (Ibid). A second reason is that computers are now capable of recognizing and scoring oral and written production (Jamieson, 2005) thanks to the use of sophisticated software a thing which was not previously possible.

4. Advantages and disadvantages of online tests

In addition to their advantages, online tests also have some drawbacks that need to be born in mind when using them. These advantages and disadvantages are classified by Gehringer and Peddycord III (2013) into the following categories: coverage, administration, grading, academic integrity, handwriting vs. coding and finally miscellany.

a. Coverage

In terms of coverage, online tests are advantageous in that they can include items that require a lot of background material. For instance, the examiner can, as part of the exam, ask students to search the internet for online documents to find information required for solving a problem. This is not possible,

however, with traditional paper-and-pen exams. As for the disadvantages, it is not possible to ask students to draw a diagram, for instance, for an answer as common computers do not support such tasks. Another complication is related to the difficulty of merging manually graded questions with automatically graded ones. Most of the testing software available in the market does not support such a feature. (Ibid)

b. Administration

Online tests are fast, reliable and more efficient with a large number of students. With online tests, teaching workload and administration is lightened (Frankl and Bitter, 2014). Online tests can include a timing feature which allows all students to have the same amount of time. Also, testees can have the test at different times and different places. Such flexibility might not be feasible with traditional exams. This however, may facilitate cheating. So, arranging for an online exam in a specific place and time may solve this problem (Gehringer and Peddycord III (2013).

As for the drawbacks related to administration of online tests, different browsers may display the test differently and some of them may get stuck during the exam. In addition, problems with saving the exam after finishing it may occur (Ibid). Network problems such as weak internet coverage in countries like Libya may be a hindrance.

c. Grading

With online tests objectivity is heightened and correction workload is lightened ((Frankl and Bitter, 2014). The automatic grading feature of online testing saves time which results in the possibility of having these exams conducted more frequently in shorter versions and with a large number of students. Moreover, objectivity of automatic grading in online tests cannot be denied with the added advantage of receiving immediate feedback. Online tests allow examiners and test designers to include questions which require writing a text for the answer. Giving feedback to such answers also saves time compared to that of traditional tests as teachers can just copy and paste feedback on common mistakes to a number of students instead of having to write it manually in every student's paper in a paper-and-pen exam (Gehringer and Peddycord III, 2013).



As for disadvantages, it is not easy to give partial score as answers which are partially correct will not be recognized by the software. Another disadvantage is that if the teacher is not himself the designer of the test, they may not be able to adapt grading to allow devoting more scores to certain questions based on their curricular value (Ibid).

d. Academic integrity

In terms of academic integrity, online test questions can be randomized to prevent cheating. Also, there are certain procedures that can be followed to inhibit cheating including invigilating online tests, locking down browsers to prevent communication and adding a feature to the test which forbids students from going back to already answered questions. However, this might be frustrating to those who want to check their answers after they finish answering all the questions. Also, invigilation will not be possible if students are taking the exams at home or outside class (Ibid).

e. Handwriting vs. coding

In this respect, typing involved in online tests is easier than manually writing the answer especially for students who are skilful in using computers. Furthermore, typed answers are easier for examiners to read than hand-written material typical of paper-and-pen exams. As for the drawbacks, automatic grading of short answers might not be effective as the system may discard correct answers including special characters that are not recognised and, thus, must be done manually. Finally, some browsers will not display the layout of questions properly which will cause reading them by testees difficult if not impossible (Ibid)

f. Miscellany

Regarding online tests being miscellaneous, there are a number of positive points including the fact that some students consider online tests to be less stressful than paper-and-pen tests. Also, privacy is more protected as students will not be able to see each other's grades. A third benefit of online tests is that they are considered friendlier to the environment than traditional tests due to their capability of saving paper. Another advantage is that these tests can be reused with other students and in other occasions if needed (Ibid).

As for the disadvantages, online tests can be stressful for some students.

Another disadvantage is the difficulty to have a quick look at the whole exam as in traditional ones in which students can see all their answers at a glance. A final disadvantage is related to changing the software or test system which results in difficulty in merging the old exams into the new system (Ibid).

5. Online tests related issues

Using online testing has attracted attention to some related issues. Three of these issues are discussed in the following subsections: cheating, feedback and targeting low cognitive levels (Boitshwarelo et al, 2017):

a. Cheating

Research has found that online test takers may be engaged in a variety of cheating actions. Students may think of online tests as open book tests and may use other devices such as laptops or mobile phones to search for answers to the test questions (Fontaine, 2012). Another problem is the possibility of having more than one person logging in with the same username simultaneously on different computers to help each other. Finally, cyber security threats such as hacking are another concern especially when students do the online test on their own computers which may lack high quality protection (Boitshwarelo et al, 2017).

To tackle these issues, an electronic invigilating system had been invented to digitally and visually monitor test takers during the test. Also, cheating is often prevented by including control features in the online test software itself such as specifying a time limit to answer a question, preventing going back to already answered questions, and randomizing test items. Other solutions to the problem of cheating include using multiple test versions, not using the same exam version in subsequent sittings of the test and careful invigilation (Ibid).

b. Feedback

Giving immediate feedback is one of the characteristics of online tests. However, this feature is sometimes restricted or even inactivated to minimise the possibility for cheating especially in tests of a summative nature. Lack of feedback in online tests may result in negative effects in that students will reinforce their incorrect answers thinking that they are the right ones (Fazio et al., 2010)



c. Targeting low level skills

Online tests are generally used to assess low-level cognitive skills such as knowledge and comprehension rather than high level cognitive processes such as application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation in spite of their capability to deal with a variety of levels in terms of cognition That is because of the excessive use of multiple choice questions in these tests which does not target assessing higher level cognitive skills (McAllister & Guidice, 2012). This negative effect can be reduced by having a variety of assessment tools to cover all types of cognition besides online testing.

6. Study design

The study is exploratory in nature aiming at investigating the potential of using online tests in the Libyan context in the field of learning and teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). To achieve this aim, 37 MA students in applied linguistics in the Libyan Academy in Tripoli were asked to design an online test using specific free software as part of their study of the Language Testing subject. Sufficient time was given to them as this is their first experience with designing online tests to help them become familiar with the software and its technological features. After submitting their designs, they were asked to respond to an online questionnaire to elicit data related to their beliefs, attitudes, feelings, impressions and reactions towards their experience of designing online test. According to Young (2016) questionnaires can be used to gather information about participants' attitudes, opinions, factual knowledge and their future intentions and aspirations amongst other things. The questionnaire of this study involved the use of 8 open ended questions focused on certain themes with an additional question asking students to feel free to add further comments regarding online tests. The use of open-ended question is favoured over closed ended questions due to time limitations and to give the participants more freedom to express themselves.

7. Data analysis and results

The study of the participants' responses showed that they had high perceptions about using online testing. Several excerpts from their answers to the questions are shown below:

1. How did you find the software? Was it user friendly? Did you face any problems while designing your test? Please explain?

This question was asked to elicit data about the participants' beliefs regarding the software and its features.

Candidate (9) wrote:

The software provided a simple way of designing a good online test. It is easy to browse, doesn't have annoying advertisements, directly accessed without redirections, and easy to register and log in. In addition, the design was simple and good-looking, most basic features are available for free, typing features are there, and feasible tools for inserting different types of tasks. Results are easily accessed and reported. There is also a good feature of printing the test in a pdf format.

Candidate (13) wrote:

It offers more flexibility and convenience than traditional examinations because it can be prepared and deployed at any time and from any location. Given the current move to remote work as a result of the pandemic, employing online testing software mitigates accessibility difficulties, ensures that no one is left behind, and ensures that your organization's learning process runs smoothly. Online testing tools can also make it easier to oversee and track your students' progress.

Candidate (22) wrote:

I found the software feasible and not complicated in terms of: 1. It is easy to browse and move on from one question into another. 2. The main page can be immediately accessed by both mobile phones or computers. 3. There are no external links. 4. There are no advertisements. 5. It is easy to register and make an account. 6. It is not cumbersome to design the questions and provide directions with each. 7. The basic common types of questions are available; cloze test, matching, MCQ, short answer question and gap filling. 8. The online test can be printed as a PDF. Regarding the problems, I could not manipulate the order of the word bank of the cloze test. In addition, it was not possible to integrate pictures, audios or videos.

Candidate (25) declared:

Like anything new, when you try it for the first time; it would be difficult but it gets easier by the time you use it.

2. Comparing between an online test and a paper-and-pen test, which do you think is superior in terms of design and use and why?



This question was asked to explore the candidates' attitudes towards the use of online testing compared to traditional testing, and whether they find it more advantageous.

Candidate (2) stated:

In my opinion, online tests are superior and better in terms of design and use, it has a lot of benefits such as: 1- The students can appear for exam from any location of their choice by using any electronic device such as mobile phones, computer, laptops, etc. 2- The students can decide the date and time to appear for the exam at their own convenience. 3- The tools which are available online for conducting online exams are extremely uncomplicated and can be used by anyone. 4- Online classes and exams help the institutions to cut down the costs spent on infrastructure such as classrooms, question papers, answer sheets, exam invigilators, etc.

Candidate (9) wrote:

Comparing the online assessment to a paper-and-pen one, the latter is more superior than the former. That is, although online assessment is becoming increasingly common recently, it is not widely available (used in every country). Traditional assessments remain the norm for more complex subjects; they are reliant on systems that have been proven to work for many decades.

Candidate (27) wrote:

Online test makes designing questions much easier. As it is auto organized, the designer only needs to focus on the content rather than the outline. Paper-to-paper test on the other hand, is easier to use because it doesn't require devices, electricity, or internet connection.

It is not a matter of which is superior, both of them complete each other and provide different experience.

Candidate (18) wrote:

Paper-and-pen tests are more common because they take place in the classroom. They are known to almost all teachers and in terms of designing, administering and scoring. They are also more familiar to students who got used to paper-and-pen tests from the very starting levels of education. On the other hand, online tests require special knowledge of technology use in order to design and use them.

Candidate (20) wrote:

I think a paper-and-pen is superior because: all teachers and students are familiar with it, no equipment, internet access or technical experience are required, and classrooms are always under supervision.

Candidate (11) contradicted:

We are in 2022, integrating technology in teaching and learning is a necessity for educational evolution. So, I do prefer online testing, it's easier to design and faster.

3. Compare the two types of tests: online and paper-and-pen tests in their accordance and harmony with the five principles of assessment: practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity and washback.

This question was asked to explore the participants' beliefs toward online tests and whether or not they are found more advantageous than the traditional ones. The responses were controversial between a supporter and an opponent to the notion of superiority to the online tests based on the main principles. The following are some of their responses.

Candidate (9) wrote:

Regarding practicality, it's easier in conducting, administering and invigilating than the traditional one, and for reliability, it's basically more reliable since most of the questions have (correct-incorrect) responses which are not affected by the subjectivity of the scorer. For validity, I believe this depends on the educator himself; whether he has the objectives in mind while conducting the test or not. Authenticity as well can be met; since the software provides space for audios and visuals to be inserted; authenticity can be met, but again, it depends on the test conductor. When it comes to washback, the software can provide exact feedback both from objective and subjective questions which can be used to reflect on teaching and learning.

Candidate (21) wrote:

1. practicality: for teachers, online tests are more practical than paper and pen tests in terms of: scoring (auto correction) turning evaluation back to students (individual feedback). lower cost even though the paid version is being used no paper consuming ability of visually impaired students to take the test independently with the help of the screen reader



ability of visually impaired teachers to check and correct their both visually impaired and sighted students tests independently with the help of the screen reader.

- 2. reliability: paper and pen are more reliable than online tests because online tests have: possibility of taking the test more than once possibility of cheating time limit- visually impaired students could not have the same time limit as sighted students.*
- 3. validity: paper and pen tests are more valid than online tests. the online tests are invalid in terms of content validity i.e., not being able to include aural comprehension and oral production skills.*
- 4. authenticity: paper and pen tests are more authentic than online tests because of the possibility of using pictures, audios and videos. washback: both of online tests and paper and pen tests provide washback, but online tests is considered more practical and less time consuming than paper and pen tests due to auto correction and individual feedback.*

Candidate (23) wrote

- 1. Practicality: both online and paper-and-pen tests can either be practical or impractical depending on the feasibility, availability and easiness of administering. Time, effort and cost are equal matters for both types of tests.*
- 2. Reliability: this also depends on the extent to which the test can yield similar results in different settings. But paper-and-pen tests may meet more reliability than online tests due to supervision. That is, cheating may be an issue which may cause an online test to yield unreliable results.*
- 3. Validity: this principle is given an equal concern. The validity of both online and paper-and-pen tests depends on the extent to which the test measures the intended content. Some of my colleagues' tests contained different contents with various levels. This may touch the validity of the test.*
- 4. Authenticity: online tests serve authenticity with the integration of audios and videos, but may lack the actual performance like speaking. Most test items can be decontextualized.*
- 5. Washback is expected more in paper-and-pen tests because of the more potentiality of giving feedback. Online tests may also provide feedback, but with less frequency.*

Candidate (31) wrote:

Online tests are more practical as it is easier to design, set and grade. Also, the grading process using online software makes it more reliable as it is done automatically. Using technology makes the process more authentic. Regarding the marking process, some students have bad font or keep erasing and crossing which it might make it difficult for the teacher to know the right answer, this makes the regular testing less reliable. The washback is directly given bias free which makes it more reliable and valid.

Candidate (36) wrote:

In terms of practicality, validity and washback, I think both tests have equal consideration. However, I think that reliability and authenticity are more challengeable for online tests because the chances for cheating are higher and test items are usually decontextualized. When I checked some of the online tests designed by my classmates, I found that some of them were not practical as they require more than the allocated time, 30 minutes. Also, some tests lack authenticity as MCQ items were not contextualized.

Candidate (5) who was neutral wrote:

I think it depends on the test designer. The test could be reliable, valid, practical, authentic and provides wash-back if the teacher took these five principles into account and apply them effectively and properly.

4. According to the experience you had with designing and answering online tests, what do you think the advantages are?

This statement of the questionnaire was to seek candidates' perspectives about the leverage of online tests and the benefits they provide.

Candidate (3) wrote:

It brings a great advantage, since candidates can choose where and when they want to do their tests. The candidate can easily skip questions, go back and review their answers with a click of the mouse in a way that the candidate can see his result published in a restricted way, by electronic means or even on the following day, which decreases waiting anxiety. Another great advantage that the online test has is the selection of functionalities that contribute to the enrichment of the experience of being tested. It can give you instant feedback. Automated online tests also give you the option of taking practice tests whenever you want.



Candidate (9) wrote:

Independence on location and time are some of the crucial advantages provided by the online exams for both the educational institutions and the students. online tests provide fast results and save time and effort. They are becoming much more convenient and interesting. They are also a must have due to current circumstances and the shut down because of Corona Virus so they are in such a case environmentally friendly.

Candidate (15) wrote:

The Advantages of using online tests may be: 1) saving time and effort in designing, administering and scoring 2) easiness to distribute and administer 3) easy to answer in terms of choosing items or filling gaps 5) learning to use technology which can be beneficial for other educational purposes 6) using pictures, audios and videos for more illustration

Candidate (30) wrote:

- 1. Security is high. By using the code, only those who administer and take the test can have access.*
- 2. Flexibility to take the test any time and at any place.*
- 3. The administrative burden is minimized.*
- 4. Scores are often instant and objective.*
- 5. It saves much time.*
- 6. It cuts the logistic cost down*

5. Are there any disadvantages in using online tests? If yes, what are they?

This question was stated to enquire about the drawbacks that may hinder the use of online tests and may make them less favourable to be an alternative for the traditional. These are some of the candidates' views:

Candidate (6) answered:

Yes, there are some disadvantages in using online tests; there is a high possibility for cheating as long as the test takers are not required to have their cameras facing them and that no one is in charge of observing them. Another disadvantage is that the power may cut off while conducting the test,

thus causing some confusion to the test-taker. Also, some students do not work well under the pressure of time, they feel stressed and thus their performance will get affected.

Candidate (12) answered:

Yes, there are some disadvantages listed below: 1) cheating (in unsupervised setting) 2) online tests require technical experience and special training which most teachers and students may lack 3) lack of accessibility to internet in some situations 4) poorly designed online tests may be misleading and could yield unreliable results 5) speech recognition software may not be very accurate for testing speaking.

Candidate (37) added:

- *Sometimes there is a high opportunity for cheating.*
- *Open-ended questions still require manual reviewing.*
- *Time crunch makes students assess their speed which results in poor understanding.*

6. What are the obstacles and difficulties that hinder the use of online tests in the Libyan context?

This question was stated to find out the obstacles that may hinder the use of online tests locally. This is one of the pillars of this study. Their responses highlighted many issues which should be taken into consideration when conducting online tests. These are some of their answers:

Candidate (8) wrote:

The Libyan mentality is resistant to changes (this is my own belief through experience in teaching) even if you find a chance to use online tests you will face challenges to persuade the supervisors.

Candidate (24) wrote:

In my perspective, besides the poor Libyan infrastructure, there's some other factors like the educators' reluctance to use technology. Many of them are satisfied with the traditional way of teaching and not willing to make any additional effort.

In the Libyan context, there is an absence of the suitable conditions



for online testing such as a good internet connection, electricity and the availability of working devices.

Candidate (29) wrote:

Some issues might hinder the use of online tests in the Libyan context, such as: electricity cut, poor internet connection/ no internet access, lack of coverage...etc. Some students may not have facilities such as internet and computers in order to access the website. Also, some students do not have a good background about using technology and software websites. Additionally, it would be challenging if not difficult or even possible to join when technical issues appear which are beyond the control.

Internet connection has always been one of the major drawbacks of online exams. Connectivity can be a serious disadvantage of online testing. A student's internet connection either in a school lab or at home can drop at any time for various reasons.

Candidate (33) wrote:

The major obstacle is related to internet accessibility and availability. Most educational institutions do not afford for internet access with unlimited use. This issue also concerns students, most of whom may lack internet facilities. Another problem is the lack of training and experience with technology for most of both testers and testees. A third issue is the potential for cheating in unsupervised setting, which may decrease the tendency for using online tests in the Libyan context.

Candidate (37) asserted:

Most of the Libyan schools and colleges lack important facilities, like laboratories. If the teachers would use the online test at the educational institutions, they won't find where and how. If the students are asked to do it from home, there's a high possibility of cheating.

- 1. There is a significant number of teachers and students who are technophobes and not computer literate.*
- 2. Poor infrastructure. Most of the Libyan universities and schools are not provided with enough equipment and a good internet connection.*
- 3. Lack of confidence.*
- 4. Lack of knowledge and skills of designing online tests.*
- 5. Teachers need more administrative support to develop their technical skills.*
- 6.*

Cultural issues may be a negative factor. Usually, Libyan students from conservative regions especially females do not trust in giving their identities online.

7. What do you suggest to overcome these difficulties and to solve problems related to the application of online tests as an assessment tool in Libya?

This inquiry was raised to elicit some possible solutions to solve problems related to the application of online assessment in Libya.

Candidate (34) wrote:

The government should provide every school with an electricity generator and free internet access, therefore, if the power cuts; there would be a substitution. Additionally, building more electrical poles, fixing the power socket, using Libya's oil wealth to provide energy, or even using solar panels for energy!

Creating security plans in all Libya cities to provide protection for the ICT infrastructure, which is indispensable to guarantee the successful implementation of E-learning.

Candidate (8) wrote:

To overcome these difficulties, I may recommend the following: 1) teacher and student training courses for the use of technology in teaching and learning 2) providing educational institutions with internet access in a limited accessibility (access to limited websites and programs to avoid misuse) 3) setting criteria, standards and rubrics for designing, administering and scoring online tests to ensure more validity and reliability 4) conducting these tests under supervision 5) teach students and encourage them to focus more on learning than on passing a test (to decrease tendency to cheat)

Candidate (23) suggested:

- 1. Provide universities and schools with internet facilities for teachers and students' access.*
- 2. Carry out several workshops about integrating technology in language testing.*
- 3. Continuous attempts to promote knowledge and skills of designing and using online tests.*
- 4. Cultural and educational institutions should work hand in hand to raise awareness among Libyan teachers and students emphasizing that online tests can*



be trustworthy and safe.

8. *How was your experience with designing and using online test in Language Testing course? Do you like the idea of designing and using online test? Do you recommend its use to Libyan teachers? Will you use it yourself as a teacher?*

All participants have experienced using online tests. Below are some of their experiences which showed a consensus about its superiority.

Candidate (5) wrote:

I find it enjoyable. It's like having a template; everything is set for you; all you need is the content that matches the objectives. I'm undoubtedly going to use it in my future courses and I do recommend it to be used by other teachers too.

Candidate (13) confirmed:

Online test is a new and exciting experience for me. The application is very simple to use and very useful to help teachers to carry out activities in different ways, and with more technological innovation. Easy test-maker has never presented me with flaws in its operation. Really this is one of the factors by which Easy test-maker is my favourite academic assessment tool.

It was a very beneficial experience to learn to use technology in language testing. It added some variety to the field of testing. I do recommend its application in the Libyan context to enhance the teaching and learning process. The present time is the time of technology, and integrating it will be a good choice. I like the idea and will use it in my teaching career.

Candidate (37) declared:

This was my first time designing an online test. It was so beneficial that I'm no longer sceptical about my abilities in integrating technology. Now, I have a more positive attitude and belief in this regard. This experience made me shed the lights on another aspect of language testing I did not use to pay much attention to. I believe that Libyan teachers, including me, should wait no more to use online tests as they can be a reliable assessment tool and enhance the process of teaching and learning.

8. Discussion and conclusion

The technology advancements in the recent decades have provided a wide

scope of opportunities for instruction and evaluation. Until recently, these advantages of technology could be neglected as relying on the traditional ways of teaching and assessment was an option. Many instructors, students, and institutions could have limited skills and hardly utilise the numerous online education programmes created until 2020; nevertheless, due to the COVID-19 epidemic, everyone was forced to use online networks, regardless of their preferences. Those with prior experiment in this profession adjusted easily, while the remaining found it challenging. The usage of online learning and e-assessment can, thus, no longer be delayed, as seen by recent occurrences. Instead of avoidance, there should be a concentration on eliminating the drawbacks and paving the way for remote education.

This study has investigated the role of e-assessment and examined the degree to which students in higher education in Libya are prepared to accept it. It also aimed at exploring the potential barriers they may encounter.

A positive tendency towards using online tests was revealed into the participants' responses as they stressed the significance of utilizing the Internet for academic purposes. Most of the participants considered the implemented testing software user-friendly. Even those who mention some difficulty in use justified their answers with computer illiteracy and confirmed its feasibility and manageability as they got used to it. This is in harmony with Kereluik et. al.'s view that advances in information and communication technologies have positively affected the teaching and learning domain (2033).

Regarding the five main principles of testing which are: practicality, reliability, validity, authenticity and washback (Brown 2018), the responses varied but the majority agreed on the superiority of online tests in terms of their practicality explaining that they are easier to administer, do not require much preparation for setting, printing and invigilating. There is also more reliability in the sense that most questions have either correct or incorrect responses which prevents the subjectivity of the scorer. This finding is consistent with views expressed by Frankl and Bitter (2014) who maintained that online tests, unlike traditional ones, are flexible, practical and reliable.

The validity is believed to count mainly on the conductor of the test; while authenticity and washback did not seem to be supported by most of the participants in online tests; their responses indicate the fluctuation of the latter principals since the items of online tests are usually discrete and



decontextualized making the online tests less authentic and providing less meaningful feedback. This is consistent with a finding made by Fazio et al. (2010) and who maintained that online tests lack feedback. According to the respondents, lack of authenticity can be solved by using sophisticated software which allow using audios and visuals to create a context, and by avoiding the excessive use of multiple-choice questions which does not provide efficient feedback. In this respect, Gehringer and Peddycord III (2013) suggested that online tests can include more authentic tasks including asking students to search the internet for information to solve a problem, for example.

Another focus of this study is the consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of online tests. The majority agreed on the feasibility, flexibility and accessibility of online tests; adding that it also saves time and can provide immediate feedback. On the other hand, the susceptibility to cheating, the requirement of training, the inaccuracy of some recognition software and the technophobia (technology resistance) of some educators were criticised. These disputes might be even more challenging in Libya as a developing country. These advantages and disadvantage in addition to others were also mentioned by Gehringer and Peddycord (2013).

The reported responses highlighted the paucity of conditions for online testing which include the poor infrastructure, the computer illiteracy and the reluctance to use technology. As a suggestion for overcoming these challenges the participants emphasized the importance of appealing to the higher authorities as the country settles to enhanced infrastructure and provide stable Internet connection in the educational institutions along with providing CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) and broader technological training which should include both teachers and students.

When asked about their attitudes and beliefs towards online tests, almost all the participants were affirmative to their significance and usefulness stating that they save time, add variety to education and can be enjoyable for both teachers and learners. Those who were conducting an online test for the first time reflected on this experience as no longer being sceptical about integrating technology for assessment which again highlights the importance of technical training. Providing necessary training for Libyan teachers and students to acquaint them with the necessary knowledge and skills of using computers and their application was emphasised by a study made by Ahmed (2018).

The discussion above indicates that the idea of using online tests mainly gains positive tendency and is believed to be beneficial and convenient; however, it still represents a new experience in the Libyan context and the conditions are not very adequate yet for its implementation in the current situation, but hopefully it gets a brighter future as the country settles and the infrastructure evolves.

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Smooth Mentoring and Effective Learning Through Interactive White Board (IWB) Technology: A (Narrative) Review

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Abstract

Technology is, essentially, invading the teaching and learning domain in the modern world of education. Smart Board or Interactive White Board [IWB] is one of the advanced educational tools adapted for the classroom learning environment across the globe. Recent surveys conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, 2012 in the U.S. public schools and the European Commission, 2013, across Europe have found that, more or less, all instructional classrooms have been equipped with computers along with internet facility. Therefore, the need for the classroom computerization for better and more effectively interactive learning must be acknowledged and implemented in developing countries, in spite of the emergence of several real time constraints subsequently found regarding its funding, installation and maintenance as well as training the Language teachers. Therefore, the impetus of this study remains with the idea of spreading the concept of Smart Board teaching and learning in the academic communities as well as institutions by discussing elaborately. In order to achieve this goal, several articles relevant to the topic have been thoroughly studied and analyzed for the latest review. Eventually, the current review has found that the merits and demerits of IWB



need to be further explained to the mentors as well as learners, those who are engaged in the active classroom environment. In addition to this background work, a brief interactive workshop is also designed to make the study more realistically effective and motivational. In this context, the outcome of this study would bring awareness among teachers as well as learners about the advantage of using smart technology to compete with their relevant peer groups while experiencing a smooth and effective academic progress. It also enables them to enhance their skills rapidly and consistently, while keeping abreast with the ever growing technology and its application. This study will be helpful not only to the mentors and the learners inside the classroom but also to everyone else, who is involved in digital technology as well as smart and independent learning process that prevails in an absolutely mechanized schooling environment.

Key words: Mentoring and learning – Digital Technology – Smart Board/
Funding - Rapid growth and Prevalence



Introduction

Smart board is a magical mirror in the world of ‘classroom teaching’, descended to enhance the mentoring skills smoothly and intelligently. A digital classroom, otherwise, a place where both the teacher and learners together interact with a transparently tinted wall of light and energy displaying various colorful events in a sequence while holding the entire learning session under a spell. Thus, it is the power of technology, which is leading the human race in all walks of life, apparently, in the Language Learning field. Indeed, according to Kern (2006, p. 200), technology-based language teaching is not a method but is integrated into various pedagogical approaches. Hence, the integration of various technologies in pedagogy eventually makes it a place for creativity and experimentation with the involvement of teachers and learners spontaneously. Barbara Gruber (2011) investigated initiative into the classrooms, she argued that, the successful integration of a new technology is the goal of any educational technology’s initiative. Hence, the advent of Interactive White Board (IWB), one of the many Information and Communication Technology [ICT] tools, replacing the traditional blackboard

with a chalk, caused a revolutionary change in the pedagogy especially in the learning of a foreign or a second language. For instance, certain studies focused specifically on the changes regarding ELT, which revolutionized the Language Classroom. Dudeney & Hockly (2012), since the advent of IWBs in the beginning of 2000s in ELT classroom, they have become very effective teaching tools. According to Hockly (2013), the introduction of IWBs into ELT in several contexts was to realize an urgent need to keep up to date as well as to be known as having the latest equipment and were looked at as the latest ‘must have’ teaching tool. On the other hand, Young Learners (YLS) can enjoy stories on the IWB while listening to the characters speaking in the L2 context; they can visualize, join in with songs physically touch and move objects on the screen, play interactive games or work with written texts, all of which strengthen their L2 development (Coyle, Yanez & Verdu, 2010).

However, this systematic narrative review, apparently, focuses on three aspects of IWB / Smart-board use in the classroom. They are:

- 1) The revolutionary changes occurring in the Education Technology as a result of the dawn of IWBs/Smart-boards. Charles Clarke, the British Government’s former Secretary of State for Education and Skills was quoted to have said, every school of the future will have an interactive whiteboard in every classroom, technology has already revolutionized learning’ (Arnott, 2004).
- 2) Teachers’ competence and compatibility in terms of using technology in the classroom full of Tech-Gen. It is argued that the IWB generally enables teachers to integrate ICT into their classroom. It is explicitly claimed that the board can offer them challenges and opportunities’ (Beauchamp, 2004: 327). This is generally beneficial and results in more professional development (Somyurek et al., 2009). It is also stated that the IWB can help with developing young learners’ reading and writing at a basic level and it can also be used to test their understanding (Becta, 2003).
- 3) Motivation levels of Teachers and Learners while engaged in a digital classroom with several learning tools and techniques. According to Kennewell & Morgan (2003: 67), IWBs improve standards in the classroom and increase motivation.

Eventually, the outcome of this study would bring awareness among



teachers as well as learners about the advantage of using smart technology like IWB to compete with their relevant peer groups while experiencing a smooth and effective mentoring. It also enables them to enhance their skills rapidly and consistently, while keeping abreast with the ever growing technology and its application. This study will be helpful not only to the mentors and the learners inside the classroom but also to everyone who else is involved in digital technology and computer based smart education.

Theoretical Background

Primarily, English Language Teaching [ELT] was built basically on behavioristic approaches to learning, fundamental approaches to linguistics and audio-lingual teaching methods on the learning platform. As we know that the concept of teaching entailed on repetitive language maneuvers centered on stimulus, response and reinforcement. This substantiated to be a good base for the advancement of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) since the first major developments in CALL can be found in the 1950s. One of the earliest and the most important developments in CALL is the introduction of Language Laboratories, during 1950s (Levy 1997:p14). During the late 1970s and 1980s however, the approach to language learning had altered. It was nowadays prejudiced by humanistic methods which concentrated on the individual learner.

The aim of language learning/teaching was to cultivate communicative skills. Since the use of monotonous drills was any longer not in focus, individuals examined the significance of CALL. However, the entry of the personal computer in the 1980s led to CALL evolving even further. Since it was technically promising at the time for language teachers to do CALL programming themselves in a wider range, the technology could be developed to suit the more unique methods to learning which were widespread at the time (Levy 1997;p21). Technological changes during the 1990s were of course highly subjective to the emergence of the internet, completely changing the way of working with computers, both in and outside the language classroom. However, the 1990s manifested a change in teaching with technology. Since this time, language teaching has been gradually influenced by socio-constructivist theory, focusing on socialization in the language. The early period of web knowledge made it thinkable to involve in activities influenced by this pedagogical standpoint, such as web quests, where the teachers create tasks for the students to answer using the internet. Eventually, this Web transition has headed to the evolution of teaching tools that are more

collaborative and interactive, such as the IWB. It is around this time that one starts to hear references to Information and Communication Technology(ICT), which is defined by (Castro Sanchez & Aleman 2011) as something that is transforming the pedagogy from a teacher-centered environment to a student-centered learning.

Teaching with ICT

The main reason for being interested for educators and tech-facilitators in ICT in English teaching is that the young learners today grow up in a world, where the use of technology has become a tool in their routine living. What needs to be kept in mind is that younger generations are different to older groups of learners, especially when it comes to the field of technologies (Prensky, 2001:3). The younger generation, the pupils of today, have grown up using computers and other devices their whole lives, which, apparently, would affect not only their natural ability of using technology at ease but also their way of judging about how the technology should be used to season their ability of comprehension. Prensky (2001:3) again, calls this generation digital natives, comparing their knowledge of technologies to a language which they speak fluently. Older generations that are not brought up with the same technologies can be described as digital immigrants, and even though they may learn to speak the language, the younger generations will continuously ensure their dominance in using the modern technology and the its tools (Prensky 2003:1). However, technology should be brought into the language classroom to be a part of teaching as well, and not only exist in the world outside of school. It is rational to approve that the technology will be a natural part of education in the future. It is also comprehensible to realize that technology is making a room for new prospects, hence opening up new ways of teaching English.

There are a considerable number of teachers with a negative attitude, as Dudeney and Hockly (2007:9) have discovered, in spite of many apparent reasons for language teachers to be interested in using ICT in their classrooms. This attitude is believed to be welling up from some sort of anxiety and a lack of enough awareness and application skills in the area. Teachers may not be having ample time for planning and drilling to be able to apply the digital equipment as part of their teaching. Teachers should, certainly, find it worthwhile to be aware of new technology in their way to uncover the new



and useful resources that they can use in schooling. There are many different ways of using ICT in the classroom, and there are extensive numbers of tools that could be used, one of them being the IWB. The devices that young people use are most often used in their spare time, outside of school. They might not be aware of the fact that they could actually be used for educational purposes, or how to do that. There is a difference in knowing how to use computers to, for example, play online games or communicate with friends, and how to use it as a resource for schoolwork. For this reason, teachers need to know what resources there are to use, and teach their students how to go about incorporating this usage into their daily routine. In this way one might be able to integrate technology as a regular part of people's educational life as well as in their spare time (Dudeny et al. *ibid*:2ff).

As mentioned above, the recent developments of technology are sure to have had an impact on the teaching of English. Dudeny and Hockly(2012) conclude that the materials used in teaching are in fact affected by the change in technology. The development of ICT has gone through different stages and the arrival of IWB is one of those revolutionary changes having a significant effect on ELT.

Interactive White Boards (IWBs / Smart-boards) Intro

The IWBs / Smart-boards technology is considered as more advanced as well as more effective technological tool being used in many English learning classrooms. IWBs work well together with the new types of course books and seem to be built to have a significant impact on English language teaching. One aspect that Dudeny et al (2013:538) suggest in their article is that IWBs are likely to help ICT become a normal, integrated part of English teaching. It implies that ICT tools will be used on daily basis in a very natural way, in exactly the way as one might presume the teaching to include a pen or a book. This means that simply using a classroom equipped with an IWB does not have a direct effect on students' learning. There is also a risk that the teacher uses and controls the board without inviting the learners to use it as well. According to Reedy, even though the tool had the potential to be used very effectively, which was shown in some lessons, most teachers unfortunately felt the problems were greater than the solutions. One reason for this could be the lack of training that the teacher had prior to the installation of the IWBs (Reedy, 2008). In other words, the interactivity features of the board were

hardly used by the teachers in Reedy's study.

However, as several earlier studies have shown, not knowing how to use the board is, obviously, one of the predominant reasons that some teachers and researchers are negative towards the IWB. Many teachers do not have the right training and knowledge of how to integrate an interactive white board as an everyday part of their teaching, in addition to merely using it as a data-show or as a normal white wall for mere writing and explaining. Cutrim Schmid and Whyte (2014:16) describe different levels of interactivity in the classroom. The form of interactivity depends on how the board is used, which Cutrim Schmid and Whyte connect to how familiar the teacher is with using the board. They differentiate between technical interactivity and conceptual or enhanced interactivity. The former is when the IWB is used mostly as a presentational tool and occasionally allowing the students to come up to the board to solve a problem, usually by moving visual elements one spot to another. They associate this type of interactivity with teachers who are inexperienced in using IWBs. A teacher that has more experience in using IWBs may use it in a way that creates what (Cutrim Schmid & Whyte) call an enhanced type of interactivity. This is when all participants in the classroom can use the board effectively, for example in connecting to the board with their individual smartphones or tablet. Cutrim Schmid & Whyte (2014) examine different activities for which the board can be used, in order to provide inexperienced teachers with an idea of how to move from technical to enhanced interactivity around the board.

Methodology

This systematic narrative review is carried out following qualitative approach to analyze various previous works. This type of research may review both qualitative and quantitative or their combination of the aspects of the research area (Bryman, 2011; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). The study throws light on the origin and growth of technology with an impetus on Education, more precisely, Computer Assisted Language Learning [CALL] and other emerging trends in the line of English Language Teaching [ELT] with a special focus on IWBs.

Narrative Review and Discussion

Now a days, the synergic ability of the integrated learning has been



acknowledged worldwide in many academies, especially, in the field of EFL and ESL. ICT has become a regular part of English Language Teaching, and the authors suspect that ICT tools will be an even more natural and integrated part of teaching before long, according to Dudeney & Hockly (ibid). The language teachers without ICT skills, apparently, will be on the back foot while they cannot make enough progress in smart and smooth mentoring in a classroom full of young learners with better technological tools in their hands. A number of previous studies, conducted for several years, suggest that the technology is being used for refined transmission-style teaching, which is against the constructivist approaches (Serow & Callingham, 2011, p 161). The mentor's role has often been defined as one of 'orchestration', and this harmonious correlation is a dominant one in smooth and soft exposure of the management of structures in the classroom situation in order to produce a motion or 'performance' which heads to learning.

As part of smart mentoring, teachers can use interactive whiteboards for wonderful interactive multimedia presentations for an entire class, merging many types of digital material just at a click, or they can use the panels with only a pair of learners simultaneously. According to Doe (2010, p30), the demonstrations and student work can be interpreted and saved. Interactive Whiteboards can be used with learner response structures, graphical presenters, podcasts, so on and so forth. It is obvious that in any case, If IWBs are used properly, they could even be the teaching tools that can compete for students' attention with TV, games, and other exciting external visual activities. However, the integration of education technology and its application such as IWB can possibly upsurge the interactivity between tutors and pupils, improve student engagement, providing inspiration and amusement, and at the end of the day that would also increase students' success. Therefore, if the teacher is able to realize that Interactive Whiteboard could improve instruction and interaction, there by outcome could be optimistic in terms of students learning (Essig, 2011, p41). Furthermore, from the perspective of ELT, as stated in a number of studies, teaching with the IWB may facilitate the delivery of material. According to Gerald et al. (1999), this happens in three ways: 1) the IWB can present linguistics and socio-cultural elements, it is supportive of interactivity in the classroom, and it can help the teacher organize their materials. 2) It is also concluded that the technology is useful to students 'acquisition of language (ibid.) 3) lastly, it also uses highlighter

tool to highlight nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. Kennewell and Higgins (2007: 207) further clarify that the status of the IWB is different from those of other new technologies.

Traditional Language Management System (Blackboard Schooling)

The current review about the use of Smart-board / IWB for smooth mentoring in HEIs, essentially, would be able to provide a comprehensive outlook towards the methodology and technique in a language laboratory equipped with all state of art technology. However, it is quite important to maintain that while 20th century changes in the field of educational technology are being studied, the customary Learning Management System [LMS] must also be reviewed, retrospectively. The history of Blackboard classroom endured necessarily the same until the 1960s with school teachers exhausting themselves through the slate blackboards similar to their ancestors. As Chang mentioned, since 1997, Blackboard is a licensed LMS, and one of the most common marketable LMSs embraced in the HEIs (Chang, 2008). Blackboard, however, bids a collaborative learning aid that can be improved in order to meet the learners' instructive requirements. That's how Blackboard has been embraced by the HEIs for its simplicity, ubiquity, and user-friendliness.

According to Hill (2014), in his recent study, the Blackboard was the leading giver and provider of the LMS for all higher education institutions with larger than (800) enrolment. Furthermore, Mohsin and Shafeeq (2014) indicated that the EFL instructors have favorable perceptions on the applications of Blackboard for teaching the English language skills. Thus, the most instructors view the everlasting advantages of Blackboard and its applications as a structured platform of E-Learning that assists promoting the instructor-student relationship in a certain educational program to provide as an easy process of learning and teaching even after the Smart-board / IWB invasion. Some critics, however, maintain that the smoothness of the whiteboard makes it harder for young students to use it when writing and that the minor resistance of the old-fashioned blackboard is easier. The development of dust-free chalk also makes blackboards smarter to many. Whatever may be its avatar, it's clear that the blackboard, because of its low-tech efficacy, might remain a chief teaching aid of the classroom against the IWBs.

The traditional blackboard has been a focal point of the classroom for centuries though, the old-fashioned slate and chalkboard are becoming a



thing of the past with the new technological innovations. Therefore, there is also an absolute need to take on the challenging shift in the educational technology by the invention of umpteen teaching and learning devices such as: Computers, Mobiles, Audio-visual players, floppies, CDs, DVDs, Data-show projectors [PPP], Digital Walls [IWBs] and their supporting accessories etc.. Professional educators in HEIs, especially who are considered to be new to the technology, must be able to coup up with the application of the technology through various teaching aids digitally designed.

Teachers' Attitude

This study also focuses on the attitude of the 'transitional teachers', who are struggling between the traditional chalkboard and the ever advancing computerized teaching. Traditionalist educators, while using teaching aids with advanced technology, must not forget the lessons from the past, maintaining an equilibrium between the new methods of teaching and learning while upholding the everlasting principles of education. The latest informative equipment can be part of a complete structure for a permanent tutelage. On the other hand, however, one of the major grievances about interactive whiteboards is that they are frequently underutilized by ill trained or technically-challenged mentors. These teachers might write a few problems or assignments on using IWBs, but fail to utilize any of their other features. Similarly, a number of educators would merely rather use a blackboard or non-interactive whiteboard than a high-tech presentation. Consequently, this gap between the technical knowledge/ skill and application must be filled. Specifically, in case of ELT faculty 'to be technically literate' can neither be avoided nor escaped while the 'target learning population' is well aware of the thoroughly computerized classroom ambiance. Considering the possible advantages of IWBs, teachers can enrich their instructions with various instructional strategies and techniques and, therefore, increase students' attention, motivation, participation, and collaboration by means of an electronic whiteboard otherwise IWB / Smart-board (Levy, 2002; Beauchamp & Parkinson,2005). Therefore, to meet the needs of the young learners Language Teachers ought to realize the significance of the use of the IWB / Smart-board technology with a positive attitude rather than compromising with the lack of technical awareness. Smith (et al., 2005) confirmed this by mentioning that lessons with IWBs have a positive effect on students' motivation, which ensures successful learning.

IWBs as powerful visual tools

IWBs are, apparently, powerful visual tools for teachers in the ELT classroom. A smart-board can be employed in an interactive classroom, in many ways to make it an effective learning place. Active use of IWBs in schoolrooms ensures several benefits in the course of teaching and learning (Türel, 2010). Using interactive whiteboards, Teachers can build academic modules that integrate audiovisuals, moving figures, and online information to assist elucidating tough material and to maintain learners involved in a play-way. Positive teaching may be a sure-shot outcome of many IWB features along with acoustic instructional strategies (Brown, 2003; Glover *et al.*, 2007).

The current review realized that there are quite a number of researches, that have defined the salient features and functions of IWBs, which can be integrated with the teaching. As Türel (2010) defined, teachers can implement diverse stratagems and practices while using IWBs by bearing in mind the environment of the learning context together with learners' requirements and comforts, and technical conveniences. Hence, the following citations would be certainly useful in understanding the IWB's instructional stratagems as well as its positive influence on learners' learning:

- ❑ *Advantageous for tactile learning as the learner can touch and feel the material* (Bell, 2002)
- ❑ *Various advanced media scrutiny important for optical learning* (Bell, 2002)
- ❑ *Revealing blurred or covered portion of an image by highlighting or screen-shade* (Beauchamp & Parkinson, 2005)
- ❑ *Fixing the errors in the content in the slides* ((Beauchamp & Parkinson, 2005)
- ❑ *Playing games* (Smith et al., 2005)
- ❑ *Flipping back and forth to review previous content providing reviewing techniques better for understanding* (Levy, 2002; Smith et al., 2005)
- ❑ *Activities such as: collaborative writing, collaborative problem solving, shared reading, peer teaching, and discussion and brainstorming illustratively* (Becta, 2006)
- ❑ *Providing support through several features like zoom feature for the students of visually impaired and other special needs* (Smith, 2008)



- ❑ *Annotating important content and coloring and highlighting* (Türel & Demirli, 2010)
- ❑ *Multiple activities like disguising and disclosing, matching items, and drag and drop activities* (Türel, 2010)

Now a days, the multimedia competence of interactive whiteboards also permits instructors to deliver information in numerous means. For instance, if a teacher is doing a lesson on Libya, he can show his students a map from Google Earth, PowerPoint graphs on city populations, and a video about historically popular tourist sites, sand dunes and Oasis' in Sahara desert, Manmade River, Vegetation in and around Libya. Interestingly, the teacher can become a weather reporter by showing the weather system locally and globally as well. This kind of presentation of a topic with live illustrations will draw the attention of the learners towards the mechanism of the IWBs and its interactive features so that they can voluntarily come forward take an active part in multi-tasking. As a result, students can interact in a variety of ways with whiteboards, including writing and marking on them, handling objects in matching or organizing games etc.. Many teachers consider these kinds of exchanges keep students attentive and more engaged throughout the lessons.

Smart-board advantages

The present analysis has realized quite a number of advantages of using IWBs in the ELT classroom as they have been thoroughly observed in several previous studies led by a number of linguists and non-linguists. The following are a few but key revelations regarding the merits of the Smart-board use on the ground.

They are:

- ◆ *Using with voting system, document cameras, and electronic microscopes* (Bell, 2002)
- ◆ *Student's participation, communication, and teamwork in a renewed learning environments can probably be encouraged by the educators* (Smith et. al. 2005)
- ◆ *Community interface will be Boosted* (Türel & Demirli, 2010)
- ◆ *It could easily capture the attention of students* (Türel, 2010)

- ◆ *The use of audiovisual teaching tools facilitate easy and quick learning and remembering (Türel, 2010)*
- ◆ *Elongated electronic touch screen (Türel. Y.K. & Johnson . T. E., 2012)*
- ◆ *Classroom discourse exchanges can be chronicled and saved like (PDF) document, slides of PPP, or Recorded movie file of entire lesson. (Türel. Y.K. & Johnson . T. E., 2012)*

This study also noticed another benefit in addition to all the above advantages that IWBs allow teachers to showcase projects that students have created by using data-show device on a big screen. This kind of assignments may look more exciting on a large display, and most of the students enjoy seeing their work put on a show in this fashion get motivated.

Interactive whiteboards, though a costly affair (between \$2000 and \$15,000 each), are worth the price if the institutions look at their benefits and know how to use the smart-boards and other relevant electronic tools. The classrooms, though, technologically poorly equipped or totally lack of tech-tools can always be used. However, it must be realized by the funding authority of academic institutions that reasonable spending on the technology might help students learn quicker and better as well as promising returns on their investment. According to Smith (et al., 2005: 99) though the IWB can be seen as expensive, it is regarded as revolutionizing learning to the extent that the UK government has been investing intensively in the equipment.

Critical view of IWBs use

The current analysis also views at the harsh side of IWB's usage in the classroom, if the technology is not properly and reasonably used. There are different kinds of activities conducted during the teaching and learning event for which the IWB, as well as other ICT tools, can be used. Therefore, comparing technology to other common tools, one can see that it can serve different purposes, depending on the way the teacher chooses to use them. In the technical aspect, IWBs could act, precisely, either as substitutes for existing tools, or they can be used in completely new ways. In the case of the IWB, it is possible to see that these tools could be used in either way. A teacher could choose to use the IWB as an ordinary white board, using it for writing down notes for the class. Furthermore, the IWB could also be used for a number of activities, including doing exercises (as for example from a



course book) to practice language (Hockly, 2012).

However, some research shows that the IWBs are dominantly used for presentations or as a textbook, rather than as a learning tool by itself. Miller and Glover (2010:1), state that for the interactive whiteboard to have any effect, one will need to make a change in pedagogy from a teacher-centred to a more interactive culture between the technology and the participants. A risk otherwise is that the board is used merely as a visual aid, diminishing its whole purpose. There is also another common criticism against using IWB, an issue raised by Gavin Dudeney among others. His argument is that the IWB is a far too expensive tool, seeing as one could instead use a regular projector. Another key study by Reedy examines how ICT tools and resources, in particular the IWBs, were used in a specific school (Reedy 2008). He concluded that the way in which teachers used the IWB was very similar to an ordinary white board. Except for being used as a writing board, the IWB was mostly used for display of (PowerPoint) presentations. In fact, Reedy comes to the conclusion that compared to an ordinary white board the IWBs presented more problems and limitations, even more often leading to a teacher-centred teaching.

All the above criticism, in deed, indicates that for the IWB to be effective, it should also be given an opportunity to the students to use it during the active classroom interaction in conjunction with the teacher. Thus, IWBs will only be successful (in enhancing student attainment) if teachers are willing to change their approach to more interactive method of teaching.

Conclusion

Educational technology, may it be in any form, has come a long way since the race started in the modern societies. In case of the IWB or IAW or EWB or Smart-board, whichever the way it is named, this great device is defined and described as an electronic whiteboard operated via touch-sensitive surface. Interactive whiteboards are a brilliant conjoint technology of chalkboard or blackboard, computer, video player or a flip chart, CD player, overhead projector (Kennwell & Higgins, 2007) and therefore allow the usage of all kinds of media in a single and unique method of using IWBs. Aside from assimilating a number of media in one device, the feature of interacting with the IWB is supposed to be one of its major benefits for using it. In this context, the mentor's role is pretty significant if he is able to incorporate all his technical skills while applying the laboratory equipment. In addition, to the best effect of reaching out the students, the teacher must get them

have their hands on the IWB to move the items from one place to another in order to experience the instant learning. The teacher must also ensure the involvement each and every student with the smart-board interaction. Eventually, the learning activity with the support of IWB would be realized as a smart and smooth method to deal with all kinds of learners, especially young learners with computer knowledge. On the other hand, as the current narrative emphasized earlier, any electronic teaching aid would be essentially a method of increasing the motivation level of learners when it is used appropriately, in the ELT classroom set up.

However, while embarking on aids with advanced technology, we need to take full cognizance of the lessons from the past, striking a balance between embracing new methods of instruction and comprehension while sticking on to the sound and everlasting ideologies of pedagogy. Hence, the advanced educational technology with the state-of-art teaching tools can be playing, irrefutably, an effective role in giving smooth mentoring experience to the teachers as well as smart learning experience to the young and enthusiastic learner, especially in a Foreign Language classroom. Finally, IWBs, obviously, can be part of a comprehensive system of learning for lifelong erudition.

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Applying Rubric to Provide an Effective Assessment in EFL Online Classes

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Abstract

Rubric has contributed in providing an effective assessment especially in EFL online classes. In other words, “Rubrics are useful grading tools that add reliability, validity and transparency to assessments.” (Chowdhury, 2019). Therefore, this study aimed to investigate importance of applying rubrics in virtual classes as assessment tool from Libyan EFL teachers’ perception. The participants of this study were 33 Libyan teachers 26 females and just 7 males who have experience in teaching online. The data of this study were gained from online questionnaire which created by the researcher. Microsoft Excel and SPSS 20 version were utilized for data analyses. The results indicated that English language teachers demonstrated their agreement that the importance of applying rubrics in online classes contributed in providing objective and effective assessment. The findings; furthermore, showed that rubrics played a vital role in increasing the students’ self-evaluation.

Key words: rubric, assessment, EFL online classes



1. Introduction

COVID 19 and the lockdown have enormously contributed to pay more attention to online leaning especially in EFL pedagogy. Therefore, the online classes are alternative choice to English teachers to proceeding their lessons (Abdulkareem and Eidan, 2020). This shifting from face-to-face classes to virtual community is required from the EFL educators an appropriate mean of assessment in order to evaluate the students' productions. Consequently, educators have involved to adapt an online assessment which is different from the traditional one (Alverson *et al.*, 2019). Assessment is an entail element in EFL teaching and learning process to measure the achievement of the teaching and learning goals. In other words, Brookhart (2012) defined assessment as a procedure of analyses, interpreting and gathering information regarding to this procedure and accomplishment of the learning objectives by the students' learning outputs. The assessment in EFL setting has divided into two main types: summative and formative assessment (Brown 2004). The summative assessment concentrates on the final outcomes at the end of semester or the academic year (Vagholkar, 2019) and measures the quality of the students' learning (Yulia *et al.*, 2019). The formative assessment depends on the improvement of the students' learning outcomes by providing feedback, guidance and instructions during the learning process (Bennett, 2011; Dyrdal, 2021). This type; moreover, is not the process of learning only but also is the process of teaching in order to assess the effectivity of the teaching methods and materials (Zuhriyah and Pratolo, 2020). However, to have an effective assessment especially in the virtual community, the assessment should have validity, reliability, fairness, and the objectivity. And all these characteristics of effective online assessment can be accomplished by applying rubrics as evaluation tool (Chowdhury, 2019). Rubrics are an effective solution for the subjective questions such as oral presentations, writing skills, projects and translation (Aljobary 2011). Furthermore, the rubric, as assessment mean, benefits both the teacher to be objective in recoding the students grades and the student to grade their performance quality and to gain formative feedback (Aljobary 2011, Hasan,2022). Rubrics play a vital role in providing "*a mechanism for teachers to reappraise their course design, ascertain if certain skill sets need to be taught, improve assessment transparency, and be a catalyst for student collaboration to improve learner autonomy*" (Spijkerbosch, 2009). Recently, Rubrics in EFL setting as defined by Dyrdal (2021) who



said that “*Today, a scoring rubric can often be understood as a checklist with descriptive criteria based on the competence aims in each subject, such as English as a foreign language.*” (p26). Because of the positive usefulness of providing e-feedback and to facilitate assessment the students’ performance especially in writing classes, there has been growing demand implementation of rubrics in the EFL virtual community (Raddawi and Bilikozen, 2018).

Despite the advantageous impact of e-rubrics on the students learning outcomes, the application of rubrics as assessment tool in online classes has not been common in EFL Libyan context. Furthermore, there is a dearth of studies that conducted in this area with Libyan EFL teachers. These two reasons have encouraged the researcher to conduct this study. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate importance of applying rubrics in virtual classes as assessment tool from Libyan EFL teachers’ perception.

2. Research Questions

What was the importance of applying rubrics in virtual classes as assessment tool from Libyan EFL teachers’ perception?

0. Significance of the Study

This study aimed to investigate importance of applying rubrics in virtual classes as assessment tool from Libyan EFL teachers’ perception. Therefore, research findings will be beneficial to those who are interested in EFL online community such as teachers, lecturers, headmasters, syllabus designers, and language program instructors. This study may contribute in increasing the educators’ awareness towards the benefits of applying effective rubric in online classes due to using this assessment tool has a significant contribution in enhancing the quality of language learning and teaching.

4. Literature Review

4.1 Definitions of Rubrics

Rubrics is considered as on of the effective assessment tool by providing informative feedback on the students’ performance. According to Moskal (2000), “*rubrics are descriptive scoring schemes that are developed by teachers or other evaluators to guide the analysis of the products or process of students’ efforts*” (p.22). In other words, rubrics are essential assessment

tool that guarantee the fairness and the clarity of the assessment goals and increase the students' awareness of what they expected to do.

However, in the online learning community, digital rubric is defined by Reima Al-Jarf (2011) as “*a comprehensive digital rubric development, assessment, and sharing tool (maker/builder). It shows the major skills and sub-skills to be mastered, the different mastery levels, and marks allocated to each level.*” (p 53). Although there are many types of rubrics, holistic and analytic rubrics are the two main types of rubrics (Brookhart, 2013). Holistic rubrics concentrates on the overall evaluation of the student's performance and does not give detailed description of the criteria that used to grade the students' performance (Dyrdal, 2021). On the other hand, analytic rubrics focuses in providing detailed and informative feedback on the students' performance that enables the learners to aware of the strength and weakness points of their work and how improving their final outcomes (Arter, 2000).

4.2 Importance of Using Rubrics in EFL Setting

According to the previous studies, many researchers have emphasized the positive and the effective consequences of utilizing the rubrics as assessment mean in EFL setting. For instance, Al-Jarf, R. (2011) Stated that applying rubrics to assess language skills and proficiency levels is a necessity in EFL learning processes.

Rubrics have greatly contributed in saving the educators' times and effort in grading the students' performance. Raddawi and Bilikozen (2018) recruited 21 English Language Teaching professors to explore their perspective on the advantage of applying e-rubrics in the assessment and feedback of the students' academic essays. The results of this study demonstrated that e-rubrics assisted the professors in giving effective feedback and saving time and energy and objective assessment.

Furthermore, the rubrics increase the objective, precise, and fair judgment in marking the students' outcomes especially the tasks that require various responses such as writing and speaking skills (Carbera *et al.*, 2017). By applying rubrics as assessment device in EFL community, the instructors will be capable to provide understandable, informative and well-structured feedback on how the learners outcomes will be (Puşnei, 2020). Consequently, rubrics enable the students to recognize the weakness and the strength points



of their learning achievement which in turn motivate the students to enhance their productions. In other words, the rubrics give the students the opportunity to assess the quality of their work. This explanation supported by Mahmoudi and Buğra (2020) who found that rubrics improved the students' writing and allowed them to examine their writing performance, provide feedback to their peers' work, produce high-quality writings, and got better grades. Similarly, the study by Hasan (2022) aimed to figure out the impact of using rubric based feedback on enhancing the EFL writing skills of Saudi high school students. The results indicated that rubric based feedback has effective developing on the writing skills of Saudi high school students.

In the absence of direct interaction between the teachers and their students in virtual classes, rubrics play a vital role in encouraging the students to apply self-assessment on their learning performance. In this line, Carbera *et al* (2017) and Wang (2017) found that self-awareness and independence of the students increased by applying rubrics.

4.3 Rubrics as Effective Assessment Tool in Online Classrooms

Cebrián de la Serna *et al.*, (2014) examined the impact of e-rubrics on the assessment of university learning and to show the scope of e-rubrics in improving cooperative skills as an experimental study. The results of quantitative qualitative analysis revealed that the groups using e-rubrics gained better results the control group. They also found that e-rubrics positively impact on achieving good individual learning results.

Arrowsmith (2015) conducted a study aimed to examine whether the application of instructional rubrics through Moodle as online Learning Management System benefit Japanese students' academic English writing in the first year. This study, furthermore, investigated the advantages and disadvantages of using rubrics in evaluation process. The results demonstrated that teachers found rubrics facilitating their students' writing grading and saving their time whereas the rubrics benefited the students in increasing their self-assessment.

Raddawi and Bilikozen (2018) recruited 21 English Language Teaching professors to explore their perspective on the advantage of applying e-rubrics in the assessment and feedback of the students' academic essays. The results of this study confirmed that e-rubrics assist the professors in giving effective

feedback and saving time and energy. Recently, the results of this study echo those of Bui and Vuong (2022) who studied the effectiveness of applying rubrics in improving students' writing skill and the students' perspective on this assessment device. The results proved that students' writing performance enhanced due to applying rubrics and they have a positive attitude towards applying rubrics in writing classes.

Another study carried out by Shofatunnisa *et. al*, (2020) to investigate application of The Public Speaking Competence Rubric (PSCR) to assess students' speaking skill in online EFL speaking Course Through students' self-made YouTube videos. The results of this study revealed that The PSCR rubric was helpful and considered appropriate to be used in EFL context.

5. Methodology of the Study

5.1 Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were 33 Libyan English Language teachers who have experienced teaching online. They were 26 females and just 7 males. The teachers who were new users concerning to virtual English classes were 20 teachers whereas 11 Libyan teachers have 1 to 5 years of experience in online setting and only 2 teachers have more than 5 years of experience in remote teaching.

5.2 The Online Questionnaire

The data of this study were generated from online survey by utilizing Google form.com. This questionnaire was created by the researcher. Furthermore, the online questionnaire was contained 4 closed-ended statements and four open-ended questions. The first three question of the closed-ended items were multiple-choice which consisted of participants' personal information including gender, years of experience in teaching online and types of digital platforms that used in delivering online classes. To investigate the degree of agreement and disagreement of the participants regarding to applying rubric in assessing students' performance, one closed-ended items was 5- point Likert Scale. For collecting qualitative data; On other hand, one open-ended question was designed. Furthermore, this open-ended question was adapted to triangulate the findings of the first part of the online survey and gain deep insight about the Libyan EFL teachers' perception of applying rubric as a tool of assessment in virtual classrooms.



5.3 Research Procedures and Data Analysis

The link of online survey has been posted to the target sample through the International Knowledge School English teachers' Viber page and TESOL for Libya Facebook Page. The data that gained from close-ended questions of the first part the online questionnaire transferred to Microsoft Excel 2010 to enable the researcher to analyze the data via SPSS vision 20. Only the percentage of the descriptive statistics was applied to analyze the data. The table and the pie chart were used to present the quantitative data. Concerning to the qualitative data, the teachers' responses to the open-ended question of online survey was read and categorized according to the teachers' comments.

6. The Results of Quantitative Data

6.1 Common Online Platforms

Table 1 illustrates the descriptive statistics of online platforms that applied by Libyan English teachers in giving assessment by using rubric. The results revealed the Zoom meeting was the most common online platform (57.6%) and the second common one was Google Classroom (18.2 %). The third platform was Teams with percentage (9.1%). The other online platforms such as Telegram (3.0%), Facebook Messenger (3.0%), Google Meeting (3.0%), WhatsApp (3.0%), We Chat (3.0%) were similar in terms of percentage usage by the participants.

Table 1: Common Online Platforms

	Online Platforms	Percentages %
1.	Google Classroom	18.2
2.	Zoom Meeting	57.6
3.	Facebook Messenger	3.0
4.	We Chat	3.0
5.	Teams	9.1
6.	WhatsApp	3.0
7.	Google Meeting	3.0
8.	Telegram,	3.0

6.2 Using Rubrics to Provide Timely and Informative E-Feedback.

Figure 1.1 presents the percentages of the agreement and disagreement of participants concerning to use rubric as an effective assessment tool in virtual classes. The majority of the participants agreed that rubric was a beneficial method in providing timely and informative feedback whereas the percentages of agree and strongly agree were (50%), (25 %) respectively. The participants who disagreed of the effectiveness of using rubric pin online classes were (15%) and just 10% of the participants were neutral. Surprisingly, no one of the participants strongly disagreed that rubric was the effective assessment tool.

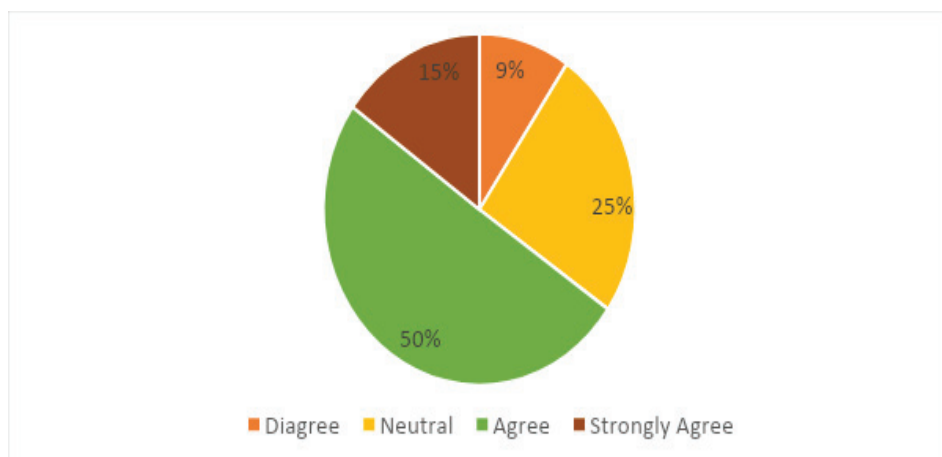


Figure 1: I use a rubric to provide timely and informative e-feedback

6.3 The Results of Qualitative Data

The qualitative data came from the teachers' response to the open-ended question in order to gain in-depth information concerning to the effectiveness of using rubric as assessment tool in virtual classes. According to the teachers' comments, the majority of the teachers reported that they used rubrics as an effective assessment tool for the following reasons:

Using rubrics in assessing the student's assignment enabled the teachers to give fair and accurate evaluation. For instance:

"Yes of course, rubrics are very important in assessing students work because it helps the teacher to be fair and to give precise evaluation". Another teacher reported that:

"Additionally, rubrics help teachers to give students feedback equally."



Other teachers commented that rubrics contributed in increasing students' self-evaluation and their awareness of strong and weak parts of their learning outcomes. Furthermore, they said that rubrics enabled the students to achieve the task objectives. For example:

"Yes, I use the rubric in writing class to help students to self-evaluation and be aware of what they will be assessing about."

"Yes, because it guides students to know what they should do and what is expected from them to do."

"Yes. I always give rubrics as I believe it helps students to do their assignments in a right manner."

"Yes. It helps in understanding and following."

"I do, it helps the student to get a preview on what they'll be learning."

On the other hand, some teachers reported that rubric was beneficial in the fluency activities. They also added that the rubric was effective in writing and speaking online classes. For instance:

"Only in fluency activities because it keeps me on track. I'm supposed to do even in writing, but I didn't consider that before."

"Yes, I have used rubric in giving presentations assignment. Students give more than one presentation in oral skills and each one is evaluated by using different rubric style."

However, some of the teachers did not experience this assessing tool in their online classes. Surprisingly, one of them has never heard about rubrics before.

"No because I have just heard about it."

7. Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the importance of applying rubrics in virtual classes as an assessment tool from Libyan EFL teachers' perception. The results revealed that (75%) of the teachers used rubrics to provide timely and informative e-feedback. This result is supported by Puşnei (2020) who found that applying rubrics as an assessment device in EFL communities will enable the instructors to provide understandable, informative and well-structured feedback on how the learners' outcomes will be.

According to teachers' comments on the open-ended question, applying rubrics in their online classes contributed in providing fair and accurate evaluation. This result goes in the same line with Carbera *et al.* (2017) results which indicated that the rubrics contributed to gain the objective, precise, and fair judgment in marking the students' outcomes especially the tasks that require various responses such as writing and speaking skills.

The participants of this study; moreover, commented that rubrics contributed in increasing students' self-evaluation and their awareness of strong and weak parts of their learning outcomes. The present study found that rubrics enabled the students to achieve the task objectives. These results agree with those of Arrowsmith (2015) and Mahmoudi and Buğra (2020) who found that rubrics benefited the students in increasing their self-assessment and improved the students' writing and enabled them examine their writing performance, provide feedback to their peers' work, produce high-quality writings, and got better grades.

The results of this study revealed that some teachers reported that rubric was beneficial in the fluency activities, writing and speaking skills online classes. This result recalls the claim of Aljobary (2011) who stated that rubrics are an effective solution for the subjective questions such as oral presentations, writing skills, projects and translation. This results also sustained by Bui and Vuong and (2022) Shofatunnisa *et. al.*, (2020) who found that students' writing performance enhanced due to applying rubrics and they have a positive attitude towards applying rubrics in writing classes. The results of Shofatunnisa *et. al.*, (2020) study revealed that The PSCR rubric was helpful and considered appropriate to be used in EFL context.

Despite the effectiveness of rubrics in evaluating students' performance in the online classes, there were some of teachers in this study did not apply rubrics in their classes. Usurpingly, one of these teachers commented that he has never heard about rubrics before. The possible justification of this result may due to their unfamiliarity of the benefits of rubrics in facilitating students' performance assessment.

8. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to figure out the importance of applying rubrics in virtual classes as assessment tool from Libyan EFL teachers'



perception. Based on the results of the present study can be concluded that Libyan English language teachers demonstrated their agreement that the importance of applying rubrics in online classes contributed in providing objective and effective assessment. The findings; furthermore, showed that rubrics played a vital role in increasing the students' self-evaluation.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Recommendations Based on The Results

It is also recommended that the teachers should use rubrics as assessment tool due to the rubrics' benefits especially for virtual classes. Applying rubrics in English language virtual classes requires from the educators to be familiar with the characteristics of well-designed rubrics; and they should be trained in how effectively use the rubrics in order to gain the desirable results from the teaching and learning process.

9.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research is highly recommended to conduct the same study with a larger number of participants who have similar learning language background and major to see whether there are any similarities in the findings. Future study is also recommended to apply more qualitative instruments such as interview, observation or reflective journal. Therefore, these instruments contribute to gain deeper understanding about the effective e-feedback.

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The Attitudes of English Majors Towards the Use of Modern Technology in Translation Learning

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Abstract

Technology has a great impact on how we live and work. The way that students view the advantages of the various tools of modern technology, however, may determine how widely they are used. In this study, it was explored how students felt about using contemporary technologies to learn translation. The respondents ranged in age from 20 to 22. They were composed of 85% of female and 15% of male. A survey was used by the researcher to collect the data. It was made up of seven questions that tested the students' attitudes on the application of contemporary technologies to the study of translation. The study's findings revealed that a significant portion of the participants (80%) were convinced that using modern technological tools would put them at ease as they learned translation. The findings also made clear that most of the subjects (60%) felt that students need to have a firm awareness of contemporary technology tools and be able to use them. The researcher recommends that in order to help students become more skilled translators, it is necessary to integrate modern technologies in the classroom.

Key words: English Majors, Modern Technology, Students' Attitudes





ملخص الدراسة

للتكنولوجيا تأثير كبير على طريقة عيشنا وعملنا. ومع ذلك، فإن الطريقة التي ينظر بها الطلاب إلى مزايا استخدام وسائل التقنيات الحديثة قد تحدد مدى انتشار استخدامها. في هذه الدراسة، تم استكشاف شعور الطلاب اتجاه استخدام وسائل التقنيات الحديثة في تعلم الترجمة. للحصول على المعلومات والحقائق، تم إجراء المسح باستخدام نهج كمي، وتكوّن المسح من سبعة أسئلة بحثت في شعور الطلاب تجاه تطبيق التقنيات الحديثة أثناء دراسة الترجمة. تراوحت أعمار عينة الدراسة من 20 إلى 22 عامًا. وكانوا يشكّلون 85٪ من الإناث و 15٪ من الذكور. كشفت نتائج الدراسة أن جزءًا كبيرًا من المشاركين (80٪) كانوا مقتنعين بأن استخدام الأدوات التكنولوجية الحديثة من شأنه أن يجعلهم يشعرون بالراحة أثناء تعلمهم الترجمة. وأوضحت النتائج أيضًا أن معظم الطلاب (60٪) يشعرون بحاجة إلى أن يكون لديهم وعي قوي بأدوات التكنولوجيا المعاصرة وأن يكونوا قادرين على استخدامها. يوصي الباحث بأنه من أجل مساعدة الطلاب على أن يصبحوا مترجمين أكثر مهارة، من الضروري دمج التقنيات الحديثة في الفصل الدراسي.



1.1 Background of The Study

It has been simpler for people to interact and share knowledge because of the digital revolution and advancements that have occurred in the past century. Modern technology has had a significant impact on education as well, facilitating global collaboration and increased access to educational resources. Since it was possible to get important materials for any language, especially English, via tools of modern technology, it became easier to teach or learn languages. Through the integration of foreign language classes into their platforms, modern technology has improved language learning. Learners are urged to use modern technology to further their education in various nations where English is either the first or second language.

Modern technology can be utilized to assist translation students and translators in their work. As a result, the area of computational linguistics' Computer-Aided Translation (CAT) was born. In this context, "CAT" refers to the process of facilitating translation through the use of computer software and resources including Translation Memory (TM), online dictionaries, terminology management, and

corpora (Bowker, 2002). Zhang (2010) emphasized the importance of modern technology in translation programs, saying that the students' effective use of the technology allowed them to get around challenges in translation and generate high-quality translated texts. At both the undergraduate and graduate levels, universities and private language institutions, modern technology is now a crucial part of translation courses and translator training programs (Olohan, 2011). To meet all current demands, students of translation must be proficient in working languages, subject areas, and regular classroom exercises used in translation. They must also be able to use translation technologies that speed up the translation process by ensuring higher terminology accuracy and text organization management (Ivanova, 2016).

In contrast to face-to-face settings, students feel more liberated to share their thoughts and interact online, according to Venkatesen (2014). As a result Google Classroom could be used as a platform for group translation projects as well as a tool for teaching translation. A new approach is needed to teach translation as a resource-based learning activity that builds students' language, transfer, and digital competencies. These abilities include the ability to translate. Additionally, these competences encompass the many capacities, skills, and information necessary for translation, as well as the attitudes that professionals and student translators who participate in online collaboration for teaching and learning translation hold (Kelly, 2005).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Due to this century's great development of knowledge and significant progress in all fields of trade, culture, and science, the globe has quickly become a village. As a result, the value of translation has been highlighted, and universities and language learning institutions are now focused on training proficient translators. The expectations of the translation industry are not, however, met by the existing state of translation schools, where the major objective is to teach students a variety of translation theories and practices. It is regrettable that traditional translation departments and branches ignore the modern commercial translation business, which places a strong emphasis on the necessity to translate a lot of text in a short amount of time. Previous research such as (Kaminskien, & Kavaliauskien, 2012; Frérot, 2013) has highlighted the need to revise the current translation curricula to meet professional market expectations. In this aspect, modern technology appears to be a promising



substitute for the approaches now in use for teaching translation. The majority of students are unwilling to attend translation lessons, which is another reason why traditional translation programs have continually failed to excite students (Al-Jarf, 2008). Informal interviews with the students revealed that a significant portion of them perceive translation as a difficult undertaking that is beyond their capacity. As a result, it is imperative to implement modern technology in translation classes together with sufficient instruction on how to use the program in order to change the way things are now done.

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

It is assumed that:

- 1- the use of modern technologies in teaching translation to English majors may raise their degree of proficiency.
- 2- with the aid of contemporary technological tools, students may be able to speak with one another to explain and share ideas, ask for help, discuss issues, and talk about solutions.

1.4 Aims of the Study

The study was conducted to:

1. investigate English majors' feel about the modern technology that can be utilized in learning translation.
2. to understand the English majors' thoughts on the idea that using technology in the classroom encourages effective learning environments.

1.5 Significance of the study

Students might expect to succeed in their academic goals with the aid of modern technologies. According to Bueli (2012), students will not be open to distant learning if they do not see technology as useful (p. 26). Leontyeva (2018) affirmed that "Students hold out for online learning, but there are concerns about the quality of interaction with lecturers, and the underdeveloped technological infrastructure of the institution" (p. 6). In recent years, universities started offering a variety of courses online, particularly for freshmen in their first year. According to Haddad et al. (2014), educational technologies are now viewed as a key component of education and a useful tool in the classroom. Therefore, it is important to understand

how university students feel about the technology used in online courses, and this study offers universities useful information on that subject. In order to help students rediscover their goals and ideals for implementing online learning, this research was created.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

This study is limited to:

- second year, English Department, Faculty of Arts, Assab'ah, University of Gharyan.
- academic year 2021-2022

2. Literature Review

A review of the relevant literature is provided in this section. Overall, there are four parts. The first one focuses on the concept of modern technology. The second concentrates on some modern technological tools that English majors and lecturers can use to teach and learn. The third discusses the difficulties that English majors could run into when employing these tools. The fourth one sheds light on earlier research in the area.

2.1 Modern technology

Information, networking, and telecommunication technologies are together referred to as Information Computer Tools (Nicol, 2003). Computer hardware and software are referred to as information technologies. Internet, mobile phones, cable, satellite, and other broadband connectivity are examples of networking technology. The broadcasting of radio and television is one example of a telecommunication technology. ICTs in language learning give students new ways to improve their foreign-language proficiency (Lloyd, 2012). Research has demonstrated the advantages of using current technological tools when learning a foreign language. For instance, students engage in real-time conversations with language speakers (Godwin-Jones, 2006; Kumar & Tammelin, 2008; Stevenson & Liu, 2010). To be more specific, a number of language learning websites, like Livemocha, Palabea, and Babel, make use of social networking tools to create online language-learning communities where learners can practice their target language with other competent students or proficient speakers. Without these tools, joining communities for studying similar real languages was only feasible abroad (Stevenson & Liu, 2010).



2.1 Types of Modern Technological Tools

In order to learn and teach English, one can use a variety of modern technological tools such as:

2.1.1 Internet Translator

Internet translator (Google translate) is definitely the app that everyone who learns or teach foreign languages should have on their phone. It can translate almost all the languages, not just English, and can be used in many activities. It has wide usage—either when being abroad, travelling or working on a project outside the classroom. This program also brings a disadvantage which comes with translating whole sentences. Learners must pay attention to a word-for-word translation used by this app and can result in misinterpretation or incorrect translation of the words.

2.1.2 Translation Memories

Programs called translation memories (TMs) build databases of source-text and target-text segments in a way that allows the matched segments to be reused. These resources are priceless assists in the translation of any material that contains a significant amount of repetitions, such as user manuals, computer products, and different iterations of the same document (website updates). The employment of translation memory technologies has sped up and reduced the cost of translation in various industries, increasing demand for translation services. The memories do not render translators unemployed; rather, they ideally perform the tedious routine tasks of translation on our behalf. By dividing up the source text, which is made up of one or more electronic files, into segments that translators translate one at a time the traditional method, translation memory technologies reuse past translations. Then, a built-in database receives these parts (which are typically sentences or even phrases). The memory accesses the previous translation from the database when a fresh source segment is identical to or similar to one that has already been translated. Zhang (2010) emphasized the importance of CAT in translation programs, saying that students' effective use of the technology allowed them to get around challenges in translation and generate high-quality translated texts.

2.1.3 Mobile Phones

In practically every country in the globe, people have access to mobile phones. Smartphones are their upgraded form, and the younger generation is well-versed in them. These individuals, in particular, use their phones mostly for photo-taking, gaming, and installing apps rather than just making calls or sending texts. These apps can be used for entertainment or they can be both humorous and educational. There are four smartphone apps that concentrate on vocabulary, listening comprehension, speaking, and general or concrete knowledge. The program is free for both teachers and students to use in the classroom. The instructor creates a public room for students every session using his account. The students are either divided into smaller groups or he produces a list of everyone in one group. A quiz is created by the teacher, who also sets a deadline, reviews the answers, and solicits feedback from the pupils. It is a fun and useful way to test your knowledge without requiring an internet connection; all you need is a fully charged battery and a phone with access to the Google Play store.

2.1.4 Skype

There is no question that Skype can teach English. It is a simple and affordable method that allows students and teachers to interact with the outside world without getting up from their seats. Students can communicate with native speakers from all over the world in the language classroom to improve their English language abilities. Learning improves when it extends outside the four walls of the classroom and becomes more real, inspiring, and interesting. (Krishnasamy, Raman, 2015, p. 21).

2.1.5 Podcasts

A podcast is a collection of audio or video files that can be downloaded to a computer or mobile device or broadcast online (Müllner, 2009, p. 3). In terms of language learning, students may either produce their own podcasts and practice speaking or they can listen to current podcasts to enhance listening comprehension. This tools can also be used in practicing interpretation from English into Arabic. Due to the students' independence in selecting their own topics, both alternatives are far more interesting than the conventional listening and speaking exercises found in the course books. Encourage them to find a podcast that grabs their interest and to listen to it frequently.



2.1.6 Blogging

While blogs primarily concentrate on the areas of reading and writing, podcasts can be a terrific tool for enhancing learners' speaking and listening abilities. An online journal-like website with frequent updates is known as a blog. A class blog could be utilized as a collaborative place where teachers and students can actively contribute to creating the blog's content in the context of teaching English. Stanley (2006) claims that it is a means of breaking down the barriers of the classroom, revealing what is happening to the outside world, and establishing a small community of language learners. Blogging is a platform where even the most hesitant kids can contribute while also fostering self-expression, confidence, and autonomous learning. Assignments may call for the student blogger to interact closely with a particular group of student bloggers as part of activities based on classroom blogs. Additionally, blogging can be read and written from home or in practically real-time. Blogging is a relevant and interesting social activity because of the mix of planned and unplanned linguistic interactions inside and beyond the classroom (Blackstone, Naganuma, Spiri, 2007, p. 2).

2.1.7 Online Games

Although they can be used to teach English, online games are typically seen as a source of enjoyment. Though Seli (2015, p. 5) claims that when learners start playing the game, they will be motivated to solve the problems, answer the questions, and accomplish the objective to move to the next level, using online games in the language classroom requires far more preparation for teachers than using books. This belief has also been supported by research, which demonstrates that English students who play online language games tend to learn more effectively, can remember new words for longer periods of time, and can recall more terms than those who do not play such games (Kwan, Yip, 2006).

2.1.8 Online collaboration via Google Classroom

Google Inc. offers an app called Google Classroom that is used as a platform for online education. With Google Classroom, instructors can easily establish classes, give homework, publish announcements, receive student feedback, and submit course materials for students to read. According to Khalil (2018), when students submit their assignments through Google Classroom,

the teacher can highlight the contents of each assignment, give the student immediate helpful feedback, and assess the learner's performance. The teacher can also invite friends or family members to view the posts on the application. He further notes that Google Classroom can be utilized for every course at any institution of higher learning. According to this study, students share their translated texts on Google Classroom as a means of communication.

2.2 Challenges to the Use of Digital technology

Utilizing modern technology tools for learning has created a number of challenges while seeming like an interesting method. Using contemporary technology to study a second or foreign language makes it even more challenging. The production typically falls short of what teachers and students had hoped for (Rahman, 2015). The use of technology, it seems, will give language learners useful and practical language skills. Digital technology does not, however, have an impact in the classroom without the proper protections and controls incorporated into the curriculum. The employment of technology, according to the initial perception, will give learners useful and practical language skills. Digital technology, however, is not effective in the classroom unless the proper protections and controls are incorporated into the curriculum. Managing administrative concerns is another difficulty that arises frequently in digital learning. It might be challenging to use digital classrooms when students and teachers frequently forget their passwords to access the learning platform. Teachers are occasionally compelled to use analog teaching techniques, which have been shown to be less effective than instructing with digital materials (Rahman, 2015). Carrove (1999) points out that one of the problems of translation students is that they are untrained in computer assisted translation software.

2.3 Previous Studies

Studies have been done to determine how students feel about using contemporary technology to learn translation and English in general. For example, Barros (2011) suggested that it is important to foster in students a good attitude toward teamwork in order to maximize learning for each team member. Additionally, each team member will be accountable to the other team members and assume certain duties in accordance with their position on



the team. Every team member must complete the specific task that has been assigned to them in order to complete the planned overall goal; otherwise, the team's performance will suffer. Teamwork is encouraged and developed in translation schools along with linguistic abilities (Kelly, 2005).

Investigating the perspectives of English majors on using contemporary technologies for learning is crucial. In this regard, Challob et al. (2016) investigated how students felt about learning vocabulary in a group setting online. According to the study's findings, students who participated in a computer-supported collaborative learning environment had favorable opinions about learning new words online. Other research looked into the impact of employing online platforms for collaborative translation in translation schools. As an illustration, Rudnick et al (2014) demonstrated a new translation collaboration toolkit for internet use. This approach, which was developed in response to conversations with Guarani language activists and educators in Paraguay, aims to address issues faced by both machine translation researchers and by individuals living in communities where their language is not widely spoken. According to the study's findings, Guampa System aims to build an online community where conversations can occur. In order to learn how to translate, Venkatesan (2014) investigated a wiki-based solution. The initiative enabled scaffolding and provided a variety of information that may aid student-translators in translating correctly and successfully, according to the findings. In a similar vein, Barr (2013) investigated Ulster University in the UK's use of wikis to teach translation. According to the study's findings, using wikis to facilitate collaborative translation techniques in translation classes encourages student interaction and gives them the opportunity to evaluate each other's work through peer review and editing. This study demonstrated the value of peer evaluation during a translation task. Thus, it is crucial to incorporate Google Classroom as a platform for online teaching and learning. EFL students frequently see the use of technology for learning favorably. In their exploratory study of ICT use among 149 EFL university students in Vietnam, Dang and Nguyen (2014) discovered that the vast majority of students (82.6%) expressed favorable attitudes about ICT use in EFL learning. Similar findings were found in Liu's (2009) study of 140 college students in China who did not major in English about their views toward ICTs. The students were fully aware of the potential of ICTs in their growth of EFL learning, and their opinions were generally positive. Their opinions of ICT characteristics, such as relative benefit, compatibility, simplicity, and observability, had a significant impact on their

attitudes (Liu, 2009). Some students have negative attitudes about ICTs in EFL learning, despite the majority of students reporting favorable opinions. Some students in Liu's 2009 research of EFL learners in China expressed hostility toward the use of ICT in the classroom. These students claimed that because there was little practical usage of ICTs in their English classrooms, they were not ready to employ the available ICTs for language learning inside and outside of the classroom. This result is in line with earlier research that show a lack of ICT expertise in EFL courses may cause EFL students to have unfavorable opinions toward the technology (Dang & Nguyen, 2014).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Sample of the study

Twenty students who were fourth-year English majors in the department of English, Faculty of Arts, Assab'ah, University of Gherian during the academic year 2021–2022 made up the study's sample. They were made up of 16 female students between the ages of 20 and 22 and 4 male students. They were all native Arabic speakers from the country of Libya.

Table 1: Information about the Participants of the Study

Gender of Participants	Number of participants	Percent
Male	3	15%
Female	17	85%
Total	20	100%

3.2 Data Collection

A survey with 7 questions, divided into two parts, was used to gather the quantitative data for this investigation. (see appendix 1). Part 1 of the survey comprised three demographic questions that inquired about respondents' age, gender, Internet and computer access. 7 questions made up the second part of the survey and asked students their opinions on using contemporary technological tools for translation learning. Students were requested to respond to each statement on a three-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (agree), 2 (neutral), and 3 (disagree).



3.3 Results and Discussion

Students were instructed to carefully select the response that best suited them in the study's topic after receiving the survey. To determine the subjects' attitudes toward using contemporary technology to learn translation, the data collected were categorized and ratios were calculated.

Table 2: The Results of the Survey

Item	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
1- The modern technologies(such as internet and apps of mobile phones) that are used in learning translation are comfortable and easy.	16	2	2	20
	80%	10%	10%	100%
2- The tools of contemporary technology are practical and easy to employ when learning to translate.	12	7	1	20
	60%	35%	5%	100%
3- I need to be more familiar with technology before I sign up for translation classes	12	6	2	20
	60%	30%	10%	100%
4- At home, I am capable of using a range of technological tools, including smart phones, the Internet, Facebook, email, and so on.	14	3	3	20
	70%	15%	15%	100%
5- Universities provide students with labs, laptops, and other contemporary equipment.	9	6	5	20
	25%	30%	45 %	100%
6- The relationship between the instructor and the student is facilitated by the use of contemporary technology tools.	9	9	2	20
	45%	45%	10%	100%
1. I advise and exhort other pupils to utilize contemporary technology to learn English and translation	9	4	7	20
	45%	20%	35%	100%

Table (2) summarizes the survey's findings. 20 students in all, 3 male and 17 female, completed the survey for this study. The purpose of this study was to investigate how university students felt about various learning technology. The first research question's findings revealed that 80% of the participants were confident that employing contemporary technological tools while learning translation would make them feel at ease. 10% of them indicated that they would not comment by checking the neutral box, and another 10% claimed that modern technology is not user-friendly or comfortable. In the second question of the poll, 60% of the participants agreed that modern technological tools are practical and user-friendly for learning to translate, 5% disagreed, and 35% opted not to give any ideas because they had not previously used modern technology in their learning.

The majority of the subjects (60%) agreed that students need to have a solid understanding of modern technology tools and be able to use them, whereas 30% of the subjects were neutral on the matter and 10% disagreed. 70% of the participants confirmed that they can use specific tools, such as smart phones, the Internet, Facebook, email, and so on, whereas 15% of them were unsure and 15% were certain that they cannot. Furthermore, and regarding the fifth question of the survey, 25% of the participants had a different perspective and said that universities have some types of modern technology, such as labs and internet connections, while 45% of the participants emphasized that universities had a deficiency in providing students with laboratories and computers so they could use them in translation learning. 30% didn't comment at all. Therefore, before the start of such programs, universities should adequately prepare students for how to handle online learning courses. Universities should also provide students a variety of centers with technology-equipped facilities to assist pupils in comprehending how to use the tools of modern technology.

Regarding the sixth survey question, 45% of the respondents confirmed that these contemporary technological tools help to strengthen the relationship between the lecturer and the student, 45% chose the neutral option to remain silent, and 10% claimed that contemporary technology has no bearing on this relationship. In response to the last poll question, 45% of students agreed that they should exhort and advise other students to use modern digital tools for learning, while 35% rejected the idea and 20% preferred to remain silent.



4. Conclusion and Recommendations

1 Conclusion4.

The majority of survey participants were in favor of using modern technologies to teach translation. They accept and welcome the role of technology in translation learning. The results of the study also demonstrated that students are content and at ease using instruments of contemporary technology to learn translation. They believed that rather than their expressive capabilities, the means of modern technology were more advantageous to the development of their receptive translation abilities. About 80% of students agreed that using technology in the classroom is convenient and easy, and they expressed this opinion favorably. The majority of the students (70%) confirmed that they have access to and can use Facebook, Messenger, email, and other contemporary technical tools at home. The fact that students participated in the study also suggests that their faculty is severely lacking in modern technology resources. The academic institution where the subjects are enrolled is devoid of labs, sophisticated technical equipment, and an internet connection. Due to the fact that electronic resources are now essential tools for English majors, the subjects verbally advise giving them access to some technology so they can begin using it and profiting from it in the next years.

4.2 Recommendations

In the light of the findings and conclusions of the research, it is recommended that:

- 1- it is crucial to use contemporary technology in the classroom to help students become more proficient translators.
- 2- utilizing contemporary technology enabled learners to practice their translation abilities in a supported environment.
- 3- by utilizing online resources like Google Classroom and online dictionaries in translation classrooms, teachers can encourage students to translate in collaborative groups and develop their attitudes toward online cooperation.
- 4- Utilizing contemporary technology gives students a wide-ranging, adaptable, and creative learning environment for studying translation.
- 5- By utilizing contemporary teaching methods, teachers should be creative

and exploratory, educate themselves on the most recent developments in translation theory and multimedia network technology, fully utilize their roles as organizers, coordinators, helpers, and guides, and continually look for new teaching strategies and methods for teaching translation.

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Appendix

Survey of University Students' Attitudes Towards the Use of Modern Technology in Learning Translation

The First Part: Demographic information

-Sex: Male Female

-Have you used online courses in your pre-university education? Yes No

The Second Part: This part focuses on university students' point of views about technologies used in learning translation.

Item	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Total
1 - The modern technologies(such as internet and apps of mobile phones) that are used in learning translation are comfortable and easy.				
2 - Modern technological instruments are convenient and user-friendly for learning to translate.				
3 - I need to be more familiar with technology before I sign up for translation classes				
4 - At home, I am capable of using a range of technological tools, including smart phones, the Internet, Facebook, email, and so on.				
5 - Universities provide students with labs, laptops, and other contemporary equipment.				
6 - The relationship between the instructor and the student is facilitated by the use of contemporary technology tools.				
7- I advise and exhort other pupils to utilize contemporary technology to learn English and translation.				



Libyan Undergraduates' Views on the Online Courses Program During Covid 19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The current study focused on Libyan undergraduates' views on the effectiveness of the online courses program which has been adopted by the English Department at the Faculty of Arts in Tripoli University during COVID 19 pandemic. A quantitative approach has been used through a questionnaire distributed among students at their 5th and 6th semester in the Fall of 2020. A pilot study has preceded the main questionnaire to ensure the reliability and the validity of the data to be collected. The result revealed several challenges faced by the Libyan undergraduates. Some of these challenges were due to the lack of necessary logistics, preparedness on both students and instructors' side, and the nature of the subjects to be taught. It is recommended that similar studies should be conducted on instructors' views on this program in order to see the bigger picture of this program and its effectiveness in the Libyan universities in the future.

Keywords: Online Courses Program, Covid 19



I. Introduction

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Many countries saw in the online classes program during the period of Covid 19 pandemic a good alternative for regular classes. They even believed that it may make learning on both student and instructors' side more efficient.



However, this was not the case for the Libyan undergraduates at the English language Department in Tripoli Faculty of Arts.

Many interrelated factors came in the way when the English Department adopted the online teaching system. Such factors contributed to making learning even harder for the Libyan undergraduates. Lack of simple logistics such as computers, poor internet service, and insufficient preparation of both instructors and students made learning a challenging task.

Another significant factor was the inappropriate nature of the subjects to be taught online. Some courses require immediate tutoring. Hence, the absence of instructors' face-to-face interaction made learning somehow challenging. The case is even worse when it comes to instructors' unpreparedness for conducting the exams online due to the same previously mentioned reasons.

As a result, students complain of the insufficiency of their academic input. Furthermore, as the pandemic lasted for more than two years in Libya. Students' lack of future basic knowledge made them feel that they are frustrated and demotivated for the next semesters. Some students even dropped some subjects. Others, differed some subjects. And some continued unwillingly.

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

The current study investigates the effectiveness of undergraduates' online classes. More specifically, it examines students' views on how far they benefit the program. This paper gives a closer look at how students see their competence in the light of this program.

1.4 The Objectives

There are four objectives:

- 1- Knowing students' views on online classes.
- 2- Finding out weakness at this program.
- 3- Clarifying major challenges.
- 4- Ringing the bell for future governmental efforts.

1.5 The Limitation

The study deals only with a small scale of 36 students at the English

Language Department in the faculty of Arts at the University of Tripoli. The choice of samples was based on the idea that the researcher was among the instructors who took part in the online program at the time of the study. This enabled the researcher to have a closer look at the samples. The time was also limited to the fall of 2020 semester.

II. Literature Review

Online teaching program has been adopted in many pioneering countries in this field. It even goes side by side to regular face-to-face instruction. Students take online courses for many reasons due to the flexibility of access. In the early days of online learning, some erroneously considered online courses, the content and assessment, to be easier than the face to face equivalent course (Keramidas, 2012, p. 26).

Keramidas (2012) stated that by 2010, over 4.6 million people, about 25% of college students, were enrolled in a course offered via the Internet (p. 25). These online courses changed how institutions of higher learning offered classes, often reducing their on campus course offerings in the process, as classes were made available in anytime, anywhere formats. This idea, of creating courses and delivering them directly to individual students, wherever they are located and in some instances, at the time the student wanted, forever changed the traditional education landscape (Marcum, 2014, p. 1).

So, when the pandemic hit the world, education in the advanced countries didn't face serious challenges. Unfortunately, countries such as Libya had a hard time during the adoption of the online teaching program. This was a result of the negligence of this important means of future education style.

Such sluggishness of online program adoption has negatively impacted EFL undergraduates at the faculty of Arts in Tripoli University. According to Delaney-Klinger et al (2014), faculty without a background in online teaching or online learning were at a disadvantage and did not have the tools required to effectively teach in this medium, and this had a negative impact on their students (p. 47).

the consequences of such sudden disruptions goes back to several issues. On top of these issues is The lack of basic training and preparation required for the online courses. This is because instructors themselves were educated in traditional face-to-face classroom instruction. McQuiggan states that



“Faculty’s initial teaching model is typically born from that of their own teachers, and they teach as they were taught; however, few have any online experience as a student or a teacher” (2012, p. 27).

This caused a distortion of the objectives of the delivery of the courses. As suggested by Herman (2012), that faculties who hadn’t taught online and suddenly found themselves being asked to do so had a negative perception of online courses in general, and especially if the faculty did not feel they had received the appropriate training to teach online. “Moving to online teaching provides a new way of seeing practice, and often becomes a disorienting dilemma” (ibid, 2012, p. 56).

In order to have a smooth transition from regular face- to-face instruction style, to online instruction, many skills have to be mastered by both instructors and students as Ragan et al (2012) stated, “The transition by instructors from a face-to-face format to the online classroom requires careful adaptation of a wide variety of skills and competencies” (p. 84).

Mupinga, Nora, and Yaw (2006) suggested that faculty who taught online needed to not only understand the online learning environment, but also the student learning styles, needs, and expectations . A broad understanding of pedagogy and student learning styles is a must. “No particular learning styles were found to be predominant among the online students; hence, the design of online learning activities should strive to accommodate multiple learning styles” (p.185- 188).

Garces-Ozanne and Sullivan (2014) discussed that though student goals, particularly if grade related, impacted student satisfaction, students did not always have realistic expectations regarding their test scores or final grades (p. 88).How faculty approached feedback and assessment for these students was a critical component to student’s assessment of their abilities and approach to learning, and rubrics were an important part of this evaluation cycle (Wyss, Freedman, & Siebert, 2014, pp. 100, 105).

Instructor engagement and feedback are critical to student learning and mastery as well as course satisfaction (Paechter, Maier, & Macher, 2010, p. 227). As a student noted in a study done by Deggs et al (2010), “The longer I waited for feedback, I would lose motivation and confidence to proceed with the next assignment. On the flipside, the more immediate the responses, the more willing and motivated I felt to push ahead with course material” (p.

696).

Online course material is an ever developed process. It requires hard constant work. Timely and relevant feedback is also seen as a critical component of effective learning in an online classroom. Additional expertise was needed in the technical arena for teaching online, and many noted this differentiation. Ragan (2012) stated

that preparation of an online course is intense and complicated. In addition to the usual work of updating and revising course content and syllabi, the technical aspect of modifying course content so it can be read, accessed, and linked to electronic sources is daunting for a novice (p. 83).

The availability of online courses is even more appreciated by those in rural areas, who may not have ready access to education (Keramidas, 2012, p. 26). The task of preparing online material has always been a controversial issue to the experts in this field. While some have focused on the “whats”, others were interested in the “hows”. McQuiggan (2012) stated, “It must be noted that classroom teaching is not always teacher-centered and online teaching is not always student-centered; this is a false dichotomy. In fact, in some cases faculty simply put their lectures online and call it online teaching” (p. 32).

Adams and Pente (2011) on the other hand, mentioned that relying too heavily on presentation software such as PowerPoint negated the teaching effectiveness of content presentation (p. 252). Letting the technology drive instruction also inhibited online faculty, restricting how information was shared with students and limiting how students learned from course content.

Providing presentation materials distributed by textbook publishers could be even more detrimental to student learning, as students who were given the publisher notes for each chapter seemed to avoid reading the chapter at all, since the notes were provided. Course content and the presentation of the material had direct impact on student learning (Otto, Sanford, & Ross, 2008, p. 357).

III. Method

3.1. Research Design

The researcher adopted quantitative method as the goal was to know certain the views of numbers of the targeted population on the effectiveness of the



online teaching program. Therefore, a questionnaire was distributed among the samples to collect quantitative data. Statistical analysis were performed on the data to test the research question.

3.1 Samples

A random group of the undergraduates of the English department at the faculty of Arts in Tripoli (who were at their fifth and sixth semester) have been chosen as a sample for the study. The number of male students was 22. Female students were 14. They were at the same academic level, so this assumes that the samples are academically homogeneous.

3.2 Data collection

The data of the current paper was collected through a questionnaire was distributed among the undergraduate who were at their fifth and sixth semester in English department at the faculty of Arts in Tripoli. The study took place in the Fall of 2020. It was the time when the wave of COVID 19 began to slow down. Some classes were allowed to be held normally with some precautionous health majors.

The questionnaire was based on 5-point scale (1 – strongly disagree, 2 – disagree, 3 – neutral, 4 – agree, and 5 – strongly agree).

The questionnaire included fifteen items. It was divided into three categories. Each category focused on a certain aspect. The first category addressed the Views of students on the instructors . the second category was based on the views of students on the infrastructure. The final part was dedicated to the views of students on the online courses. The participants were asked to choose only one of the five options provided, and they were informed that their responding would be used for research purposes only.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed through several steps: coding and comparing questionnaire, interpreting data, analyzing and grouping similar frequent responses, and finally, stating the conclusion. Responses to the items of the scale were presented descriptively in percentage and frequencies.

3.4 Procedure

Although the questionnaire was carefully built, yet , the study was preceded

by a pilot study to examine the content and the elements of the questionnaire. The result of the pilot study yielded results which encouraged the researcher to continue with his questionnaire.

Students were first guided and instructed about the content of the questionnaire so they can gain familiarity of how they go through it. Each question was given sufficient time to ensure clear and concise answer. Students' feedback was collected immediately after finishing it and kept for later coding and analysis. Finally, the data was coded, categorized, and interpreted statistically.

IV- Results

The results obtained through the questionnaire distributed among the undergraduate students of the English Department at faculty of Arts in the university of Tripoli were briefly summarized into three sections:

Section 1: Views of students on the instructors:

- 1- 58% disagreed that instructors provided timely and frequent feedback on tests, reports, assignments, etc. to help students improve.
- 2- 47% strongly disagreed on the idea that instructors explained course material clearly and concisely.
- 3- 61%strongly disagreed that instructors monitored all students' online discussion.

Section 2: Views of students on the infrastructure.

- 1- 36% strongly agreed that internet service is available at all times.
- 2- 38% strongly disagree that great cellular connection covers all their area.
- 3- 69% strongly agreed that a smart phone is used to follow up online classes .

Section 3: Views of students on the online courses

- 1- 61% **strongly disagreed** that online courses provided students with a better instruction than that received in face-to-face instruction.



- 2- 50% agreed that online courses were taught in a form of texts and pre-recorded lectures.
- 3- 52% strongly disagreed that online courses were regularly updated.
- 4- 41% strongly disagreed that instructors used high quality material.

V. Discussion:

The current study examined the views of the students on the online teaching courses. Such a topic has drawn the attention worldwide. Such an attention was aroused by the spread of COVID 19 pandemic. When the WHO classified it in march 2020 as so, it suggested a necessity for physical distancing. Education worldwide was to be accessed only via online means. All educational institutions were ordered by their governments to continue education online. For some countries the transition was so smooth. Such smoothness was the outcome of their readiness , experience, and infrastructures.

As Libya was one of these countries who had to adopt this system, the same reasons made it challenging for Libyans. it took Libyan students and instructors some time to adjust to this system. Most instructors lacked the experience for conducting their classes easily. Similarly, students had even worse conditions. Experience, infrastructure and readiness comprised real challenges for them.

Even examinations couldn't be conducted via online. Instead, the English department had to violate safety majors for physical distancing because it didn't have the ability to conduct exams online. To be more specific, the results were presented in a form of three sections. Each section has focused on certain area related to samples' views on certain targeted point. The results were discussed, compared and contrasted to the literature composed so far.

At first, beginning with views of students on the instructor, the result showed that respondents were not satisfied with their instructors performance in terms of their timely feedback, explanation of the material, and interaction with the students. 58% of students disagreed on the idea that instructors provided timely and frequent feedback on tests, reports, assignments, etc. to help students improve.

Instructor engagement and feedback are critical to student learning and mastery as well as course satisfaction (Paechter, Maier, & Macher, 2010, p. 227). As a student noted in a study done by Deggs et al (2010), “The longer I waited for feedback, I would lose motivation and confidence to proceed with the next assignment. On the flipside, the more immediate the responses, the more willing and motivated I felt to push ahead with course material” (p. 696).

Moreover, about 61% strongly disagreed that Instructors monitored all students' online discussion. In addition, 47% strongly disagreed that instructors explained course material clearly and concisely. Online course material is an ever developed process. It requires hard constant work. Timely and relevant feedback is also seen as a critical component of effective learning in an online classroom.

Additional expertise was needed in the technical arena for teaching online, and many noted this differentiation. Ragan (2012) stated that preparation of an online course is intense and complicated. In addition to the usual work of updating and revising course content and syllabi, the technical aspect of modifying course content so it can be read, accessed, and linked to electronic sources is daunting for a novice (p. 83).

Garces-Ozanne and Sullivan (2014) discussed that though student goals, particularly if grade related, impacted student satisfaction, students did not always have realistic expectations regarding their test scores or final grades (p. 88). How faculty approached feedback and assessment for these students was a critical component to student's assessment of their abilities and approach to learning, and rubrics were an important part of this evaluation cycle (Wyss, Freedman, & Siebert, 2014, pp. 100, 105).

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Such sluggishness of online program adoption has negatively impacted EFL undergraduates at the faculty of Arts in Tripoli University. According to Delaney-Klinger et al (2014), faculty without a background in online teaching or online learning were at a disadvantage and did not have the tools required to effectively teach in this medium, and this had a negative impact on their students (p. 47).

Only 69% strongly agree that a smart phone is used to follow up online



classes. And 38% strongly disagreed that great cellular connection covers all their area. McQuiggan states that “Faculty’s initial teaching model is typically born from that of their own teachers, and they teach as they were taught; however, few have any online experience as a student or a teacher” (2012, p. 27). Ragan et al (2012) stated, “The transition by instructors from a face-to-face format to the online classroom requires careful adaptation of a wide variety of skills and competencies” (p. 84).

Herman (2012), that faculties who hadn’t taught online and suddenly found themselves being asked to do so had a negative perception of online courses in general, and especially if the faculty did not feel they had received the appropriate training to teach online.

Section 3: Views of students on the online courses:

In the early days of online learning, some erroneously considered online courses, the content and assessment, to be easier than the face to face equivalent course (Keramidas, 2012, p. 26). He also added that by 2010, over 4.6 million people, about 25% of college students, were enrolled in a course offered via the internet (p. 25). These online courses changed how institutions of higher learning offered classes, often reducing their on campus course offerings in the process, as classes were made available in anytime, anywhere formats. However, 61% of Libyan undergraduates strongly disagreed that online courses provided students with a better instruction than that received in face-to-face instruction.

The availability of online courses is even more appreciated by those in rural areas, who may not have ready access to education (Keramidas, 2012, p. 26). The task of preparing online material has always been a controversial issue to the experts in this field. While some have focused on the “whats”, others were interested in the “hows”. McQuiggan (2012) stated, “It must be noted that classroom teaching is not always teacher-centered and online teaching is not always student-centered; this is a false dichotomy. In fact, in some cases faculty simply put their lectures online and call it online teaching” (p. 32).

50% agreed that Online courses were taught in a form of Texts and pre-recorded lectures. And that 52% strongly disagreed that online courses were regularly updated. Moreover, 41% strongly disagreed on the idea that instructors used a high quality material. Ragan (2012) stated that preparation

of an online course is intense and complicated. In addition to the usual work of updating and revising course content and syllabi, the technical aspect of modifying course content so it can be read, accessed, and linked to electronic sources is daunting for a novice (p. 83).

Mupinga, Nora, and Yaw (2006) suggested that faculty who taught online needed to not only understand the online learning environment, but also the student learning styles, needs, and expectations. A broad understanding of pedagogy and student learning styles is a must. "No particular learning styles were found to be predominant among the online students; hence, the design of online learning activities should strive to accommodate multiple learning styles" (p.185- 188).

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IV. Conclusion and Recommendations:

The current study was conducted to answer the research question about the Libyan students' views on the effectiveness of the online program. A questionnaire has been conducted to obtain students' feedback on the issue of the current paper.

The questionnaire revealed shocking results related to the online courses effectiveness on the side of the students. The majority complained of lack of experience. Infrastructures, and content of courses.

It is recommended that the government should take some more serious steps towards online learning. Regular training and workshops have to be held throughout the year. In addition, A technical governmental support or sponsorship for instructors and students to tackle the lack of simple logistics such as computers, strong internet coverage, and electricity.

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Role of Technology in Teaching English as a Foreign Language at the University of Benghazi Language Center (UOBLC)

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Abstract

The world has become a global village, if not a global tent, in which all people can contact with each other more easily and more effectively. The only barrier that might hinder people from contacting with each other is the barrier of language. Hence, several English language centers have been established for teaching and learning English. This paper is directed to highlight the integration of technology in teaching English at the UOBLC. The researcher, General Director of the UOBLC, used a qualitative research method to fulfil this study. Interviewing 18 teachers of English teaching at the UOBLC regarding the integration of technology in teaching English at the UOBLC represents the primary resource, while literature review regarding technology and teaching English at the UOBLC represent the secondary resource in this study. The findings of the study show that integrating technology in teaching English at the UOBLC is core and essential as it helps teachers present the educational materials more effectively and helps learners use English in communicative situations. Based on the findings obtained, the researcher presents some recommendations regarding the integration of technology in teaching English at language centers in general and at the UOBLC specifically. The researcher, also, recommends motivating both teachers and learners of English to use technology in language learning and teaching.

Keywords: Language use; technological devices; Internet; computer; globalized world





1. Rationale

The most prominent characteristic of the 21st century is the shift to the globalized world in which the entire world has almost-totally been dominated by technology and the Internet. In this regard, Omar (2018) believes that “it is a matter of fact that people in the 21st century live in an era of technology almost dominated by the Internet. Media have become indispensable in our life in this era in a way that they become an integral part of our culture” (p. 181). People all over the world regardless their languages, cultures, beliefs, traditions, and so on are now able to contact each other in a second with no barriers except the barrier of language. Hence, it has become a must for people to learn a language to function as a mediator among them. This language with no single doubt is English, at least for the time being. English, as we all know, is the language of knowledge and technology.

English, based on Devrim and Bayyurt (2010) “has become a global lingua franca. It is the most commonly spoken foreign language, language of media, language of technology, and language of science” (p. 4). For that reason, I, as the general director of the University of Benghazi Language Center, have directed the efforts towards teaching English at the Center to be used not to be learned, basing mainly on technology. I have been convinced of the role and importance of technology in teaching English as a foreign language because, as Omar (2021a) emphasizes, learners of English become more enthusiastic in learning and using the language when they become able to associate language to an action in reality through technology. This is also supported by Elmajdoubi and Yahya (2021), stating that “a crucial matter of the 21st century is becoming more associated with the integration of digital technologies into educational systems” (p. 153).

2. Literature Review

Various research and studies reveal the fact that using technology in teaching and learning English enhances the process of both teaching and learning English. Technology, in fact, provides great opportunities to learners not only to learn language, but also to use language in authentic situations. It, also, helps teachers of English find the most appropriate methods and strategies of teaching English effectively. Thanks to the Internet, people all over the world can easily contact with each other. This part of the study is dedicated to literature review relevant to the topic of the study.

2.1 Teaching English in Libya

Various studies and research reveal that the history of teaching English in Libya has always been unsuccessful due to several factors, amongst of which are the use of traditional methods of teaching, such as grammar translation method and audio-lingual method and the lack of technological devices in teaching. For instance, (Omar, 2014) presents some of the challenges encountered by teachers and learners of English in Libya in “teachers’ and students’ skills in using technology, availability of technological devices, and the families’ understanding of the benefits of technology in learning” (p. 58). In this regard, Omar (2021) clarifies that “using technology in some developing countries, including Libya, was not that easy due to various physical and nonphysical conditions. Several studies and research in the Libyan context reveal that the unavailability of technological devices represents one of the biggest physical challenges encountered” (p. 239).

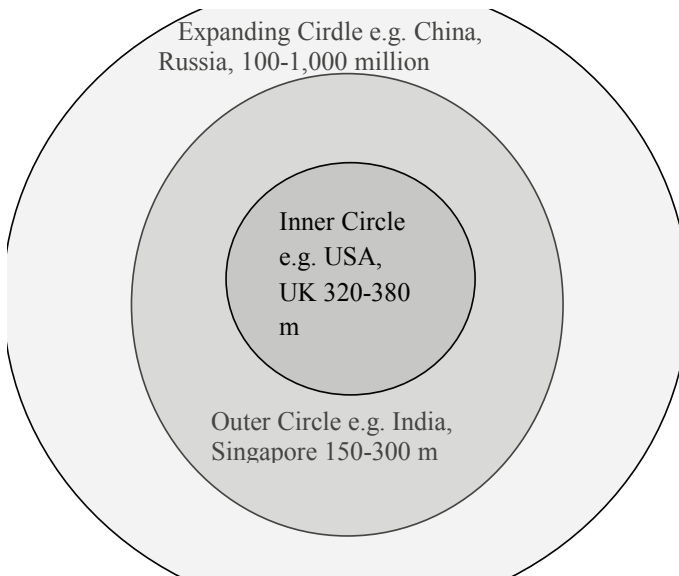
English in Libya is taught and learned as a foreign language, where it is taught and used just only in the classroom. In contrast to learners of English as a second language, where learners find opportunities outside the classroom to practice the language, learners of English as a foreign language lack this opportunity. Even in the classroom, all the time is dedicated to teachers to use the language, and the learners sit passively as sponges absorb blindly whatever given to them by their teachers. Hence, it has become a must that teachers of English find a way and create an atmosphere for learners to use English continuously and authentically.

According to Kachru’s Three Circles of English (Walker, 2010; Schneider, 2011), which classifies countries based on how English is used, Libya, as most Developing Countries, is classified in the Expanding Circle. Kachru sees that English is classified into three types: English as a native language (ENL), where English is used by people as a mother tongue or first language (L1); English as a second language (ESL), where English is used by people in their daily-life routines, media, education, and in the country system; English as a foreign language (EFL), where English is used as a class subject in classrooms. In this vein, Jenkins (1996) argues that

we are faced with a situation in which we now have two categories of English: first, that used internationally, whether in the core countries (Britain, the USA, Australia) or as an official language in

the ESL countries such as India; and second, that used anywhere in the world, between speakers from countries for whom English does not have international functions. (p. 10)

Having a look at Kachru's diagram shows that there is more interest in learning English in Expanding Circle countries, where Libya belongs, than other countries in other circles with an estimated number of 1.86 billion users of English, which constitutes almost 64% of the total users of English in the world. What is interesting in this rate is that the majority of users of English as a foreign language are from China and Russia. This, of course, shows the importance of learning English in the world. Users of English as a second language in the Outer Circle countries also represent almost 16%, estimated roughly 300 million, from the total users of English in the world, and the majority come from former colonies of the British Empire, such as India, Malaysia, Singapore, Ghana, Kenya, and others. The diagram shows that about 20%, roughly 380 million, of the users of English come from the Inner Circle, where English is used as a native language in countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The diagram below represents Kachru's three circles of English.



What is really noticed in Kachru's circle is that English is used as a foreign language and a second language more than it is used as a native language, which makes English an international language belonging to all people over the world. Of course, this wide spread of English creates what is called World Englishes (WE), which functions against the norms of standard English dominated by native speakers of English. In this vein, Seidlhofer (Cited in Omar, 2013) argues that "the most consequences of the global spread of English for the teaching of English has been the questioning of the native speakers' ownership of English" (p. 321).

Furthermore, Rampton (1990, cited in Al-Mutairi, 2020) suggests replacing the concept of native speakers of English with the concept of expert speakers of English for those who speak English with proficiency. That is the reason why Jenkins (2002) enhances the idea that some nonnative speakers of English deviate from native norms of English and use English as a lingua franca with some kind of creativity, yet it is considered English with other names, such as American English, Canadian English, Indian English, Malaysian English, African English, and so on.

Based on the discussion above, it has become essential that I determine the location of Libya in the three circles because, as Chew (2010) believes, the diagram provides scholars with information about how English spreads and is used in various sociolinguistics contexts. It is also crucial that I pose the discussion of who teaches English in the Libyan English settings. As Libya is classified as a country in the Expanding Circle, I will focus mainly on how English is taught in the countries that belong to such a circle.

There is a hot debate whether native-speaking teachers (English teachers) or nonnative-speaking teachers (local teachers) teach English in countries in Expanding Circle. Some scholars prefer local teachers while others prefer native-speaking teachers. For instance, a study by Liu (2007) shows the priority of teaching English in countries like Thailand, Korea, Japan, and China, to nonnative-speaking teachers over native-speaking teachers. The study reveals that learners of English in the abovementioned countries prefer local teachers as they can understand English well when it is taught in their mother tongue. Tang (1997) (Cited in Liu, 2007) also prefers local teachers because they are familiar with the challenges learners of English encounter while learning English in classroom. In addition, local teachers base on their own experience in learning English in Expanding Circle countries to predict these challenges and can find out the most suitable remedies for tackling these challenges.



Other scholars prefer native-speaking teachers to teach English in Expanding Circle countries. For instance, O'Neill and Gish (2008) believe that language is culture, so language should be taught and learned within the frame of its culture. Thus, they prefer native-speaking teachers to teach in Expanding Circle countries because they can bring the English culture inside the classroom. Through the use of English as part of their own culture, native-speaking teachers function as a real model in using English in various communicative situations, where they help learners use the language as its native users do. Jenkins (2003) supports O'Neill and Gish in the priority of native-speaking teachers over nonnative-speaking teachers, emphasizing that "given the fact that native speakers are widely held to make better teachers of English than non-native speakers" (p. 106).

In addition to basing on the idea of language is culture, Jenkins (2003) bases her preference to native-speaking teachers to their English fluency and accuracy as well proficiency and knowledge of the most up-to-date strategies and methods of teaching English in their Developed Countries. Quirk (1990), also, prefers native-speaking teachers to teach English not only in Expanding Circle countries, but also in Outer Circle countries like India and Nigeria.

Of course, other hot debates have been discussed on methods of teaching to be used in the countries in the three circles. What is noticed in the countries in the Expanding Circle is that the government imposes the method of teaching English basing on its political and ideological grounds over educational grounds. Most governments in the Expanding Circle countries prefer traditional methods, such as grammar translation method or audio-lingual method, not taking into considerations teachers' or learners' preferences and attitudes. (Kirkpatrick, 2006). Of course, such a policy in education leads to resistance by both teachers and learners, such as the resistance of the task-based method of teaching English by teachers and learners in Sri Lanka (McKay & Bokhorst-Heng, 2008).

2.2 Technology and Teaching English at the University of Benghazi Language Center

The University of Benghazi Language Center (UOBLC henceforth) is a public language center under the administrative authority of the University of Benghazi. It was established in 1986 as a public center to provide language services to the university students and others in the community. Since August 2021, the date of being assigned as the general director of the Center, the policy and the view of the UOBLC have changed dramatically to involve other

categories of learners and new technologies, open new branches in faculties of the University and activate the old ones, and change methods and strategies of teaching and theories of learning.

Based on my 29-year experience of teaching English as a foreign language in Libya and as a second language in the United States, I gave my instructions to the teachers at the Center to use technology in teaching and create authentic situations in the classroom through technology. I have always been convinced of the role of technology in teaching and learning English. Technology as Dalziel and others (2016) explains “provides new ways to share great teaching ideas” (p. xi), and it also “has transformed the learning environment into a learning community where knowledge is transacted and negotiated” (Muman, 2021, p. 192).

Because of integration of technology with teaching English, the UOBLC has now been working on all its full capacity. I have decided from the first day of being assigned the director of the Center to improve the process of learning English at the Center from knowing about English into using English in communicative situations. Hence, I provided the teachers with all technological devices they needed to perform their tasks properly. I, for instance, provided the Center with new up-to-date all-in-one computers, data shows, the latest smartboards, TVs, and two Internet accesses.

For the first time from its establishment, kids have been involved to learn English at the Center. We started accepting kids from ages six to nine in a category and from ten to 13 in another category, being taught by the most qualified teachers with master degrees or professional teachers in majors of language acquisition and applied linguistics, using the course ‘*Let’s Go*’. From the first semester, we had 17 groups of kids with a number exceeds 600 kids from ages six to 13. Of course, we based mainly in technology in teaching, so we updated the methods of teaching to cope with technology. Technology, as Omar (2014) states, plays an essential role in teaching and learning foreign languages at the 21st century. Most of modern methods of teaching and learning foreign languages now benefit from technology to improve students’ learning and teachers’ teaching.

Based on Ihnesh (2020) “foreign language teaching experts usually agree upon the fact that the communicative approach, integrated approach, and technology can improve listening and speaking skills” (p. 17). Hence, the policy of the Center was concentrated on not only providing technology to the main center in Benghazi, but also providing technology to all the Center’s branches: Faculty



of Arts and Sciences in Kufra, Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Jallo, Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Solouq, Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Qamins, Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Abiar, Academy of Military and Strategic Sciences at Rajma, Faculty of Nursing at Kowaifia, Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Toukra, Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Marij, Faculty of Education in Marij.

Of course, this policy and vision had already improved the level of learners of English at the Center. This improvement had already shown in the improvement of their levels of English in school, based on parents' speeches and declaration. Thanks to integration of technology to methods of teaching, the Center has had excellent reputation, and the number of the learners in the Center increases from less than 200 learners in Benghazi Center in August 2021 into more than 1600 in October 2021 and from less than 400 in its four old-branches in August 2021 into more than 3600 in its ten branches. In addition, the Center has been accredited as the first center in Libya to conduct IELTS exams and UOBPT exams.

To know the importance of technology in learning and teaching English, Dudeney and Hocky (2007, pp. 7-8) provide various advantages for integrating technology learning English as:

- Younger learners are growing up with technology. For these learners the use of technology is a way to bring the outside world into the classroom, and some of these younger learners will in turn become teachers themselves.
- Technology, especially the Internet, presents us with new opportunities for authentic tasks and materials, as well as an access to a wealth of ready-made ELT materials.
- Technology is offered with published materials such as coursebooks and resource books for teachers.
- Learners increasingly expect language schools to integrate technology into teaching.
- Technology offers new ways for practicing language and assenting performance.
- Technology is becoming increasingly mobile. It can be used not only in the classroom, lecture hall, computer room, or self-access center, but it can be also used at home, on the way to school and in Internet café.
- Using a range of ICT tools can give learners exposure to and practice in all of the four main language skills - speaking, listening, writing and reading.

Noeth and Volkov (2004), also, highlight the role of technology in classroom, where teachers can demonstrate lessons and provide new materials more effectively. They provide various several advantages for the use of computer in the classroom as: (1) the use of computers can increase students learning in basic skill area, (2) the integration of computers with traditional instruction produces higher academic in a variety of subject areas, (3) students learn more quickly when learning with the aid of computers, and (4) students like learning with computers and their attitudes towards learning are positively affected by computer use.

Similarly, Brinton (2001) emphasizes the role of technology in teaching as technology “can reinforce for the students the direct relation between the language classroom and the outside world” (p. 461). Bajcsy (2002) recommends the integration of technology in methods of teaching English as technology have various advantages as the follows: (1) it can assist learners to organize and provide structures for new materials, (2) it can assist learners and teachers to interact and contact with each other anytime and anywhere, (3) it can assist in the authentication and prioritization of Internet material, and (4) it can simulate, visualize, and interact scientific structures, processes, and models. Also, Omar (2021b) believes that “it is therefore essential that people not only know about technology and the Internet, but are also aware of how to use them in order to be part of this globalized world” (p. 31).

3. Methodology of the Study

This part of the study is dedicated to the methodology used to reach findings and present recommendations.

3.1 Objectives of this Study

The main objective of this study is to highlight the role and importance of technology in teaching English as a foreign language at English language centers in general and UOBLC in specific. This study might help directors of English language centers set up new strategies for helping Libyan learners of English at all categories learn English effectively and Libyan teachers of English use the most effective methods in teaching English. Also, I hope that this study might be used as an educational resource in the fields of learning and teaching English as a foreign language at English language centers in Libya.

3.2 Problems of the Study

As a general director of the UOBLC since August 2021, I have focused my efforts to enhance the process of using English in authentic situations through



technology. Studies and research in teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Libya reveal that Libyan learners of English know about English, but they do not know how to use English communicatively. For instance, Ahmad (2001) assures that the situations of teaching and learning EFL in public and private schools in Libya are fully unsatisfactory, and almost all Libyan students are poor users of English in oral activities. Aini and Normazla (2008) (Cited in Gaibani, 2020) found that foreign language learners find difficulties in communication with English when they participate English in interpersonal communication, public speaking, and gatherings.

Abu Srewel (2002) believes that Libyan students cannot use English in reality due to the traditional methods of teaching English in Libyan public and private schools. Also, Shihiba (2011) notices that Libyan graduate students from English departments in Libyan universities cannot use English in communicative situations due to their poor speaking and listening skills. Omar (2019) states that “it has become common in most settings in Developing Countries, more specifically in the Libyan setting that we hear people say that learning foreign languages, namely English is challenging” (p. 518). Also, Omar (2014) highlights the challenging of using technology in teaching and learning English in Libya, stating:

Using technology in language learning is not an easy task because using technology in language learning requires some requirements, amongst of which are the teacher’s and students’ skills in using technology, availability of technological devices, and the family’s understanding of the benefits of technology in learning. (pp. 57-58)

The situation is the same at UOBLC. Hence, the researcher sees that there is a problem needs more investigation and providing remedies regarding this issue.

3.3 Research Questions

To reach findings and provide recommendations, the researcher has already posed the following main question to be answered:

- What is the role of technology in enhancing learners of English as a foreign language at UOBLC proficiency in using English in communicative situations in reality?

3.4 Scope and Limits of the Study

The scope of this study is directed to identifying the role of technology in teaching English as a foreign language at the UOBLC. The participants of this

study comprise 18 teachers of English selected randomly from the staff at the UOBLC.

3.5 Methodology of the Study

To fulfil this study, reach findings, and provide recommendations, the researcher used qualitative research method, basing on interviewing 18 teachers of English at the UOBLC as a primary resource and using literature review regarding the topic of the study as a secondary resource. The researcher uses this method to understand the main question of this study from the perspectives of the participants as they teach at the UOBLC. Meaning and interpretation of the reality were assumed to be embedded in the experiences of the participants of the study, and my role, as a researcher, was to get these meanings through my interpretation of the data obtained. I was trying to find out the situation of using technology in teaching EFL at the UOBLC. Later, I proposed remedies and presented recommendations to improve the situation of teaching EFL at the UOBLC.

3.6 Participants of the Study

The participants of the study are 18 teachers of English, who teach English at the UOBLC in Benghazi and its branches. The participants of the study were selected randomly and voluntarily to fulfil the objectives of this study. The participants have been teaching in various levels and various categories.

3.7 Data Collection

The primary data sources include interviewing 18 Libyan teachers of English at the UOBLC in Benghazi and its ten branches. Interviewing the participants of the study is essential in collecting the data of the study because it enables the researcher to comprehend the reality from the eyes of the participants. The researcher could get closer to the meaning of the reality and understand it as the participants would see and understand. Interviewing the participants of the study provided the researcher with great opportunities to know more about the phenomenon of the study. Through the face-to-face interaction with the participants of the study, the researcher could identify important points relevant to integration of technology in teaching EFL at the UOBLC and the effects of this integration on Libyan learners of English progress in using English in communicative situations.

4. Data Analysis

The researcher interviewed the participants of the study regarding the role and importance of integrating technology in teaching English at the UOBLC.



After collecting the data needed to fulfil the study, the researcher analyzed the data to reach findings and present recommendations later. Through the data analysis, all the participants (100%) emphasize the importance of integrating technology in teaching English at the Center. For instance, Samia believes that technology saves time and efforts and provides the piece of information more effectively.

Similarly, Noura said, “Technology improves the process of education as it is more effective and reaches the information more easily”. Sahar, also, said, “I use technology in teaching to practice listening and speaking”. Ahmad uses the computer and data show for kids to show them cartoons and songs. Salwa graduated from the International University and has had quite experience in using technology in teaching, so she completely bases on technology in teaching, even in the exams. Asma uses the computer in listening, so that the kids can hear the correct accent by English native speakers. Whereas, Salem integrates body language with technology through doing an action and associates it with a picture or an action through the data show. In this case, he is following the behaviourism theory in learning.

The data analysis shows that 12 teachers of English (75%) are using technology in teaching inside and outside the classroom. For instance, Said uses Instagram to follow up with the learners outside the classroom. He set up a room that gathers all the learners in the third level, where he teaches. He sends the assignments through the group and asks the learners to answer and bring it the other day. He, also, opens discussions through the group and gives the space to the learners to discuss in English. He sends texts for reading and asks the learners to answer the questions. He believes that most of the learners find difficulties in the skill of reading, so he focuses mainly on this skill to improve through Instagram. He justifies the use of technology inside and outside the classroom because this generation is accustomed of technology and “uses technology almost 24/7”, as he said.

Similarly, Sana uses Instagram outside the classroom for providing extra materials to the learners to practice and use English with each other. She said, “I use technology inside the classroom and outside the classroom, too. I use Instagram for sending extra materials as videos and songs because I see it is more effective and beneficial for learners to practice English”. Samar uses the Zoom with a student that is in Tunisia and cannot attend the classes, so she is working through Zoom to cover up the missing classes. Mouna creates a group through WhatsApp, where she sends questions and other activities for learners to answer and do. She asks them to discuss in groups and bring the answers the

other day in classroom to discuss. Hashim, who teaches IELTS, bases mainly on technology inside and outside the classroom. He uses for instance IWB (Interactive Whiteboard) in the classroom and YouTube, Talk Show, Instagram, WhatsApp, Tik Tok videos outside the classroom. He said, “I provide extra materials through YouTube, Talk Show, Instagram, WhatsApp, Tik Tok, and the Website of the British Council to make students familiar with these exams”.

The data analysis shows that the participants of the study encourage and motivate the learners to use technology not only inside the classroom, but also outside the classroom. They provide the learners with websites concerning with learning and using English. For instance, Ahmad provided the learners with a website regarding irregular verbs in English. He said, “When I teach past tense, I give the students a website that has all irregular verbs in the past. I save time and ask the students to search and use the Internet in learning. They have to be confident of themselves and use technology in learning English”.

5. Findings of the Study

Back to the main questions of the study, the researcher obtained the following findings:

- Integration of technology in teaching English at the UOBLC is a policy imposed by the administration of the Center.
- Using technology in teaching English at the UOBLC helps both teachers in teaching English effectively and help learners use English communicatively.
- Teachers of English integrate technology in teaching English at the Center to facilitate the processes of teaching and learning English.
- Teachers of English at the UOBLC use technology even outside the Center to motivate the learners to use English inside and outside the classroom.
- Teachers of English at the UOBLC use various types of technology inside the classroom: computer, data show, IWB, audio, TV, Internet based on their preferences, needs, and capabilities.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings obtained, the researcher presents the following recommendations:

- Providing English language centers in Libya with the most up-to-date technological devices. This is enhanced by Marzano, Pichering, and Polloch (2001) (Cited in Omar, 2018), explaining that “one of the best



ways to learn a new word is to associate an image with it” (p. 181).

- Building the healthy educational environment through integrating technology with teaching methods because, as Loretta, Maria, and Donn, (2000) point out, “students need materials that allow them to develop English language proficiency in listening comprehension and speaking” (p. 135).
- Shifting classroom from teacher-centered to student-centered through motivation and encouraging the learners to lead the process of learning inside and outside the classroom. This leads, as Abdulkader (2021) believes, to autonomous learners that help learners learn and use English on their owns.
- Motivation the learners to practice English with each other and their teacher through the use of technology inside and outside the classroom. In this regard, Omar (2014) believes that “technology provides students with opportunities to have authentic conversations with native speakers under the guidance and control of their teachers. In the technological environment, the students need to be active in using English in different situations and locations” (p. 58).
- Involving students in activities relevant to English culture through technology. This is enhanced by Means and Haertel (2004), who believe that “technologies can support ways of learning that would otherwise be difficult to achieve” (p. 17).
- Providing classrooms at English language centers with visual aids, computers, data shows, TVs, audio machines, and Internet because, as Ihnesh (2020) explains, “the integration of teaching methods and technology is feasible and desirable. The educational technology can serve as the content of the course and that it can also provide the context in which other content, for example culture, takes place” (p. 18)
- Encouraging teachers of English to integrate technology in their methods of teaching and considering technology as an integral part of the processes of language learning and language teaching because technology has “become central to language practice” (Motteram, 2013, p. 5)
- Involving the globalized world and be aware of the most up-to-date methods of teaching and theories of learning through technology. Hence Shyamlee (2012) encourages teachers to involve technology in teaching because technology “provides so many options as making teaching interesting and also making teaching more productive in terms of improvements” (p. 150)

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IV

E-Learning: Content Creation and Methods of Availability

The Need for Utilizing (CAT) Tools as an Educational Technology Instrument for Training Translation Students Universities in Libyan

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Abstract

Technology has permeated almost all our routines and become an essential part of our life. In the last few years, interest in improving the teaching of translation increased immensely. The term Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) as a field of Machine Translation (MT) covers a wide variety of software tools that are employed to assist the translator. Currently, CAT tools can offer a wide range of competing commercial CAT products that are enabled for Arabic. This study is devoted to explore the significance of using CAT tools as an educational technology instrument in training translation students in the classroom. The aim is to shed light on CAT tools aspect as a new trend and show its advantages and merits when it is integrated in the teaching curricular and utilized in appropriate classroom. The significance of study lies in the fact that it deals with this new trend that being used in teaching translation at university level, enabling students acquire translation competences and skills needed for the market. The data collection methods used in the study include a questionnaire addressed to translation instructors aimed to obtain their perspectives on the significance of using CAT tools as a smart learning and teaching resource at the university. Initial findings of the study revealed that CAT tools have not been utilized in the classroom yet due to lack of awareness among university circles, lack of infrastructure, lack of curriculum review, unfamiliarity of translation technology tools, and ineffective educational policies. Finally, it is highly recommended that the Ministry of Higher Education in Libya should seriously modernize Libyan

universities translation teaching programs, and to take steps towards including translation technology courses in their curricula.

Key words: CAT tools utilization, translation teaching, translation technology, curricula reform.



I. INTRODUCTION

A. Preamble

This study explores CAT tools aspect as a field of Machine Translation (MT). The concept of Computer Assisted Translation (CAT) tools has recently been defined by the European Association of Machine Translation (n.d.) as “translation software packages which are designed primarily as an aid for the human translator in the production of translations” (para. 3). In most cases, these terms refer to Translation Memory (TM) tools, i.e., software that stores the user’s previous translations in the computer database, which the program draws on for suggestions when new texts are being translated (Hutchins 1995). Actually, translation technology does not only have a profound impact on the nature of the translation process but also on the translator’s cognition.

In the last 20 years, there has been an increase in the amount of knowledge and information. Hence, there is a need to familiarize students with modern translation technologies to embrace progress and acquaint them with translation technology to meet the market requirements and needs. Because translation is an essential tool for transferring knowledge and achieving communication, there has been a rapid increase in the use of Computer Assisted Translation (CAT) tools as a pedagogical resource for training student translators and developing their instrumental competence. Consequently, translation technology has become an integral part of the translation process and has changed the nature of this process in quite fundamental ways (Christensen/Schjoldager 2010:1; O’Brien 2012: 1)

This study is devoted to explore the role of using CAT tools as a technology instrument for translation from English into Arabic and vice versa. The prime rationale behind this study is to raise awareness among translation teachers and students of (about) the significance and effectiveness of using CAT tools in both translating and teaching translation at Libyan universities.



CAT tools have become a staple feature in the curricula of most translation departments throughout the world. Researchers in the field of translation teaching such as Alkhatnai (2017), Alotaibi (2014), Gough (2011) and Mahfouz (2018) among others underscored the need for the curricula reform so that translators can adapt to modern market conditions. The ultimate goal of this study is to claim for the academic authorities to modernize Libyan universities and take serious steps towards establishing CAT tools programs in their curricula

B. Research Questions

The rationale behind researching in the area of machine translation stems from years of experience as a teacher of translation to undergraduate students at the College of Arts, Al-Khums. El-Mergib University for a period of more than fifteen years, I am obliged to submit - even if it is a little - what this period of time has provided me with practical experience in the field of translation and Arabization. The main observation made during that period, as (Deeb, 2005:27), states was that undergraduate students often seem to have higher expectations of performance than what they can actually perform. Students, nowadays, prefer to use technology instruments when doing translation processing tasks. They no longer use pen and paper and classic dictionaries for translation tasks. Instead, they use smart mobile phones, I Pads and Lab tops. Their ambition is that they need to be able to keep pace with global developments through the implementation of modern educational tools such as Google Translate or CAT tools applications. In view of this, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Why (CAT tools) are needed?, and how are they used in the classroom?
2. Why should CAT tools be taught at Libyan universities? What are their pedagogical benefits?
3. What are the impediments that control implementing CAT tools? And how to persuade translation specialists to introduce machine translation tools in the teaching of translation and in the training of student translators?

This study seeks, accordingly, to fill the knowledge gap in this regard, by—precisely—investigating the situation in Libyan universities, sounding

the opinion of key stakeholders, highlighting the necessary reforms needed, and setting guidelines for the necessary steps to take in order to introduce CAT tools in translation training curricula. The timing of this project is decisive as Libya is in a rebuilding stage. Part of this task is to conduct diagnostic studies, establish a baseline and propose urgent reform. There has never been a better time than now to start.

C. Significance of the study

The significance of study lies in the fact that it deals with a new trend that had attracted the attention of translation scholars in the world who have expressed their views in support of the use of CAT tools in translation teaching such as Hakkani et al. (1998: 4) who point out to three factors in the translation teaching context: (i) the changing nature of the translation profession, (ii) the new demands and practices in the field, and (iii) the changing profile of the learners who now use modern technology applications in various areas. Therefore, teaching CAT tools in Libyan universities is worth investing in, as it can revolutionize translation teaching and, consequently, translation practice. The ultimate goal of this study is that Libyan translators can adapt to modern market conditions.

D. Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to clarify the need for establishing CAT tools in Libyan universities. It also aims to show the picture of what is found in other international universities and suggest a practical approach that can be adopted by Libyan universities and make a case for urgent curriculum reform. The study also has the following objectives: 1) To raise awareness among university management, and IT centers about the need for establishing CAT tools in Libyan universities; 2) To shed light on the significance of translation technology to be harnessed in the field of English-Arabic-English Computer translation and in translation teaching; 3) To tackle the obstacles that led to the delay of implementing CAT tools in Libyan universities and to focus on the possible challenges that may encounter the users; and 4) To pave the way, through ICTs, for the introduction of CAT tools in the university classroom. By surveying the available related studies, and by analyzing the questionnaire responses, the study hopes to suggest a practical approach that can be followed by Libyan universities and make a case for urgent curriculum reform.



II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Brief History of CAT tools

The first appearance of CAT tools was in 1984 when two companies TRADOS GmbH in Germany and STAR in Switzerland were founded. After that, in 1988, the Japanese ETOC (Easy TO consult) was established. In 1992, TRADOS launched its products globally (Breikaa 2016: 12). Over the past decades, there has been an exponential increase in studies on machine translation from a variety of perspectives including, the need, assessment, requirements, expectations, implications and applications, e.g. Melby 1994; Lockwood 1995; Rochlin 1997; Texin 2003, Alkhatnai 2017 and Alotaibi 2020, among others.

Concerning the contribution of Arab scholars to the literature on CAT tools, there have been a few studies focusing on the role, importance, and future of CAT tools and MT in translation in the Arab world. Studies (in Arabic) investigated machine translation and CAT tools from a variety of perspectives including the need for automated translation, assessment of MT output, and the significance and role of MT in the globalization era. Of these, we may mention Bareikaa (2012); Al-Maani M, 2000 and Murtada H, (2002) among others.

C. The Gap in the Existing Literature

As attested by this review of the literature, the studies reviewed above do not relate to the Libyan context. Their findings are based on research conducted mainly in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, or in other non-Arab countries. Although they discuss key issues about translation technology that are of much relevance to Libya (familiarity/lack of familiarity with CAT tools, perception of these tools among teachers, learners and stakeholders, resistance to change, advocacy work, requirements for a proper implementation of CAT tools, training of trainers, etc.), they do not investigate the situation in Libyan Translation Studies Departments. Therefore, there is a big knowledge gap that needs to be filled. It may be formulated, in view of the research questions, as follows:

1. Why CAT tools were ignored in Libyan translation departments' curricula? Why are they now still overlooked / ignored?

2. Demand on utilizing CAT tools has been on the increase; so why is it that neither staff, nor academic institutions, have pushed for their introduction in the translation teaching programs?
3. Do Libyan teachers agree or disagree with some modern writers' views in favor of using CAT tools in teaching?
4. Why have CAT tools not been incorporated in the translation curricula in Libyan universities despite their effectiveness as a teaching and training resource?

The main advantage of this study over the previous ones is that it does not only pay a special attention to the significance of CAT tools to be implemented in the classroom but also suggest the possible type of CAT tools that can be utilized effectively.

III. MERTHODOLOGY

A . Instrument

The questionnaire plan was designed to include five sections. Each section comprises some questions. For example, translation technology–use related questions that included a close-ended question concern on whether the teachers and their students use translation software in the classroom or not, and open-ended questions asking for the reasons behind not adopting translation technology in Libyan universities, and when and how it can be adopted are provided. The open-ended questions are supplemented by extra space for the respondents to provide additional information and express their views. A close-ended question on teachers' agreement or disagreement with statements made by modern researchers and writers on the need to use translation software was put to the respondents.

B. Participants

The questionnaire was distributed to 60 randomly selected male and female faculty teaching English and Translation Studies teachers in different state and private institutions in Libya. Only 38 were filled and returned. 25 copies were filled by male teachers and eighteen were filled by females who work on both full-time and part-time in different institutions. In terms of qualification, nine teachers hold PhD degrees and the rest hold MA degrees in teaching English or Linguistics but only few hold a master's degree in Translation



Studies. To classify and analyze the responses, the questionnaire statistical analysis data has been divided into three axes.

C. Data Statistical Analysis

The questionnaire data was collected over a three-month period (February, March and April 2020); copies of the questionnaire were distributed electronically via email and personal contacts to ten Libyan Universities. The questionnaire data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics with SPSS 17.0 and Microsoft Excel 2013. The surveys included Likert-scale, open-ended, checkbox-type and ordering questions, some of which were optional.

In view of Table 7, for instance, it is noticed that fully 97% of the participants surveyed said that CAT tools should be adopted in Libyan universities. Regarding the benefits of using CAT tools in the classroom, 84% of the participants stated that using CAT tools would enhance the reliability and accuracy of the translation process as conducted by translation graduates. Moreover, 87% of the responses said that using CAT tools would raise the confidence of users. In addition, 97% said that using technology in teaching would be useful and time-saving, and 89% said that using CAT tools would help increase productivity. Besides, 79% said that using CAT tools would increase competency by providing the appropriate strategies for effective translation, and 97% believe that CAT tools would help improve the quality of the translation. Finally, 87% mentioned that using CAT tools would raise the confidence of the users. In general, the (Weighted Mean is 1.84) which indicates that the answers tended to the (True) answer, that is, Libyan universities hope envision to adopt using CAT tools in the classroom.

Furthermore, the questionnaire includes some comments and feedback provided by several participants in Libyan universities about their views and knowledge of the use of translation software in Libyan universities. These comments show that there is a total agreement about the benefits of CAT tools, but that the problem is how the use of CAT tools can be achieved.

It emerges from the participants' comments that: (1) it is important to conduct a needs assessment exercise as to equipping translation classrooms, properly qualifying teachers and providing all ancillary facilities; (2) there is awareness that machines propose but that it is humans who dispose, hence

the need for qualified teacher; (3) the advantages of harnessing modern technology for translation teaching are obvious; (4) the market requires mastery over modern technology; and (5) there is a need to familiarize teachers with modern translation technologies. The main insight, here, is that CAT tools are there to help, but it takes a well-trained teacher to properly train a high-performing translator, and a well-prepared infrastructure. Accordingly, the benefits to be derived from adopting CAT tools require adequate facilities and properly trained teaching staff.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Questionnaire Findings

The following findings proposed further down are based on the analysis of data collected from 38 participant teachers teaching translation studies courses in Libyan universities:

1. The current translation courses in Libyan universities do not include any reference to machine translation or any CAT tools. Students learn only the basics of Translation Studies as a discipline;
2. Translation software has not been used in Libyan universities until now because it is not included in the curricula;
3. The majority of teachers who participated in the study support the use of CAT tools in teaching translation courses in Libyan universities;
4. Curricula need to be revised, infrastructure should be provided and faculty members need further technical and subject-related training, especially with respect to translation technology and more support for in-service training of practicing translators is needed;
5. Participants in the questionnaire call for necessary measures to be considered to adopt using CAT tools in the classroom and point out the need for traditional methods of translation to be replaced by more adequate and effective ones;
6. Using CAT tools needs well-qualified users; therefore, universities should provide students with the necessary technical knowledge and skills to prepare them for the translation market;
7. Finally, the findings also have pedagogical and practical implications and would be very useful for translation trainers and translation tool developers.



B. Discussion

1. Why Libyan universities are lagging behind in implementing translation technology?

Based on the preceding sections of this study, the delay in implementing translation technology in Libyan universities arises from several factors. These factors are as follows: a) lack of awareness among learners, teachers and stakeholders about the significance of CAT tools and their relevance to both training and professional work; b) lack of skilled trainers and of technical support from the IT departments in the faculties where translation courses are taught; c) lack of infrastructure for using CAT tools in the classroom; and d) lack of CAT tools software in the Libyan market, and even where it is, software packages need to comprise initial training and after-sale service. As we can see, the factor related to “awareness” ranks first. Indeed, any future reform needs to start there. Also, as pointed out above, all other factors follow from this. Consequently, buy-in among all stakeholders is key, and this requires, first and foremost, significant advocacy work.

2. Challenges that obstacle implementing CAT tools in Libyan universities

It emerges from the participants’ comments that there is awareness among translation teachers about the impediments to introducing translation software. These impediments are: (1) lack of pressure by translation teachers to persuade the oversight authority to take the necessary steps; (2) lack of equipment and labs; (3) poor infrastructure (internet connectivity, and even power outages), (4) proper teacher-training; (5) lack of awareness among decision-makers, and insecurity; (6) lack of a stable oversight authority and poor financial resources. While the responses reiterate infrastructure-related and teacher-training issues, they point out more fundamental problems pertaining to political stability which are beyond the control of academic institutions. This does not prevent, however, the existing institutions to incept reform actions to be deployed when the situation goes back to normal.

V. CONCLUSION

A . The Questionnaire Conclusion

To sum up, in view of the results of the study, the delay in implementing

translation technology in Libyan universities was due to certain factors and obstacles: (i) firstly, machine translation is not seen as essential course in translation studies curricula, (ii) secondly, there is a lack of skilled trainers and technical support from the IT department, (iii) thirdly, there is no infrastructure for using CAT tools in the classroom; neither computers nor internet access are available in the classroom. To fill this, the findings suggest that some measures should be taken, some of which are of a methodological and pedagogical order, such as conducting diagnostic studies to assess how translation is taught and identify teacher and learner needs, while others are of an administrative and practical nature, such as espousing advanced technologies, providing the necessary equipment and training faculty in this respect. It is hoped that these results will prompt students and teachers to take stock of the situation and engage in calling for the necessary reforms that are likely to introduce CAT tools in curricula and in the classroom.

B. Why teach CAT tools in Libyan Universities?

Regardless of what the writers say about the impact of translation technology on the translation process and about the advantages and disadvantages of CAT tools, undoubtedly, the advantages of CAT tools will have a great influence on two groups of people: translation teachers and translation students:

i. With regard to translation teachers, the following objectives can be achieved: 1) reinforcing what the teacher is teaching, and customizing instruction; 2) enhancing the process of teaching and learning in classroom settings; 3) helping teachers refine and hone their teaching competence; 4) establishing a nexus between concepts and procedures and harnessing information and communication technology for practical tasks; 5) paving the way, through ICTs, for the introduction of CAT tools; 6) diversifying translation teaching methodologies, as well as teaching skills; and 7) fostering discussion forums about innovations and advances in technology and its use in translation teaching.

ii. With regards to the benefits of using CAT tools in Libyan universities for students of translation, the researcher lists the following advantages: 1) students will learn how to use CAT tools for terminological work and text processing; 2) students will learn how to work under the pressure of deadlines and how to edit their production; 3) students will gain self-



confidence and become autonomous; 4) students will see their motivation boosted as their abilities and skills are improved; and 5) students will have access to terminological resources such as tools to save time and to make translation more profitable.

Therefore, in order to keep pace and align with global academic curricula of teaching translation technology and to modernize Libyan universities translation teaching programs, Libyan universities must take steps towards including translation technology courses in their curricula. The time has come for the oversight authorities and academic bodies to realize that translation software has become an important aspect in academic circles.

E. The way ahead

In view of the discussion conducted in this study, two axes emerge as of paramount importance for any future reform. The first axis comprises awareness-raising and advocacy among translation teachers and students, administrative staff and faculty members, as well as the business community, and this, by introducing information about translation software. For example, this study, as well as other related studies, will provide data and theoretical information that prove the importance of using CAT tools in Libyan universities. Such information will assert the significance of teaching machine translation and giving a comprehensive knowledge about the need, role and benefits of utilizing and teaching CAT tools in the classroom. This information can be disseminated through meetings, workshops, symposia and conferences on machine translation. Translation Studies Departments must make sure for such a forum is also attended by representatives of the oversight authorities, and especially curriculum design and pedagogical reform departments. Besides, social media can be harnessed for the task, as a platform both for publicizing the various meetings and for disseminating their recommendations.

The second axis is related to the technical part of the project. This comprises the setting up of a Specialized Technical Committee (STC) to build internal capacity in Translation Studies Departments. The STC will liaise with IT entities, ICT service providers, technicians and experts for purposes developing specifications for necessary equipment. This community of practice should be able to advise about advanced CAT tools programs such as SDL Trados versions. Besides, the committee should be able to contact

international companies that produce the CAT tools programs most commonly used by English-Arabic translators: SDL Trados, MemoQ and Wordfast. In addition, it should be able to enter into long-term agreements with producers and/or developers to secure training and updates.

F. To suggest a possible CAT tools program for teaching

In view of the current developments, this study recommends establishing (SDL Trados Studio 2011 software) <http://www.sdl.com>, with recent versions in the university classroom. This program can offer practical applications of CAT tools in the classroom. Basically, this tool can be implemented in four types of courses:

- 1) Translation courses based on the training of translation skills;
- 2) Translation technology courses;
- 3) Translation terminology courses; and
- 4) Translation terminology management module of a CAT tool.

True, the software is still expensive and requires fairly powerful computers to work satisfactorily, but it is not expensive for high-income countries like Libya.

Recommendations

1. This study, hopefully, will initiate a healthy discussion on the challenges facing the implementation of CAT tools in Libyan universities.
2. The Ministry of Higher Education should plan and design pedagogical principles to suit the specific needs of the students.

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Metadiscourse in Academic Audio-Recorded Lectures: A Case Study of Libyan Lecturers from the Faculty of Sciences at Gharyan University

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Abstract

This study attempts to identify the use of metadiscourse (MD) in the Libyan science lectures and investigate the lecturers' perceptions towards the use of MD. Six audio-recorded lectures from the fields of chemistry, physics, and botany were selected in this study. To analyze this collected spoken data, Hyland's (2005) analytical framework of metadiscourse has been used. The findings showed that interactive metadiscourse was used more than interactional metadiscourse. Among all the subcategories, transitions, engagements and code glosses were the most common markers. The absence and lack of some categories were remarkable as self-mention and evidentials. The results of this study may suggest that when teaching or learning a language, metadiscourse should be given special consideration by both language instructors and students.

Key words: Academic Lecture – Metadiscourse – Libyan science lecturers – Hyland's framework – Interactive Markers – Interactional Markers.



1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many educational institutions around the world to set up their classes online in order to continue teaching and learning while preventing widespread infection. Since the outbreak, a few Libyan universities have been forced to quickly shift from traditional face-to-face instruction to online courses. Libyan lecturers at the faculty of



arts at Gharyan university were unable to deliver live lectures due to a lack of electricity and a poor internet connection; as a result, they recorded and uploaded their lectures to Microsoft Teams. For two semesters, the faculty of science at Gharyan University was the first to teach its students.

Generally speaking, academic lectures continue to be the primary mode of instruction in university settings, serving as an important means of communication (Flowerdew, 1994a). Academic lectures, like other academic genres, serve primarily to convey the knowledge base of a discipline to the audience thus, they are regarded as a pedagogical process genre (Thompson, 1994). As such, the functions of lectures include, but are not limited to, introducing key theories, concepts, and research (Young, 1990); integrating ideas from previous lectures and readings into the current lecture (Thompson, 1994); providing information not found in textbooks; and explaining complex constructs.

There are significant environmental and experiential differences between a learner attending an audio-recorded lecture and a learner attending a live lecture with the benefit of visual support in the form of gestures and facial expressions. More importantly, delivering a lengthy and complex monologue audio-recorded lecture is a real challenge because lecturers must make it engaging speeches, not dry talks, and provide students with a “guiding pathway” (Revell & Wainwright, 2009, p.216) to help them recognize the subject comprehensively by placing knowledge in a meaningful context. The recorded lecture contains its own unique and potentially difficult areas. The need for students to “be able to concentrate on and understand long stretches of talk without the opportunity to engage in the facilitating functions of interactive discourse, such as asking for a repetition and negotiating meaning” (Flowerdew, 1994a, p. 182) is a real issue.

When listening to a lengthy and complex monologue, such as an academic lecture, the listener must form an accurate mental image of the spoken text as a “sequential-hierarchic network structure” (Givón, 1995, p. 64), in which information is not only recorded linearly in note form but also hierarchical relationships (for example, between topics and sub-topics) and semantic relations, such as cause-and-effect relationships, are also recognized. Recognizing the links between units of information that are separated but combined to generate larger information units is a crucial step in this process

(Scott & Thompson, 2001). Textual cues that are known as metadiscourse can accomplish this process. Halliday (1994) argues that metadiscourse can serve three purposes in spoken discourse: it can construct and represent ideas and experiences related to thematic content, it can enact the speakers' affective or evaluative stance toward thematic content, and it can finally connect and coordinate parts of a lecture into a larger entity.

Metadiscourse can be an effective pedagogical intervention tool, especially when it comes to preserving the narrative lecture in audio recordings. A good writer can, with the skillful use of MD, "transform a dry and difficult text into a coherent and reader-friendly prose and related it to a given context" (Hyland & Tse, 2004, p. 157), just as a good lecturer can use a variety of metadiscourse to make the subject matter comprehensible, organized, relevant, and engaging to students. Thus, it is critical to gain a better understanding of the role of metadiscourse as a pedagogical intervention in facilitating academic audio-recorded lectures in Arabic spoken discourse.

Investigations of spoken academic discourse are fewer in contrast to studies of written academic discourse. This is because spoken data is considerably more difficult and expensive to prepare for researcher (record and transcribe) than written data. Studies on spoken corpus have emphasized the importance of metadiscourse as a strategy for achieving discourse explicitness. This strategy aids speakers in achieving organization within their utterances as well as clarity and explicitness (Mauranen, 2007). It is not surprising, therefore, that metadiscourse is a frequent topic in investigating the comprehension that university students need during lectures. Indeed, as lectures are "detailed and extended monologues" (Lynch, 2011, p. 81) that impose "heavy cognitive demands" (Field, 2011, p. 108) on the listeners, they are challenging to process. MD was found to assist academic lecture comprehension (Pérez & Macià, 2002) and have a positive effect on oral communication.

However, few studies have examined how language is used as a tool to help students deal with academic lectures (e.g., Adel, 2010; Bouziri, 2020; Camiciottoli, 2005; Carter & Fung 2007; Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2022; Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2020; Tang, 2017; Thompson, 2003; Kahkesh & Alipour, 2017). Interestingly, despite the fundamental role of MD in university lectures, no study has previously looked at metadiscourse in Arabic spoken context. It's likely that many skillful Libyan lecturers are already proficient at using Arabic



metadiscourse to teach science in an apparent, current, and interesting way (whether consciously or unconsciously). This feature of pedagogical practice has, however, largely gone unnoticed and undocumented due to a lack of knowledge and research on metadiscourse in the Libyan academic community.

Therefore, a corpus of six academic audio-recorded science lectures, from three disciplines (Chemistry, Zoology, and Botany) from the faculty of science at Gharyan University, seeks to ascertain whether Libyan lecturers are aware of using Arabic metadiscourse in their audio-recorded lectures and to explore their perceptions towards the use of MD.

In a nutshell, the following research questions are addressed to form the present study's purposes:

1. How frequently do Libyan science lecturers use metadiscourse markers in their academic audio-recorded lectures from the faculty of science at Gharyan University?
2. What are the perceptions of Libyan science lecturers towards the use of metadiscourse?

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 What is Metadiscourse?

In 1959, Harris coined the term “metadiscourse” to describe how language is used and how a writer or speaker attempts to guide a receiver’s perception of a text (Hyland, 2005). Metadiscourse, according to Crismore (1983), is a level of discourse in which the author intervenes in the current discourse to influence rather than to inform the reader. In a similar vein, Hyland (2005) maintained that metadiscourse “embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goods, and services, but also involves the personalities, attitudes, and assumptions of those who are communicating” (p. 3). Similarly, Kopple (1985) defined metadiscourse as “discourse that people use not to expand referential material but to help the readers connect, organize, interpret, evaluate, and develop attitudes towards that material”(p. 83).

Hyland’s categorization of metadiscourse items is used in this study because it was the most comprehensive and detailed one. This model divides metadiscourse into two major categories: interactive and interactional

metadiscourse resources, as displayed in Table 2 below. Interactional resources are concerned with the comments and evaluation of the content and involve the reader/hearer in the development of the text. Interactive metadiscourse, on the other hand, refers to the writer's management of information to guide readers through the text by anticipating their reactions and needs, making the text reader-friendly (Hyland, 2005). Interactive metadiscourse consists of five subcategories (i.e., transitions, frame markers, code glosses, endophoric markers, and evidentials). Similarly, interactional metadiscourse is composed of five categories (i.e., hedges, boosters, attitude markers, engagements, and self-mention). The definitions of these subcategories and their roles is provided below in Table 2 and in the results section of the current paper.

2.2 An overview of linguistic devices in Academic Lectures

Linguistic devices such as metadiscourse are much more essential in spoken discourse than in written prose because the “need to manage spoken interaction in real time” is greater (Mauranen, 2010). For this reason, a considerable deal of research has been carried out to examine academic lectures focusing on certain aspects; signaling cues in text structuring (e.g., Chaudron & Richards, 1986; Flowerdew & Tauroza, 1995; Jung, 2006; Thompson, 2003), the use of personal pronouns (e.g., Fortanet, 2004; Lee, 2009; Morell, 2004; Okamura, 2009), rhetorical and referential questions (e.g., Camiciottoli, 2008; Chang, 2012), metadiscourse signals (e.g., Adel, 2010; Bouziri, 2020; Dafouz & Perucha, 2011; Carter & Fung, 2007; Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2022; Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2020; Kahkesh & Alipour, 2017; Lee & Subtirelu, 2015; Molino, 2018; Morell, 2004; Tang, 2017; Thompson, 2003; Williams, 1992) the effect of the use of discourse markers in academic listening comprehension (e.g., Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2007; Camiciottoli, 2005; Jung, 2003; Kuhi, Asadollahfam & Anbarian, 2014; Perez & Macia, 1999), Modifiers (Lin, 2010), engagements (e.g., Kramar, 2019; Yeo & Ting, 2014), and stance (Biber, 2006).

The findings of the prior studies showed that these various linguistic devices help listeners form a coherent ‘mental map’ of discourse organization and process information (Thompson, 2003). There is general agreement on their role in reducing the cognitive load placed on the audience following a lengthy period of spoken discourse. Thus, by displaying relationships between ideas and indicating their relative importance, they assist students in organizing the



lectures (Jung, 2003). For example, the use of personal pronouns can reflect lecturers' attempts to create rapport with students by representing themselves as participants in lecture activities (Kramar, 2019; Yeo & Ting, 2014). It was also discovered that lecturers in the professional context relied heavily on stance markers (Biber, 2006) to facilitate and smooth the listening process (Eslami & Eslami-Rasekh, 2007; Camiciottoli, 2005; Jung, 2003; Kuhi, Asadollahfam, & Anbarian, 2014; Perez & Macia, 1999).

Interactive and interactional metadiscourse, as categorized by Hyland (2005), have been found in academic lectures (Adel, 2010; Bouziri, 2020; Carter & Fung, 2007; Ibrahim & Ahmad, 2020; Kahkesh & Alipour, 2017; Lee & Subtirelu, 2015; Molino, 2018; Morell, 2004; Tang, 2017; Thompson, 2003), occurring with varying frequencies. However, other research has discovered that some metadiscourse markers are missing from university courses (Dafouz & Perucha, 2011; Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2022; Williams, 1992). The absence of such markers could give students the impression that professors are disorganized and "less credible and reliable" (Dafouz & Perucha, 2011, p.218). As a result, it can be stated that there is an urgent need for university lecturers to pay attention to their insufficient use of such resources, as students would benefit from text boundary and text structure signals (Hyland, 2005; Zhang, 2017; Zhang & Lo, 2021).

Upper reviewing the literature, it is apparent that these studies have highlighted the value of using such linguistic devices in academic lectures. It gives an impression that lecturers have prepared considerably for the speech and that they are aware of the necessity for the students to be directed through the lectures (Deroey & Taverniers, 2011). However, the extensive search of the literature reveals that none of these studies have examined metadiscourse in Arabic academic spoken data, such as academic lectures. This suggests a research gap which obviously needs to be bridged.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Corpus

A corpus of six recorded undergraduate lectures delivered by Libyan lecturers from the faculty of science at Gharyan University. Three disciplines have been chosen (Chemistry, Zoology, and Botany). Altogether, they comprise (9725) words. Various guidelines were followed in the process

of data collection. To begin with, the fields chosen are all from the hard disciplines. However, it should be noted that physics, math, and statistics were not included in this study because the lectures contained a lot of symbols and equations. Secondly, the Arabic language was used for all of the chosen lectures. Thirdly, all of the lecturers are native speakers of Arabic and all have more than five years of teaching experience. Fourthly, the chosen lectures were all delivered in 2019 and 2020. Fifthly, recorded lectures that included interaction with students have been excluded because the primary focus of the current study is on recorded lectures rather than live lectures. More details about the corpus are presented in table 1, which includes information about the number of words per lecture and the lecture length in minutes. The small sample size will allow us to probe all potential manifestations of metadiscourse.

Table 1 Information about the selected corpus

Lectures	Discipline	No. of words	Minutes
Lecture 1	Chemistry	1,364	15:14
Lecture 2	Chemistry	1,983	21:19
Lecture 3	Zoology	1,312	16:10
Lecture 4	Zoology	1,718	22:34
Lecture 5	Botany	1,469	16:43
Lecture 6	Botany	1,879	25:03
Total	6 lectures	9,725	116:23

3.2 Method

A mixed-method design was used. The transcripts of lectures were qualitatively analyzed to identify metadiscourse markers. The quantitative method was used to ascertain the frequency of metadiscourse markers.

To «bring greater plausibility to the interpretation of results,» the triangulation method (i.e., using data from multiple sources) was used (Hyland, 2016). Thus, analyzing the recorded lectures has been supplemented by interviewing the lecturers who delivered these recorded lectures.



3.3 Analysis Procedure

In the first phase, the transcripts were organized in a word file, and the metadiscourse markers were searched using a word engine and categorized into ten categories, as shown in Table 2. Because metadiscourse is a fuzzy concept that is highly context-dependent, a qualitative approach was used, with each metadiscourse marker being manually examined and identified using the Hyland model (2005). Because of the corpus's small size, the transcripts have been read many times so that all categories of metadiscourse were manually analyzed.

In the second phases, a structured interview with the lecturers who took part in the current study was conducted. The questions of interview were translated into Arabic. Recording and transcribing the interviews were done.

In the final stage, reliability is needed to establish high reliability toward text analysis (Crookes, 1986) because text coding relies heavily on coders' judgment. Therefore, a professor in the Arabic language assured all the markers that function as metadiscourse.

3.4 Analytical Framework

Hyland's analytical framework (2005) has been adopted in the current study. This framework has been used before to analyze academic lectures (e.g., Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2022; Kramar, 2019; Lee & Subtirelu, 2015). More importantly, this framework has been applied to the Arabic academic written discourse (e.g., Alotaibi, 2015; Sultan, 2011; Alzarieni, Zainudin, Awal & Sulaiman, 2019) and found applicable.

Table 2 Hyland's (2005) Categorization of Metadiscourse

Category	Function	Example
1.Interactive	Help to guide the reader through the text	Resources
Transition	Express relations between main clauses	In addition; but; thus and
Frame markers	To refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	Finally; to conclude; my purpose is

Category	Function	Example
Endophoric markers	Refer to information in other parts of the text	Noted above; “see fig; in section 2
Evidential	Refer to information from other texts	According to X; Z states
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meanings	Namely; e.g; such as; in other words
2.Interactional	Involve the reader in the text	Resources
Hedges	Withhold commitment and open dialogue	Might; perhaps; possible; about
Boosters	Emphasize certainty or close dialogue	In fact; definitely; it is clear that
Attitude Markers	Express writer’s attitude to proposition	Unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly
Self-mentions	Explicit references to author(s)	I; we ; me ; our
Engagement Markers	Explicitly build relationship with reader	Consider; note; you can see that

3.5 Ethics

Obtaining permission to collect data for research purposes is an ethical consideration. Therefore, the researcher prepared a consent form to ensure the agreement of the lecturers to share their recorded lectures in the purpose of analyzing the language used. More importantly, the current study does not include their names.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results of the Metadiscourse

Only (1286) of the total (9725) words were identified as metadiscourse markers. The analysis revealed, as shown in Figure 1, that (282) functioned

as interactional markers and (1004) as interactive markers. Libyan science lecturers used interactive markers more than interactional markers. One possible explanation for this could be that Libyan lecturers' goals were to make their lectures visible and to construct the text with listeners (Hyland, 2005). Transitions, engagement markers and code glosses were the most frequently used markers in the current study. Notably, the corpus lacked evidential and self-mention markers. In what follows, the results of each category are presented and discussed, along with some examples extracted from the transcripts of the collected data. It should be highlighted that extracted examples are placed in this paper without any grammatical corrections, as this is not the aim of this study. The main focus, however, was on the metadiscourse markers that were employed correctly. Uncorrected MD markers were excluded. For example, the researcher noticed a frequent use of the verb (أعتقد). It is well-known that this verb is regarded to be a booster marker, not a hedge marker, but this verb is used wrongly in the Libyan community. For this reason, during the interview with Libyan lecturers, the researcher asked them «Do you think the verb (أعتقد) expresses hedge or booster». Five of the interviewee lecturers maintained that the verb (أعتقد) is a hedge marker not a booster markers so the verb was excluded from their lectures. While one lecturer only declared that this verb is a booster marker.

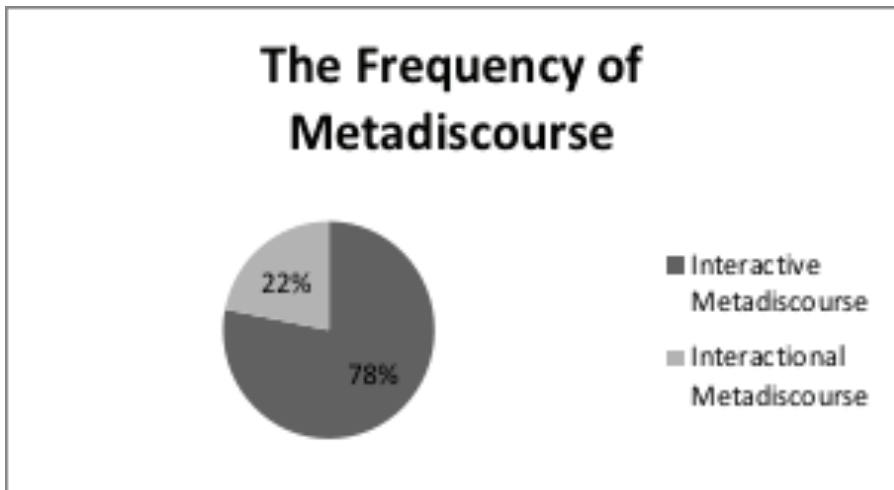


Figure 7 Metadiscourse Frequency

4.1 Interactive Markers

Out of (1286), that are found as metadiscourse, 1001 were employed as interactive markers in science recorded lectures. Transitions and code glosses were the two interactive markers that were used most frequently. However, it should be mentioned that evidential markers were nonexistent in the Libyan science lectures. The use of evidentials is a distinguishing feature of academic discourse, and it can be found in a wide range of written academic genres (Hyland, 2005). Surprisingly, in both the current study and Lee and Subtirelu's (2015) study, they are extremely rare in academic lectures. This implies that, in contrast to other types of academic written discourse (e.g., textbooks), attributions to external sources may play a less prominent role in academic lectures (Biber, 2006), because a large portion of the presented information may be regarded as codified knowledge that belongs to disciplinary communities as a whole rather than to specific individuals.

Table 3 frequency of the interactive markers

Interactive Markers	Frequency
Transitions	878
Code glosses	91
Frame markers	29
Endophoric	06
Evidential markers	00

Transitions aid readers in understanding the practical links between different parts of an argument. They express connections between speech lengths by indicating additive, causal, and contrastive linkages in the writer's or speaker's thinking (Hyland, 2005). Data analysis revealed that of all the subcategories of interactive markers, transitions (example #1,2) had the greatest percentage (878 instances). This could be attributed to transitions' crucial function in establishing logical relationships between sentences and in persuading readers or listeners (Hyland, 2005). This result is in line with findings from other studies (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2022; Kahkesh &

Alipour, 2017; Lee & Subtirelu, 2015). A large amount of academic content is covered in university lectures. In order to keep the lecture cohesive and coherent, lecturers must carefully direct students through the cognitively challenging task of remaining “in-tune” with challenging subject material for an extended period of time. This ongoing speech management is attained through a combination of different transitions that explicitly signal additions, comparisons, and consequences (Lee & Subtirelu, 2015). The current data disclosed a variety of types of transitions; additive markers (e.g., وبالإضافة و. كذلك), causative transitions (e.g., لأنه، وذلك بسبب)، contrastive, consequence (e.g., وبالتالي، ولهذا) and comparison (e.g., بينما).

However, the use of additive markers was noticeable. In particular, the conjunction (و) (wa) is the most commonly used device in the current study. It is used to join words, phrases, clauses, and sentences together. Unlike the English <and>, the Arabic conjunction (wa) is repeated before each item regardless of the number of items listed. The emphasis on additive markers in Arabic prose stems from the fact that Arabic writers are more concerned with gathering facts than developing arguments (Kaplan, 1966). This appears to be the underlying reason for the preponderance of use of the conjunction wa (و).

(1) البرغش التي تتشیر قلق الحيوان وتسبب له الالم نتيجة وخزها المؤلم أيضا تسبب لنا حساسية

(2) على الرغم من أنها كلها تعتمد على ثقب الأوعية الدموية وإخراج السوائل لكنها تختلف من حشرة إلى أخرى

Code Glosses provide additional information by restating, clarifying, or expanding on what has been said in order to help the reader understand the author’s intended meaning. They reflect the writer’s predictions about the reader’s knowledge base (Hyland, 2005). In line with Doiz and Lasagabaster’s findings (2022), code glosses were the second most frequent markers (91 times) among interactive features. This finding supports the claims made by Flowerdew (1994b) and Hyland (2009) that code glosses are essential in academic lectures because university lecturers are required to make concepts clear to their students.

There are two categories of code glosses. Reformulators (example #3) and exemplifiers (example #4). Reformulators rephrase a prior propositional meaning to add more details. Exemplifiers, on the other hand, offer examples that clarify a prior discourse unit (Hyland, 2007). More close analysis revealed

that exemplifiers were used more frequently than reformulators. This may be due to the fact that exemplifiers are crucial for improving comprehension and enlivening lectures.

(3) الحشرات المسببة للأمراض منها حشرات كثيرة مثلا الذباب الأزرق.

(4) eradication يعني هو إزالة النباتات الغريبة.

Endophoric are expressions that refer to other parts of the discourse. These markers draw attention to additional ideational material, aid in understanding, and support arguments by alluding to prior information or hinting at future events (Hyland, 2005). They also help the audience recover the writer's or speaker's meanings. This category is one of the few infrequent subcategories in the current corpus (06 instances). Interestingly, this finding is consistent with the findings of Lee and Subtirelu's (2015) study, which also discovered that endophoric markers are uncommon in academic lectures. In contrast to written discourse, particularly academic texts, which contain chapters, sections, tables, and figures (Hyland, 2005), classroom discourse contains fewer or minimal markers that point the audience to such text parts (Lee & Subtirelu, 2015). However, it has been discovered that endophoric markers can aid students in comprehending the text's macrostructure as well as motivate them to hold onto and build on newly acquired knowledge (Kuhi, Asadollahfam & Anbarian, 2014).

Cao and Hu (2014) extended Hyland's endophoric markers by drawing a distinction between linear and non-linear references, based on Mauranen's (1993) notion of text reflexivity and Bunton's (1999) work on linear and non-linear metatext. To increase explicitness in writing, linear references (such as previews, reviews, and overviews) are used (Mauranen, 1993). On the other hand, nonlinear references, are markers used to indicate additional materials such as figures, tables, or extracts (Mauranen, 1993). In the current study, non-linear references are not used by Libyan science lecturers although some lecturers used images, they did not use clear endophoric expressions such as (انظر إلى الصورة أو الشكل). On the other hand, linear references were found six times. There were five instances of the review (example 5#) and one instance of the overview (example 6#) used to introduce the lecture's goal. In the current data, preview markers do not exist.

(5) تكلما في مراحل سابقة كيف تكون عملية التنفس أو كيف تستغل المادة الخام

(6) محاضرة اليوم نأخذ فيها الوزن المكافئ الجرامي.

Frame markers are used to sequence various discourse components or to internally organize an argument. They act as sequencers that indicate the order in which stages of the text's structure should be read; labeling text stages that indicate a discursive stage; announcing discourse goals that specify discursive purposes; signaling topic shifts that indicate a change in the current topic. (Hyland, 20005). Despite the fact that university lectures are heavily signposted (Swales, 2001), and these frame markers are thought to be extremely useful in signaling shifts and announcing goals in discourse progression (Camiciottoli, 2005), they were uncommon in Arabic science lectures (29 times). While Khakesh and Alipour (2017) found that they were widespread markers in university lectures.

According to functional analysis, two distinct functions were employed; sequencers and announcers. Sequencers (example #7) were used more often (26 times). In contrast, announcers were utilized three times (example #8). Only three lecturers used announcers to begin their lectures and announce the purpose of the lecture. Others, however, did not. It should be noted that sequencers were not used in all the stretches of Libyan science lectures. For example, one lecturer was discovered to have mentioned a few conditions during the lecture, so they began with the first condition and moved on to the others without the use of sequencers. Nevertheless, there was no mention of labeling stages or shift topics. It was noted also that Libyan science lecturers, were switching from one sub-topic to another without using these markers. The absence of such markers will make the lecture quite difficult for the students to follow.

(7) وفي عدة أسباب ترجع إلى خفض سرعة البناء الضوئي السبب الأول والسبب الآخر (8) خلال هذه المحاضرة سوف نتناول جزئية مهمة وهي كيفية تأثير الأمراض النباتية على العمليات الحيوية على الجسم النباتي.

Interactional Markers

Out of 1286 words that are working as metadiscourse, 282 act as interactional markers in Libyan science lectures. Engagement markers, hedges, and attitude markers were the most prevalent interactional markers. Interaction markers improve lecture comprehension in addition to creating a productive learning environment (Morell, 2004). It should be noted that

Libyan science lecturers avoid using self-mention markers. They may think that it was essential to mitigate the distancing effect caused by the use of I (Lee, 2009) and to keep the distance close with the students. This was also confirmed by the lecturers during the interview, as shown in the following section. Additionally, this finding contradicts the findings of Camiciottoli (2005), Fortanet (2004), and Lee & Subtirelu (2015) studies, in which the personal pronoun ‘I’ was frequently used in academic lectures.

Table 4 Frequency of Interaction Markers

Interactional Metadiscourse	Frequency
Engagement markers	179
Hedges	52
Attitude markers	49
Boosters	02
Self-mentions	00

Engagements are tools that directly address readers in order to either direct their attention or include them as participants in the discourse (Hyland, 2005). In agreement with (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2022; kahkesh & Alipour, 2017), the results disclosed that engagements occupied the second place in terms of frequency among all the subcategories of interactional metadiscourse (179 times). This is not surprising, of course, because language and content-oriented classrooms involve “high levels of involvement and interactivity” (Hyland, 2009, p.102). The use of inclusive-we, the pronoun “you,” and rhetorical questions are the best ways to establish high levels of student engagement (Hyland, 2005; Lee, 2009). In the present study, rhetorical questions (22 times), the inclusive we (149 times), and the pronoun “you” (8 times) all served as engagement markers. Of these various linguistic devices, the inclusive ‘we’ was used more frequently. It is worth mentioning the majority of inclusive ‘we’ was implied plural pronouns which neither written nor pronounced but it is understood from the context as in the verbs (نسميها . نعتبره . نلاحظها) (example #9). This finding emphasizes how important it is to use the inclusive pronoun



«we» in order to «draw the listener into the ongoing discourse and create intersubjectivity between speaker and audience» (Bamford, 2005, p. 205). More importantly, inclusive pronouns are widely believed to assist lecturers in conveying positive politeness by recognizing the audience as disciplinary equals (Harwood, 2005).

(9) لما نحضر لمحلول قياسي نحضره من مادة نقيه ذات نقاوة عالية نسميها قياسية.

Although it has been claimed that <you> in university lectures create a personalized style that draws students into the lecture (Yeo & Ting, 2014), Libyan science lectures did not use the pronoun <you> frequently (example#10). They don't seem to realize how crucial the pronoun «you» is in academic lectures because it «orients listeners to the discourse and concentrates students» attention on the topic» (Hyland, 2009, p. 107). Another reason could be that there is no actual audience presence when giving online recorded lectures.

(10) ياريت وقت أنتم تحضروا يكون عندكم آلة حاسبة.

In academic discourse, questions are also employed to significantly enhance interest and encourage the listener or reader to investigate a particular topic as an equal participant in the discussion (Hyland, 2005). They have long been recognized as essential to facilitating teaching and learning processes because they are a crucial tool for promoting human interaction (Chang, 2012). Such questions are frequently used in the opening sections of lectures, where it is clear that their purpose is to pique the students» interest (example #11), and (20) questions were posed by Libyan science lecturers in the current study.

(11) متى يمكن أن نطلق على كائن أو شيء أنه هو كائن حي؟

Hedges are devices such as possible, might, and perhaps, which indicate the writer's or speaker's decision to recognize alternative voices and viewpoints and so withhold complete commitment to a proposition. (Hyland, 2005). In the current study, hedges appeared in the third most frequently occurring subcategory among interactional markers (example #12), indicating that they are quite prevalent (52 times). This use of hedges helps to reduce the power disparity between lecturers and students (Hyland, 2009). Hyland (2009) emphasized this finding and argued that hedges are frequently used in academic lectures as a way for lecturers to show caution when presenting information and to permit “information to be presented as an opinion rather

than accredited fact” (Hyland 2005, p.178).

(12) أحيانا يحدث تزواج بين النباتات الدخيلة مع النباتات المحلية في هذه الحالة يمكن يصير طفرة.

Boosters are words like “clearly,” “obviously,” and “demonstrate” that enable writers to rule out alternatives, head off conflicting viewpoints, and convey their conviction in what they are saying (Hyland, 2005). Boosters are noticeably on the wane (02 times) (example #13). The rarity of boosters in the current corpus, however, suggests that lecturers, regardless of the course they are teaching, may choose to limit expressions of certainty in order to promote discussion with students and lessen the perceived power gap that exists in formal classrooms (Hyland, 2009). Nonetheless, regardless of genre variations, some assertions with certainty play a vital role in spoken discourse. (Kashiha, 2021).

(13) الجدار الخلوي موجود في الخلايا النباتية فقط وليس في الخلايا الحيوانية ولكن دائما متواجد في بدائية النواة.

Attitude markers convey the author’s assessment of propositional information, expressing surprise obligation, agreement, importance, and so on. (Hyland, 2005). They stand as the third most frequently used markers (49 times) (example #14). The language that communicates an author’s or speaker’s attitude toward their material or audience can be more persuasive than other types of language. That is, using attitude markers can persuade the speakers or readers to agree with the propositions (Hyland, 2005).

(14) دراسة أنواع أجزاء الفم في الحشرات ذات الأهمية الطبية والبيطرية تعتبر مهمة جدا وأساسية.

4.2 Results of the Interview

The study requires a triangulation method after the initial metadiscourse analysis, so the author conducted a structured interview with the lecturers to gain more clarity on their perspectives on the use of metadiscourse. Five questions were asked during the structured interview. They are:

Q1. Have you ever heard about the term metadiscourse?

Q2. In order to make your lecture clear and organized, in what things, do you think, should the lecturer depend on?

Q3. Why did you use the plural person pronouns as engagement markers in the verb said for example (we said) instead of saying (I said) and



avoided the use of the singular person pronoun (I) during the lecture?

Q4. Do you think that there is no need to mention evidential markers (For example, Hyland found that /Hyland has emphasized that ...) while giving an academic lecture to undergraduate students?

Q5. Why do you think a lecturer use hedges more than boosters in university lectures?

First, all the interviewee lecturers declared that they have not heard about the term “metadiscourse” and its equivalent in the Arabic language “أدوات ما وراء الخطاب» except one lecturer who said that Metadiscourse is conjunctions. However, metadiscourse consists of conjunctions but this is not the only category of MD. I followed the first question by asking them « Q2. In order to make your lecture clear and organized, what things, do you think, should the lecturer depend on? to see if they are aware of the fundamental role that metadiscourse markers play in making lectures clear and organized. Surprisingly, none of the lecturers are aware of such markers in academic speech. All mentioned non-linguistic methods such as videos and data show to make their lectures clear and organized.

The high use of personal plural as engagement markers was noticeable in the current corpus, for this reason, the researcher asked the lecturers « Why did you use the plural person pronouns in the verb said for example (we said) instead of saying (I said) and avoided the use of the singular person pronoun (I) during the lecture?”. The lecturers have interesting reasons behind the use of plural personal pronouns:

(نستخدم أسلوب الجمع للابتعاد عن التكلم عن نفسي وهو أسلوب أناني
(lecturer from Zoology discipline

(أن الطالب متفق مع الأستاذ فيما يقول (lecturer from Chemistry discipline

(لجعل الطالب جزء من المحاضرة ... وبهذا إيجاء له بأنه شارك في إنجاز المحاضرة وأنه أساسي
دون التشبث بالفضل للأستاذ وكان المعلومة حكرا له (lecturer from Botany discipline

The results also displayed that evidential markers were non-existent. For this reason, the researcher asked the lecturers « Do you think that there is no need to mention evidential markers (For example, Hyland found that /Hyland has emphasized that ...) while giving an academic lecture to undergraduate students? “ Surprisingly, all the lecturers assured that evidential markers are

important in university lectures.

The obtained findings showed that hedges were used more than boosters so the researcher asked them “Why do you think a lecturer use hedges more than boosters in university lecture?” The lecturers assured that hedges should be used more in their university lectures. They attributed the reason to their disciplines where theories are still developing and what is certain today might be changed in the future because the researches in their disciplines are in progress.

(نحتاج لاستخدام مثل هذه الكلمات بسبب حدوث اكتشافات جديدة في نفس الموضوع ... أو عندما توضح أو تصف عضو معين أو تركيب لا يزال قيد الدراسة ... فنستخدم قد أو ربما
(lecturer from Botany discipline)

(لأن العلم في تطور وقد تبطل معلومة معينة مع أنها مؤكدة في الحاضر)
lecturer from Botany discipline

5. Conclusion

In the current paper, an attempt has been made to probe first the metadiscourse markers in the audio-recorded science lectures delivered by Libyan science lecturers and then examine their perceptions towards the use of metadiscourse. The aforementioned findings showed that interactive features were used more frequently than interactional features. The most frequent markers within these two groups were transitions, engagements, and code glosses. It is worth noting that evidential markers and self-mention were ignored even though the lecturers emphasized their function in academic lectures. Endophoric, frame markers, and boosters were noticeably rare. It is implied that removing these metadiscourse markers would make the stretch of speech much less interesting and would loosen the connections between the propositions, leading to muddled sentences. More importantly, the absence of such markers could give students the impression that lecturers are disorganized and “less credible and reliable” (Dafouz & Perucha, 2011, p.218).

Additionally, the results of the interviews revealed that Libyan science lecturers used MD unintentionally despite their remarkable use of them in science lectures. None of the lecturers emphasized the value of MD in spoken academic discourse. As a result, Libyan lecturers should pay attention to such markers to assist their students in better comprehending the texts by following



the speaker's line of argument more smoothly.

Regarding the implications of this study, the present findings can help curriculum designers; metadiscourse markers should be taught in some language classes. However, some limitations need to be tackled. Firstly, more research is required to ascertain how these markers affect Libyan students' comprehension of an academic lecture. A second drawback is the small size of the corpus that was used. So that the researcher could not generalize the findings of the present study.

Recommendation

Hyland's model of metadiscourse in academic discourse turns out to be applicable to the Arabic academic spoken genre of lectures. However, the detailed taxonomy of these markers in Arabic still needs investigation in both written and spoken discourse. It is hoped that Arabic scholars will devote more time to establish a clear framework for Arabic metadiscourse, as this aspect of the Arabic language has received far too little attention in contrast with other languages.

Acknowledgment

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Computer-Assisted Language Learning: Using Google Translate as a Tool for Self-directed Vocabulary Learning.

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Abstract

Over the past few decades drastic changes took place in the various fields of technology that have considerably altered our way of life. Technology provides numerous opportunities for language students to learn, practice and study language beyond the classroom. Educational technology aims to improve the process of language learning by offering an unlimited number of hardware and software services. Students are turning to using their smartphone tools to help them gain access to open educational resources. This research focuses on one of these technologies; Google Translate as a method that integrates pedagogical knowledge with technology to enhance language learning. The main goal of this research is to explore how Google Translate can serve as a valuable resource for building vocabulary and phrases to achieve the best possible results of learning a language. Google Translate is one of the most accessible tools that help its users meet their translation needs, along with providing accurate pronunciation for vocabulary, phrases and sentences as well. It is believed that a major number of language learners have trouble learning the meaning and the pronunciation of new vocabulary, using Google Translate can noticeably facilitate the processes of learning new words. This research also aims to investigate the effectiveness of using Google Translate as a self-directed language learning tool. The research covers a sample of Libyan learners of English. Those learners are adults studying English at Tripoli university, they are taking specialized English language



courses along with studying an elective foreign language course for credit as a part of their undergraduate program. For such a group of learners, learning foreign language vocabulary can be difficult as a majority of adult learners tend to forget newly-learned words easily. If learners get the chance to check word meaning and word pronunciation through using Google Translate this might help them use the words effectively in their speaking practice and writing compositions. The methodology followed for this research is merely descriptive. It basically focuses on the effectiveness of Google Translate as a self-directed language learning tool. A questionnaire was conducted along with a short vocabulary test to explore how Google Translate can be used as a tool that provides a reliable translation between two languages. The findings of this research illustrate how Google Translate helped participants to acquire new vocabulary and the correct pronunciation of new words on a short-time basis.

Introduction

Learners of a foreign language who want to develop their language skills face numerous challenges. They are constrained by a number of factors that hinder their language achievements. Considering the fact that they are highly motivated to learn the new language, some learners have difficulty accessing language classes, others have busy schedules that they do not have enough time to attend face to face language lessons, other learners might not be able to afford the high cost of language classes. Thus a lot of language learning tools have been developed to provide an effective and easy to access language learning database.

In recent years, the use of technology has greatly influenced all the activities and particularly the process of learning and teaching.

The evolution of new educational technologies has provided a massive change to how learners can learn a new language, with all the technology we have today language learning is more effective and easier than it ever has been. There are so many free resources, websites where learners can talk and practice their speaking skills with other people. Technology also provides audio content, online books, free virtual language classes, free language applications and an unlimited number of reliable language lessons

on YouTube and other similar platforms.

Most of these resources did not exist the way they exist now, especially before the internet. People had to rely on less effective ways to acquire language vocabulary, they needed to buy books, dictionaries, register for a language class. Some learners had to travel and seek native speakers to practice the language. Today with the emergence of all free educational techniques, language learning resources became more available and less affordable.

Nowadays, it is a widely known fact that learning a foreign language cannot be reduced to the direct teaching of language skills. It became more of a self-regulated process, where learners are in charge of their own learning.

Literature Review

Technology and Self-directed language learning

Self-directed learning is when the learner takes control of their own learning by choosing appropriate methods that work best with the learner's style of learning. Unlike the formal setting where both the learner and the teacher are involved in the learning process inside a classroom. Self-directed learning has been defined as the

“process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help from others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating goals, identifying human and material resources, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes”
(Knowles, 1975, p. 18).

Zimmerman (2000) makes a connection between self-regulated learning and motivation. He claims that a learner's self-efficacy belief can act as the driving force to motivate their learning, discovering that highly self-efficacious and motivated learners, in a self-regulated context, produce higher academic achievements. Therefore, the key is that learners must be able to follow the process of knowing what is needed, be motivated to act on that knowledge, and use technology to achieve it.

Technology has played an increasingly vital role in self-directed language learning over the past few years. Research has found that language learners do incorporate technology into their out-of-class learning activities



(Inozu, *et al*, (2010); & Murray, (2008). However, the types of technologies they use for language learning are limited and rather conventional Winke & Goetler, (2008);& Zhang, (2010). Encouraging and supporting the self-directed use of technology outside language classrooms is essential to maximizing the potential of technology for language learning. Technology is expected both to enhance language instruction inside the classroom and to extend language education beyond the classroom Chapelle, (2010);& Zhao & Lai, (2007). Understanding the nature of language learners' self-directed use of technology outside language classrooms is the first step towards supporting and enhancing self-directed use of technology for language learning.

The Use of Technology to Develop Vocabulary Learning

For years, language learning was a matter of debates and experiments of valid and reliable methods that better facilitate language learning. Learning vocabulary plays an important role in the process of learning a foreign language. Since the main purpose for learning a language is to be able to communicate, learners need to master the main four language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing, in order to communicate effectively in that language. For this reason, vocabulary knowledge, as a language sub-skill is considered to be crucial to all language skills. A learner cannot comprehend the meaning of a sentence or a given utterance without knowing what most of the words mean. Thus, not having enough vocabulary knowledge might affect all four language skills.

In the process of vocabulary learning, it is essential not only to know the meaning of a particular word, but also all the aspects of the word. Taylor (1990: 1-3) had listed seven degrees of knowing a word: knowledge of the frequency of the word in language; knowledge of the register of the word; knowledge of collocation; knowledge of morphology; knowledge of semantics; knowledge of polysemy and knowledge of the equivalent of the word in the mother tongue.

Vocabulary learning is a complicated process. It seems to be tedious for most learners as it is challenging for teachers. It requires teaching students to connect newly learned words to related words, analyze word structure, understand the meaning, and use words effectively. Language learning methodologies have undergone major shifts, nowadays the sole reliance on

printed materials has been seriously challenged by electronic resources that have become available on the internet Benson and Chik, (2010, Sockett, (2014) While most language learning in developed countries still takes place in traditional classroom settings and many students actually prefer to be taught that way Trinder, (2016), the advent of technology-based learning has introduced new and innovative methods to foreign language teaching methodology Katyal and Evers, (2004). In particular the introduction of smartphone applications into learning and teaching languages has brought with it new opportunities as well as challenges that will have an impact on learning and teaching methodology for decades to come Dakowska, (2018). Digital learning tools can go beyond what is commonly taught in classrooms and incorporate features that focus on specific aspects of the language learning experience Beetham and Sharpe, (2007), for instance, pronunciation or intensive vocabulary training (i.e. Duolingo or Sounds: The Pronunciation App). In addition, digital language resources may contain more current contents on language use, whereas textbooks are typically older.

Recent research has shown that unsupervised, extra-curricular online learning may enable learners to progress to a more advanced level of language proficiency as compared to those learners who exclusively rely on formal instruction Cole, (2015). In particular, the use of informal online learning sources was strongly associated with higher motivation and proficiency Cole, (2015).

There are many important connections between technology and vocabulary today. Technology provides access to many different ways for students to study vocabulary. Also, teachers can find many resources to help teach vocabulary on the Internet. Vocabulary, in some ways, is the most important dimension of language that learners need to master, Grammar helps in constructing, refining and clarifying what we mean, but vocabulary really does the heavy lifting in terms of conveying meaning. David Wilkins a famous linguist said “Without grammar, little can be conveyed. Without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed.”

Vocabulary has traditionally been one of the most neglected areas of language instruction, it's often considered acceptable to just assume that students will acquire the vocabulary they need through exposure to the



language, for example, through reading or through their own efforts and intentional learning of vocabulary using notebooks or word cards or some strategy like that.

According to Chapelle (2010), there are two ways of learning vocabulary: incidental vocabulary learning and intentional vocabulary learning. Incidental vocabulary learning occurs when students are working together in conversation or reading and their focus is on what they are talking about or what they're reading about. The vocabulary may just be in the background. They may be using it, they may not know it, and they may be picking it up without really realizing it: they learn it incidentally. In contrast, students can engage in intentional vocabulary learning, meaning that they are focusing on the words. They are there to look at the words; they are there to study the words and they know that they're trying to learn particular words. This activity is intentional both of these processes are very important for students to learn enough vocabulary.

Students learn intentionally when they work on a vocabulary lesson. Through reading many students encounter new words and they usually tend to rely on using dictionaries to look up the meaning of new words, Learners who don't use electronic dictionaries have to look up the meaning of new words using a paper dictionary which is a tedious process, technology made the process of learning the meaning of new words much easier through using electronic dictionaries which are also available as phone apps. The problem with using electronic dictionaries is that they only provide definitions, word phonetic transcription but not all dictionaries provide the meaning in context. Using alternative techniques such as machine translation software may help students to learn the meaning of words in context through translation.

Students also need to learn about all the aspects of word knowledge: collocation, register, written and spoken form. In other words, students need to learn how words are used, with what words they're used, on what occasions they are used, and whether they will be used prominently in writing or speaking or both.

English language learners can search the internet to find images and examples of vocabulary in use. Corpus of Contemporary American English or COCA, is a large collection of American English texts that are used for

linguistic research. Because it is available on the Internet language learners can use it. The corpus supports a huge number of vocabulary in use, it helps to show students word patterns, word meaning and word usage in real context. Language teachers should also encourage students to use spell checkers, which are also freely available online, a spell checker can help students to learn correct spelling.

Google Translate and language learning

Google Translate (GT) is a free machine translation service provided by Google Company to translate words and texts from one language to another. Currently it can be accessed via a web interface along with a smart phone application. In 2016 GT supports more than 100 languages Google Translate, (2016). Google Translate is based on Machine Statistics Translation, which works by analyzing hundreds of millions of pairs of natural bilingual texts Koehn, (2009). This natural partner can serve as an authentic example of the use of language from the available languages.

Since 2006, it has been widely used by language learners and non language learners as well. GT has been used by five hundred million people worldwide and translates over one hundred billion words per day Turovsky, (2016). It started as a web page but with the spread of mobile technologies an app was produced in a downloadable form to be used on any mobile device. The Google Translate app provides translation services in multiple languages, and consequently language learners have been drawn to it to help them learn a particular language and navigate any obstacles they encounter while doing so. Second language learners consult Google Translate to complete their work, and the presence of Google Translate in the classroom cannot be denied, especially in Translation classes for language students.

According to Medvedev (2016) being an important member of the (ua italic), Google Translate is probably one of the easiest and most accessible tools to help users meet their translation needs. It offers quick and rather accurate dual translation services in a variety of languages. Students have found the benefits of this application and tend to use it more often both inside and outside the classroom.

Google Translate app can translate dozens of languages, either through



text or voice. The learner can just type, write, or speak into the app and it will provide an instant translation. The program even allows its users to point their smartphone at a sign or menu written in a foreign language to view a live translation.

Features provided by Google Translate

Translate Text: Google Translate has been developed to provide the best outcomes for its users, text translation is one of the main features found on GT. If a person needed to translate a word or a phrase Arabic to English for example, tap the name of the current language on the left side and select English as the source language. Tap the name of the language on the right and select Italian as the target language. Next, tap the field that says Enter text and start typing the English word or phrase you wish to translate. Alternatively, tap the pen icon and write a phrase in English one character at a time using your finger or stylus. As you type or write characters on the screen, the app tries to predict what you plan to write in full by displaying possible word and letter combinations. Continue writing or select one of the suggested words if it matches what you intended to enter. At some point, the app may suggest the entire phrase you want to enter. If so, select the phrase. In return, Google Translate displays the word or phrase in the target language. Tap the right arrow button next to the translation and then tap a speaker icon next to the phrase in either language to hear it spoken aloud.

Translate Images: another reliable feature is the ability to translate text in an image via the phone's camera. Google Translate offers live translations, though some languages require a downloadable language pack. Choose the source and target languages and then tap the camera icon. Aim your device's camera at the sign, menu, or document written in the source language. Once the app has a moment to recognize the text, the translation is superimposed over the image, viewable right on the screen.

Transcribe Speech: You can speak in one language, and the app will transcribe what you say into another language. Tap the microphone icon at the top of the screen and speak your word or phrase into the app. Google Translate then translates your words in the target language. Tap the Speaker icon to hear the translation. Another option is to tap the Transcribe icon and then start speaking. Tap the microphone icon when done. You can then select

and copy the transcription to paste it elsewhere.

Real-Time Conversations: The Google Translate app helps its users carry on a back-and-forth conversation with someone who speaks a different language. Choose the two languages and tap the Conversation icon. You can then carry on the conversation manually or automatically. Going the manual route requires you to tap the icon of the language of the current speaker. Choosing the automatic method by tapping the Auto icon tells Google to determine who's speaking based on the language.

Research Questions

To investigate the different aspects and the perspective of using GT as pedagogical tool for self-directed language learning, the following research questions were explored: 1. To what extent can learners acquire German words, phrases and their pronunciation after using GT in self-directed language learning environment? 2. How do learners utilize Google Translate to learn a second language? Based on previous researches, it was suggested that learners could develop a fundamental level of lexical knowledge and they would become intelligible and comprehensible in orally producing the lexical items through using GT. This research is also expected to come up with similar results.

Methodology

Research Instruments

Research data was collected using a questionnaire that was designed with a special statistics website (Not mentiaued in the refuences) the questionnaire was used to gather information about students' language background and their interest in learning languages. The questionnaire contained a combination of closed-response items and other open-response items about using Google Translate app (Appendix B)

A short test (Appendix A) that examines to what extent can students use Google Translate to learn new vocabulary and phrases in German. The test included a limited number of learning objectives that students needed to achieve during 30 minutes by using Google Translate app on their phones. The learning objectives were how to say (hello / How are you? / Thank you ...) and



other basic words and phrases in German. To check whether the students are able to use the newly learned German words, a follow-up post test was done three days after conducting the questionnaire.

Participants

The research covered a sample of 17 Libyan learners of English. Those learners are adults studying English at Tripoli university, they are taking specialized English language courses along with studying an elective foreign language course for credit as a part of their undergraduate program. They have no previous knowledge of German nor were they familiar with any forms of the German language.

For such a group of learners, learning foreign language vocabulary can be difficult as a majority of adult learners tend to forget newly-learned words easily. If learners get the chance to check word meaning and word pronunciation through using Google Translate this might help them use the words effectively in their speaking practice and writing compositions.

Data Analysis

The study investigated whether or not students use Google Translate, and which tools they normally use when learning a foreign language. The results indicate that a majority of participants do in fact use Google Translate. Students commonly use their mobile phones to access tools and websites to help them learn the meaning of new words.

The data were collected and then processed in accordance to a quantitative approach. The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions, which were concerned with the strategies students use when they learn foreign language vocabulary. Questions (1 to 4) dealt with learners' language background and their interest in learning languages. All the participants were native Arab speakers, they reflected that they were familiar with either Italian or French as those were the main two languages courses that they are studying in their undergraduate program. The results showed that a great majority of learners have basic knowledge of both Italian and French, and they spend much time outside the classroom to learn and practice the language

Question 5 examined the most popular tools that students tended to use

when learning a new language. The students were asked to choose from four options: books, websites, apps. Question number 7 was intended to check whether students have GT as an app on their phones. Questions (8 to 10) investigated the efficiency of using GT as a technique for learning the meaning and the pronunciation of new words. Question 6 examined how often students use paper dictionaries, rating from very often to rarely to never using a paper dictionary.

The vocabulary test, was designed to check whether Google Translate can work as an assistive tool in learning words and phrases of a foreign language (German was the examined language). The vocabulary test reflected the vocabulary learning potentials of students, while the other collected data revealed the tools that students use when learning new vocabulary.

In analyzing the data attained, the research came up with the following results that were adequate to indicate a great variance of the expected outcome. The results reflect that learning vocabulary through using Google Translate is considered to be a useful technique for many students.

Students' questionnaire interpretation

In interpreting students' responses to the questionnaire, it was very clear that there was a great variance in the results attained. Students' results showed that a great majority of the participants emphasized on the usefulness of learning the meaning of vocabulary through using GT. This however, did not indicate that this was the only useful technique for learning the meaning of vocabulary.

In checking whether students were interested in learning a new language or not, the responses reflected that a great average of participants forming (14) participants and representing 82% of the sample seemed (very much) interested in learning a new language. Thus, scarcity was noted reflecting an average of 3 participants representing 18% were not so much interested in learning a new language.

Interpreting the results of learners' involvement in a self-directed leaning environment, a sample of about (10) participants representing 59% of the population were seemed to be taking a great deal of the responsibilities of their own language learning. However, a sample of (7) participants representing



41% of the population of the study reflecting that they didn't seem to put much effort in learning a language.

In checking learners' reviews on the different tools that students use to learn a new language, the responses reflected that 11 out of the 17 participants tend to use books as a tool that facilitates their learning experience. A number of 8 participants choose using internet websites as tool that helps them learn a new language, while using software apps was the choice for 8 out the 17 participants.

Even though most of the participants in this study, about 82% showed real interest in learning a new language, only 59% of them revealed much interest in taking the control of the learning process. This reflects that in spite of the great interest learners have, yet they do face obstacles when it comes to choosing the appropriate methods to develop their language skills.

In checking whether learners have Google Translate as an app on their phone gadget. The results showed that a great average of participants presenting 76% of the participants answered with (yes) while only 4 responses representing 24% of the population of this study didn't have GT app.

Interpreting the results of how often students use GT to look up the meaning of new words, the results showed that a sample of (10) participants representing about 59% of the population of the study, use GT (very often) to look up the meaning of unknown words. However, a sample of (4) participants representing 23% of the population of the study reflected that they do not use GT very often. While only (3) participants representing 18% showed that they rarely use GT to look up the meaning of new words. Through their responses, the participants who rarely use GT found to use paper dictionaries very often.

In examining the effectiveness of using GT to develop language skills, a great number of participants presenting 82% of the population of the study confirmed that GT can be useful to improve their language. While only (3) participants reflected that GT is not helpful in improving their language skills. Though their reflection to the open answer question (specify why GT is not helpful) participants indicated that the quality of translation given by GT is somehow inaccurate especially when it comes to word by word translation.

In order for the researcher to understand ways in which learners can

be supported in using technology for significant language learning. The last question dealt with the different feature that GT provide for its users, participants reflected that they use GT for several purposes. The majority of the participants 82% of them use GT to find out the meaning of new words, another 8 responses presenting 47% of the population of the study tend to use GT to learn how words are pronounced. Only 4 participants reflected that they use GT find synonyms and antonyms and translating long paragraphs, while 6 responses reflected that they use GT to translate sentences and phrases. Learning the pronunciation of phrases and sentences was the option for only one participant out of the population of this research.

Students' Responses to the Learning Objectives

A test (Appendix A) was used to measure learners' ability for using GT to learn new language vocabulary. In general, learners' knowledge was particularly examined to check to what extent can students acquire words and phrases of a foreign language. Since all the participants had no prior knowledge of German, the test included only basic phrases and it didn't have any complex structure.

At this part of the study students were given ten learning objectives, they were asked to use GT to learn how to say certain words and phrases. The last objective (choose your own phrase to learn in German) was selected to give participants the freedom of choice to learn their own expression.

Students were eager to learn the translations provided by Google Translate, a number of participants kept on comparing the words that have similar pronunciation to the English ones. The word (Hallo) (gut) in German are very similar to their English equivalent, although most participants revealed that they have difficulty pronouncing some words in German, the audio feature provided by GT has noticeably facilitated students' recognition for the new words and phrases.

At the end of the test, participants were asked to produce orally the target German phrases that they have learned through GT. Only 4 to 5 participants were confident of their oral production for the new words and phrases, while the majority tended to keep on going back to GT to listen to the appropriate pronunciation. All participants have acquired correct pronunciation as they



managed to correctly pronounce short words and long phrases as well.

Finally, participants were asked to not practice the phrases they learned or engage in any German language learning until they perform a post test which was performed three days after the initial vocabulary test.

The post test collected feedback about the German phrases that the participants learned using GT. Approximately 7 students provided perfectly accurate pronunciation for the newly learned phrases, while another 8 students reflected poor oral productions for the same phrases. Only 2 participants revealed that they don't remember the whole phrase but they were capable of pronouncing separate words

Discussion

Throughout this study, a number of questions have been raised to be appropriately answered, all of which aimed to come up with one goal in hand, that is, the effectiveness of using GT as an assistive tool for self-directed vocabulary learning. After having implemented the questionnaire the responses indicated that learners use different techniques and methods to learn the vocabulary of a foreign language. When learners encounter new words, most of them directly tend to figure meaning of the word through using GT. Thus, learning the meaning and the pronunciation of words through using GT is considered as a helpful technique for many learners especially when coming across complex words. A large number of participants gave emphasis to using GT not only to check the meaning of words, but also to learn the pronunciation of sentences and phrases along with seeking proper translation. Such tools work best in facilitating vocabulary learning, participants reflected that all of the GT features presented in this questionnaire are helpful, since they are likely to be used together as the replies to the last question indicated this.

The vocabulary test aimed to investigate attitude towards learning words and phrases of a new language, and it showed that participants who had more interest in learning a new language, had more tendency to use GT features to figure out the meaning of unknown words, while those who showed less interest in learning a new language seemed to give negative or incorrect answers.

Even though the fundamental research question of this study concerned

with the effectiveness of identifying the meaning of new words through using GT as self-directed learning tool. The vocabulary test results revealed that learners were willing to adopt any strategy that might lead to successful performance in learning vocabulary.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The researchers acknowledge that involving more participants in the study would have provided more data and represented more students' voices. However, the aim of the study was not to generalize but to gain some insights at the early stages of autonomous learning of a foreign language through the help of modern technology (Google Translate as an example)

This study is mainly focused on the effectiveness of using GT as an assistive tool to learn vocabulary. However, to eliminate the problems mentioned by participants further research is needed to provide tangible evidence and practical frameworks in which mechanisms and methodologies for integrating new technologies in vocabulary learning, including Google Translate.

Having these findings in hand, the researcher recommends that:

- 1 - Google Translate may work as an assistive tool for learning vocabulary, but it may not be the right tool for grammar learning. Most sentence translations are not always accurate particularly with two languages with contrast syntactic structure.
- 2 -Google Translate can be used as a complementary tool to assist students in translating English language.
- 3 - Google Translate can be very helpful for beginners in learning the basics of new languages especially for speaking skills.
- 4 - The use of Google Translate certainly has limitations because not all things can be translated correctly by the translation engine.

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Appendix (A)

Learning Objectives

Using *Google Translate*, learn how to say the following phrases in German during the next 30 minutes

- 1) "Hello."
- 2) "How are you doing?" "Good."
- 3) "What is your name?" "My name is ..."
- 4) "Do you speak English?" "Yes" "No"
- 5) "I don't understand."
- 6) "Speak slowly."
- 7) "Please."
- 8) "Thank you."
- 9) "Bye."
- 10) Choose your own phrase to learn in German



Appendix (B) Questionnaire

1. Are you interested in learning a new language?

Very interested Not interested

2. What other languages do you know or speak?

.....

3. Have you ever learned a language on your own?

Yes No

4. Which language did you learn ?

.....

5. Which of these tools did you use to help you learn the new language?

Books websites software applications

6. How often do you use a paper dictionary to look up the meaning of new words?

Very often Rarely Never

7. Do you have Google Translate on your smartphone?

Yes No

8. How often do you use Google Translate ?

Very often Rarely Never

9. Do you find using Google Translate helpful in improving your language skills? (if No, please specify why)

Yes No

.....

10. I use google translate for (you can choose more than one option)

1. finding word meanings
2. Learning word pronunciation
3. Finding synonyms and antonyms
4. Translating phrases and sentences
5. Translating paragraphs
6. Learning the pronunciation of phrases and paragraphs

Combining Computer-Assisted Translation Tools into English as a Foreign Language Classrooms: A Case Study

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Abstract

Recently, translation subjects have drawn more attention in the English language department at the University of Derna. Typically, English language learners are studying three subjects of translation: Principles of Translation, Translation I (translation theory), and Translation II (practical translation). Currently, students are using only traditional translation methods. The researchers in this experimental study propose to integrate some machine-assisted translation methods “ Computer-Assisted “ or “ CAT” tools to be taught theoretically and practically in the English department such as SDL Trados Studio and Omega T. Diana (2021) says that for the translation procedures to be developed, technology should be used and intensively implemented in the translation curriculum. Translators seek to provide an amount of information and deliver it through words, sentences, or phrases to manufacture a mutual connection and comprehension between for example two translated languages. A translator needs to be aware of the differences which may occur while translating the information from one language to another. The researcher scrutinizes the efficiency of teaching these tools. A questionnaire was distributed to one hundred students, 40 male and 60 female to distinguish gender perspective differences on CAT in the first, second,



third, and fourth years. , the study shows positive feedback to implementing the proposed translation teaching tools. Further subcategorical and statistical analysis is warranted.

Key words: Integrating, CAT tools, Machine translation, Methods, Foreign language, English classrooms.



Introduction

CAT tools are computer-aided applications that are formed to advocate human interpreters to carry out their tasks more productively by taking over the monotonous works and by making translators' research procedures easier (Orozco Agudelo, 2022). One of the most used CAT tools is SDL Trados Studio (Cocci 2009). SDL comprises two versions: freelance and professional versions (Samuelsson-Brown, 2010) and according to the productivity of its use among translation companies, it is popular in the translation industrial era (Kurniawati, rahajeng, Kristanto, & Chosa 2016). Omega T is a free tool and it is a perfect place to begin, it is not difficult to be learned, and it runs on MAC and under Linux, as well as windows (Welsh & Prior, 2014). Omega T requires the free Java Runtime Environment (JRE) installed on the computer before installing OmegaT. The use of OmegaT in the localization process is one of the CAT tools that can be categorized as follows: "Services, P., n.d. *OmegaT reviews and details*" Translation memory tools, Terminology tools, and Software localization tools. OmegaT supports plain text, HTML, XHTML, and OpenOffice.org formats, including Writer. OmegaT cannot directly work with MS documents so the alternative to MS Word is OpenOffice Writer.

Due to the lack of awareness and a lack of translators oriented toward using new strategies of teaching translation, survey research is usually used to support proposals and assess perspectives thus this paper investigates students' and teachers' views about inserting modern strategies of teaching translation in the curriculum of English language inside the department. In addition, these perspectives assist in enhancing teaching and learning methods and increasing the productivity of translation tasks and assignments. From an English teacher's perspective and around 17 years of teaching experience in English, it was noticeable that the majority of English language learners

at Derna University use Google Translate to complete their assignments both inside and outside the classroom in the subject of translation and other subjects as well. Teaching and learning translation are necessary all around the world because it has stable business and produces job opportunities for translators and interpreters in the future. The purpose of this study is to improve a portion of the English Department at the University of Derna by programming technological teaching translation strategies to enhance the learning of translation and empower the use of technology among foreign language learners and develop their knowledge of using methods that were not acknowledgeable for them before. It is important to note that there is a slight difference between machine translation tools and CAT tools. While the main purpose of the former is to undertake (assume) and carry out (perform) many of the tasks that are normally completed by a translator, the latter is designed to support the translator by eliminating repetitive work, automating terminology lookup activities, and recycling previously translated texts. CAT tools can be categorized as follows: 1) Translation memory tools, 2) Terminology tools and 3) Software localization tools. In this research, the researcher proposes integrating computer-assisted translation tools (CAT), in particular Omega T and SDL Trados Studio, into the English department at the university of Derna. According to the questionnaire and the expectation of the results, the researcher analyses the outcomes and decides whether is beneficial for these tools to be supported and taught in the department.

In the literature review pertaining on the subject in the study, the researcher describes SDL Trados and Omega T as the chosen tools to be implemented in the department and to shorten how other researchers produce or explain these tools. Omega T is free and this is a crucial point because generally, students cannot afford the expensive ones and also for the challenges which may be faced during payment processes. Omega T advocates the current Microsoft Office file formats (.docx, .xlsx, .pptx), but does not advocate the older files (.doc, .xls, .ppt). If a translator wants to use the current, he/she must convert the older (Welsh& Prior, 2014). Welsh and Prior in their documentation provide simple procedures for starters translators who have less experience with computer-assisted translation tools. In the documentation, the researchers define CAT tools and introduce information for downloading, installing, creating, and translating projects through Omega T.

For SDL Trados there are two versions: free and paid. According to the



“overview Screen layout and functionality”, 2010), SDL Trados Studio has divided into seventh views as an example the first view is the home view where SDL starts an application to perform the action.

(Kurniawati, rahajeng, Kristanto,& Chosa 2016) shed on the benefits of using SDL Trados due to it is popularity among the paid CAT tools in translating texts, saving time and providing effective work. Same as Welsh and Prior they produce steps for readers describing SDL and exemplify the results of SDL 2014 by giving a sample text translated from Indonesian to English. Riham in 2017 tended to evaluate three types of CAT tools with their functionalities; SDL Trados Studio, Omega T, and MateCAT. She wanted to test how successful and beneficial using these tools and provided her master’s study into two languages Arabic and English because the study conducted in Arabic. in her study there were six tasks to be achieved and research questions to be answered. Results showed that participants were more satisfied with SDL Trados whereas the other two software applications provided a basic assistance to the users. In relation to the estimation of the study is to introduce results that would benefit Arab readers and researchers on translation technology besides like my perspective the results may serve as a reliable bases to integrate the tools into the educational program. Learners are qualified to use technology on different devices conversely these tools were not proposed and supported. Mahfouz in her study 2018 on 114 users of CAT tools in Egypt indicated that participants who have better skills in using computers have better attitudes toward CAT tools usage, unlike those who study translation without enhancing and developing technical procedures. Alotaibi (2014) studies the degree of knowledge of computer aided translation tools of her students at the university of Riyadh, college of Languages & Translation in Saudi Arabia. Results of her study promote using technology in general and CAT tools in specific into the classes of translation to intensify students’ skills of translation and optimize their chances in today’s work market.

Methods

Results of the study rely on the participants responses of integrating CAT tools translation machines inside their classes in the English department at Derna university. 9 questions were distributed on one hundred students 60 females and 40 males (the English department has a higher female enrollment

percentage) to acknowledge their perspectives toward using these tools. The researcher proposes using SDL Trados Studio and Omega T. whilst SDL the most widely used among translators and was improved 28 years ago to assist translators to work effectively and provide professional translation services, I also propose the usage of Omega T because it is an open-source software and advocates several formats from other CAT tools. A question was also sent to the instructors from the department who are specializes in translation studies. All the participants who have responded to the questionnaire were enrolling in the English language department of the year of 2022 from the first to the fourth year.

Data Analysis and Discussion

There were 70 participants who have responded to the questionnaire: 55 females and 15 males. To advocate the researcher's point of view about integrating computer assisted translation tools into the English classes at the University of Derna, acknowledging students' willing plan after graduation was applicable. The questionnaire (see appendix A) began with asking about gender, which stage are they enrolled in and what do they plan to be or do after graduation? The researcher works as an English lecturer at the university of Derna since 2013 and in every upcoming year she asks the newly enrolled students the previously mentioned questions. Mostly, students' replies are that they want to be translators and thus the questionnaire started with this question and hence, it was the time to recommend changing the traditional teaching translation methods.

The results showed that 33% of female wanted to be translators, 16% English teachers, 16% checked in both translators and English teachers and 14% remained neutral and chose the (other) (see appendix). On the other hand, 6% of male wanted to be translators, in similarity to the previous percentage 6% checked in the (other), 4% chose both translators and English teachers while the fractions of 3% wanted to be English teachers.

In the next part, questions 4 and 5, the researcher desired to know how students translate texts and mention what translation methods they usually use to accomplish their assignments and work inside and outside the classroom. The scope of these questions is to figure out how many of them use clues to guess the meaning of the words and how many rely on technology. If most of them depend on technology, combining modern translation tools will



be positively effective. In these questions, 41% out of 79% of female use Google Translate, 13% use dictionary, 11% use Google translate, dictionary and different types of apps such as Box and English Golden Translation, 6% use other phone apps, 1% Google translate and Omega T, and 6% either do not translate or give unclear answers. These responses support that students rely on technology and are able to use it. The study lacks including an equal number of males equal or almost equal to females. Most of the male students use technology where 18% out of 22% reported using Google translate and phone apps while the remained 4% did not respond.

During students' responses and qualifying them to brainstorm the different methods they use to translate it was time to ask next in question 6 if they have ever heard of the term Computer Assisted Translation Tools "CAT"? In fact, from the researcher's perspective, the results were expected where the majority 51% of females responded with (No) while 6% chose (Yes). Similar to the female result was the male where the majority 16% of male respondents were (No) and the remaining 6% checked in (Yes). Those who replied with (Yes) were not sure what information they have about CAT tools; they solely have heard about it from others. These results indicate that English classes at the university of Derna need modern translation methods to be taught and learned inside the department. In addition to questions 6, and question 7 where students were asked if have, they ever use the modern translation method and to mention any modern translation methods they use to complete their assignments. The majority chose Yes because they believe that Google translate is modernist. 51% of females responded with yes and their answers varied between Google translate, phone apps, and mobile dictionaries. 10% replied with Yes without clear answers, 14% responded with No and 2% of them have no answers. For males, 13% Yes is their answer with mentioning the use of Google translate and phone apps, 3% Yes without clear answers and 6% responded with No.

Hence, at one of the last two questions and having some information about translation methods, students should be able to evaluate whether their knowledge of technological translation strategies is adequate to enhance their learning in university classes. 60% of females reported the No answer while the rest 19% reported Yes. It seems that most of the students who chose Yes are familiar with using different and modern apps and are at a higher level than those who chose No. 9% of males responded with Yes and 13% with No.

Finally, the researcher desired to know students' perspectives about learning the CAT tools inside their classes and whether to be one of their subjects or not. The majority 77% of females wanted to be taught CAT tools while the fraction of 1% chose No and answered with "*not applicable*". 19% of males reported Yes and 3% No, one of the students who reported No was "*what is to be a learner*" and the other was not a clear answer. This indicates that the students of the English department at the university of Derna do not benefit from translation classes theoretically and practically and there are no persuasive responses for not including these technological tools in the English department.

Teachers' Responses

To strengthen the validity of the questionnaire I have sent a question to the instructors who are specialize in applied translation studies and teach translation in the department of English at Derna University since 2012. They were asked to report with Yes or No if do they agree to teach computer-assisted translation tools in the English department at Derna University and mention reasons for the chosen response. One of the answers was;

“YES, it is important to prepare our students on how to deal with new technologies and their associated challenges in learning and development (L&D) the traditional teaching needs to be refined the learning strategy to bridge the gap between the classroom and teacher. In addition, refined learning outcomes for the CAT classroom contribute to accelerating the acquisition of technical skills”.

The other response

“YES, I agree completely with this proposal for the following reasons:

In recent decades, technology played a progressively important role within the field of translation. Computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools constitute essential technology for translators. Computers have yet to take over the business of language translation, although the use of CAT tools has become widespread in the translation procedure through professional translators. The CAT



tools that translators can use simplify their work, provide many different techniques, and save time, thus decreasing repetitive work via the use of automatic terminology lookups, as well as ensuring the efficiency of the translation. Each tool has advantages and disadvantages. The weaknesses and strengths of each tool are different for each translator in terms of the language pair that is involved in the translation.

In general, these tools play a significant role in the localization industry and make the translation process easier for translators by simplifying their work and save time by providing numerous diverse techniques that can decrease the repetition of tasks via automatic terminology lookups while ensuring translation efficiency”

Results and Conclusion

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“YES, it is important to prepare our students on how to deal with new technologies and their associated challenges in learning and development (L&D) the traditional teaching needs to be refined the learning strategy to bridge the gap between the classroom and teacher. In addition, refined learning outcomes for the CAT classroom contribute to accelerating the acquisition of technical skills.”

The other response was:

“YES, I agree with this proposal for the following reasons:

In recent decades, technology played a progressively important role in the field of translation. Computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools constitute essential technology for translators. Computers have yet to take over the business

of language translation, although the use of CAT tools has become widespread in the translation procedure through professional translators. The CAT tools that translators can use simplify their work, provide many different techniques and save time, thus decreasing repetitive work via the use of automatic terminology lookups, as well as ensuring the efficiency of the translation. Each tool has advantages and disadvantages. The weaknesses and strengths of each tool are different for each translator in terms of the language pair that is involved in the translation.

In general, these tools play a significant role in the localization industry and make the translation process easier for translators by simplifying their work and saving time by providing numerous diverse techniques that can decrease the repetition of tasks via automatic terminology lookups while ensuring translation efficiency.”

In the proposed paper the researchers examine teaching and learning modern strategies of translation called computer-aided translation tools and suggests being taught by teachers inside the classes of the English department by combining them into the subjects of translation at Derna university. The specific scope of this proposal is not to provide details and explanation of the previously mentioned tools which will be the next goal but rather to gain different perspectives on integrating these tools into foreign language classes. The necessity of inserting these tools into continuing education programs was noticeable in the previous studies however there were not many studies on the subject, it was important to start seeking some research studies and propose combining computer-assisted tools to enhance learning abilities and provide professional assistance for learners to follow modern strategies and accomplish tasks effectively. CAT tools are popular in most Arabic and English countries therefore increasing learners’ productivity of translation for future work is significant. Results of the questionnaire indicate that most of the students believe that their knowledge of technological translation methods is not sufficient to enhance their learning of translation. In other words, participants of the proposed study call for increasing their awareness toward changing traditional methods of teaching translation and instructors as well. As in Alotaibi(2014) when she investigated CAT tools and tested the



successfulness of using these tools and how may affect students' awareness of the job market nowadays. These and many other reasons assure the significant role that translation tools play in the life of education and business.

Table 1. Responses on the study's questionnaire

Plan after graduation	Translator F	Translator M	An English teacher F	An English teacher M	Both A translator and an English teacher F	Both A translator and an English teacher M	Other F	Other M
	33%	9%	16%	3%	16%	4%	14%	6%
The translation methods used to complete assignments	Google translate	Dictionary	Google & Omega T	Google & different types of apps	Other phone apps	Do not use or not clear answers		
	F 41% M 9%	F 13% M /	F 1% M /	11% M /	F 6% M 9%	F 6% M 4%		
Hearing about CAT tools	Yes F	Yes M	No F	No M				
	6%	6%	73%	16%				

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Modern translation tools used to accomplish an assignment	Yes F	Yes M	No F	No M	Not clear answers F & M			
	61%	7%	14%	6%	6%			
The beneficial of translation classes	Yes F	Yes M	No F	No M				
	19%	9%	16%	13%				
Teaching CAT tools as one of students' subjects inside the classroom	Yes F	Yes M	No F	No M				
	77%	19%	1%	3%				

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Appendix A Questionnaire

Computer-Assisted Translation Tools are used to assist translators in the translation process:

1- Are you in the..... year?

First	Second	Third	Fourth
-------	--------	-------	--------

2- Are you.....?

Male	Female
------	--------

3- What are you planning to be\ do after graduation?

A Translator	An English teacher	Both	Other
--------------	--------------------	------	-------

4- Clarify how do you translate texts from English to Arabic and vice versa?

.....

5- What translation methods do you usually use to complete your university work?

.....

6- Have you ever heard of the term Computer Assisted Translation tools " CAT"?

Yes	No
-----	----

If yes, mention what information do you have about it.

.....

7- Have you ever used any modern translation tools to accomplish an assignment?

Yes	No
-----	----

If yes, what type?

8- Do you think your knowledge of technological translation methods is sufficient to enhance your learning in university classes?

Yes	No
-----	----

9- Would you like to be taught CAT tools in the class as one of your subjects?

Yes	No
-----	----

If not, please give reasons :

.....

Blended Online EFL Writing Activities in Google Docs for Higher Education Students

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Abstract

In the field of higher education, blended learning is becoming necessary, particularly for teaching English. Blended learning combines both face-to-face and online learning opportunities for learners. This study aims to investigate the effects of blended EFL online activities by using the Google Docs application on students' writing performance. The participants of this study are 30 students of the English department at Sebha University. An open questionnaire is used to collect the data to perceive the students' impressions of the effects of the blended learning environment. The data obtained from the questionnaire confirms that students have better performance and positive perceptions in online writing classes. The findings prove that the blended online environment can inspire students, break down the lessons by making them digestible and develop strong writing skills. It is recommended that teachers must expose their students to more blended online writing activities to maintain an effective, fruitful, and enjoyable learning environment.

Key words: Blended learning, Writing activities, Google Docs, EFL learners, Higher education



1. INTRODUCTION

Blended learning (BL) is becoming an innovative tool in the field of education. Picciano, Dziuban & Graham (2013) indicate that research in this field is new and is associated with other educational fields such as educational technology, CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning), and English teaching methodology. Blended learning is defined by Bonk and Graham (2012) as “the combination of traditional face-to-face instruction with computer-assisted instruction”. Potentially, blended learning can change the learning process of individuals in a very flexible way. Significantly, a blended learning environment paves students’ path to collaborate and work on a given subject, ultimately, it is the goal of successful learning. Jackson (2014), therefore, highlights that educators and decision makers should pay more attention to implementing technology in education to give the learners a chance to connect their inner and outside world gradually. This paper aims to provide an overview of the implication, benefits, and even the problems of using the ‘Google Docs application as a blended learning tool to teach writing. This paper is among a group of our papers in different colleges undertaken between 2021 and 2022, which aims to study the effectiveness of using the Google Docs application in teaching writing collaboratively to English language students. It is hoped that this study concludes with some important considerations for the future implementation and/or maximization of blended learning opportunities by using such online applications for teaching different skills in the English language.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. What is Blended Learning?

Blending learning, operationally, blends the benefits of both methods face to face and e-learning. There are many interrelated terms used in the concept and learning strategy of blended learning. Zainab Fakhir (2015) highlights different concepts for the term blended learning as

“Multi-method learning, hybrid learning, mixed method learning, and integrated learning. These concepts are all references to the same idea and learning methods, in which learning takes place by using two different styles of interaction”.



Blended learning (BL), according to Welker and Berardino (2006), Graham (2013), and Avasmatova (2020) is the incorporation between face-to-face and online teaching. In the context of language teaching and learning, a framework for a blended learning environment is designed by Neumeier (2005). This framework is consisting of six parameters: (1) mode, (2) distribution of learning content and objectives model of integration, (3) mode of integration, (4) involvement of learning subjects, (5) language teaching methods, and (6) location. More interestingly, integrating traditional and online instructions is the key element beyond blended learning as it enables learners to accomplish whatever activity is undertaken. In terms of activities related to blended learning, several levels of blended learning were identified by Graham (2006): institutional-level blending, program-level blending, activity-level blending, and course-level blending. Each level combines the online ways of teaching as well as the traditional elements depending on the learning mode. Thorne (2003) explains that blended learning represents a very real step for an individual to gain an opportunity to study in a wider environment and provide freedom for them to progress in a flexible environment.

Blended learning is not introduced as a perfect strategic tool that resolves all the problems that take place during the learning/teaching process; however, it is proven to be a potential tool compared to its traditional counterpart.

2.2. Blended Learning and Education

In education, several studies have shown the importance of applying blended learning in teaching and learning context and how steadily gained its significance in this field. Studies have shown that blended learning, regardless of its implementation design, has shown a considerable positive effect on the teaching and learning process (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010). However, Allen and Seaman (2006) report that blended learning is becoming a major global trend in the field of education. The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) has identified blended learning as one of the top ten trends to emerge in the delivery industry of knowledge (Rooney, 2003). Different activities can be obtained from the blended learning process that moves them from theory to practice. Blended learning allows learners to visualize, listen, feel, and interact with the learning material (Fakhir, 2015). Meanwhile, using their devices connected to the internet either at home or

even in the classroom, students can be exposed to a wide range of learning resources. Students, in this globalization era, learn differently compared to before (Young, 2002). Learners exposed to this strategy gain more knowledge and are prepared for real-life resources; therefore, the role of technology should not be undermined in the field of education to track technological development.

Blended learning is also referred to by Graham (2006) as three key elements:

- a) To boost the effectiveness of education;
- b) Convenience and Increased access;
- c) A great cost of effectiveness.

Following the elements mentioned by Graham (2006), Avasmatova (2020) prefers blended learning for the following reasons:

- a) Resources are easy to access;
- b) Instant feedback in the classroom;
- c) Flexibility of lessons;
- d) large buildings are not needed.

Avasmatova (2020) adds that in blended learning, learners got the chance to inquire and raise questions in the classroom, at the same time; they take flexible online lessons no matter whenever and wherever they are. In addition, Huang, Zhou, and Wang (2006) outline that blended learning is flexible in terms of the availability of learning resources as students can reach different resources at different time and place that is not constricted to school books or even teachers' cited resources. According to Fakhir (2015), the implementation of blended learning strategies has a significant role in transforming the educational environment into a creative and participatory learning environment. It also shifts the educational process from teaching to learning, from teacher-centered to student-centered.

From the above studies, it can be seen clearly that blended learning helps to enhance the e-learning experience as students can track different skills by using technology. They will be able to bookmark relevant websites seeking



relevant information for a given topic, upload and download documents and even interact virtually with their partners.

2.3. Factors that influence the implementation of blended learning

Several factors influence applying a blended learning approach in language courses. The acceptance of blended learning, according to Apandi & Raman (2020), influences the success of technology adoption. However, the majority of studies, on what influences the application of blended learning, have generally focused on students' impressions of blended learning. Few studies have looked into teachers' opinions of blended learning, particularly in higher education institutions. According to Hamilton (2019), the teachers' Gender, subject taught, education level, perceived computer competency, and computer-to-student ratio did not affect perceived internal factors affecting the implementation of blended learning. Sharma and Barrett (2007), in this regard, arguing that learners' proficiency levels, teachers' positive or negative attitudes toward technology use, students' accessibility to technology, teachers' training, and cost are the most important factors that influence the implementation of blended learning. Apandi & Raman (2020) have another opinion as they believe that the most influential factor to influence blended learning applications is internet connectivity. Internal factors are seen to have a greater influence on implementation than external influences. Several studies (Alebaikan & Troudi, 2010; Gomez & Igado, 2008; Graham, 2007; Garrison & Kanuka, 2004) have revealed that pedagogy, flexibility, and access influence blended learning and also enable the engagement and participation of learners. Overall, many studies indicate that barriers to implementing blended learning fall into the following areas; the learners' acceptance, lack of training on how to use different technological tools, and different technical issues such as Wi-Fi and tool access. Many of the identified challenges suggest that instructors need meaningful professional development to help address the different technological tools in education.

2.4. Blended learning and Google docs

Higher education has a challenging and vital role in activating the students to track the rapid change in online technologies related to their learning process. The Internet has become the core of the educational system as it provides learners with tools to accomplish given tasks. Google Docs is one of

the technological tools that enable learners to share documents and enhance collaboration among students during their activities.

SriRahayu (2016) defines Google Docs as a free online word processor that is available to anyone with a Gmail account to create a collaboration activity to enhance collaborative writing' (ibid, 227). Google Docs does not need to download new software or buy hardware as it is free and it is designed mainly for schools, universities, and public organizations (Oishi, 2007). Google docs are characterized by many flexible features in which students can work at home and at school from any computer which is connected to the internet. This application is characterized by its main options which share the same functions: Google Spreadsheets, Google Documents, and Google Drawing, and can compare two versions of a document (Thompson, 2008). It also provides standard editing functionality and excels in real-time collaborative authoring. Chinnery (2008) states that in Google Docs, learning activities can be designed differently and creatively, therefore, it is a productive tool.

Based on a blended learning strategy, using Google docs, EFL learners, to accomplish a given task collaboratively can reflect positively on their levels since they can share, modify, comment, and correct each other's work.

2.5. Google docs and writing practice/ collaborative learning

Several studies have confirmed the use of Google Docs in the classroom to facilitate collaborative learning and promote writing outcomes (Chen, 2008; Chou & Chen, 2008). Since Google Docs is stored online, simultaneously, students are more likely to revisit and modify their written work and track comments by their partners. They will be able to insert a comment by highlighting some texts in the body of the document and ultimately the comment will appear on the right side of the page (Chinnery, 2008). Besides that, they can even click on any comment and see the highlighted text in the document, and change color to quickly determine the suggested revision. In this case, the role of the instructor is to address some issues so students feel a sense of accomplishment as they work collaboratively and follow the suggestions of their peers. Sharp (2009) indicates that this collaborative editing tool allows learners to edit a document simultaneously while they can track the changes made by their partners in real-time. This unique feature makes Google Docs a powerful program that can facilitate collaborative



writing in the language classroom. In Google Docs, a teacher might post a text for learners to correct and it is intentionally full of errors. In this case, learners start to work together and easily peer-edit as this program leaves an editing trail. Conner (2008); Perron & Sellers (2011) highlight another option which is chain storytelling. In this option, an instructor initiates a story, and learners will participate consecutively. Sholihaha and Setyandaria (2018) also mention a special feature of this program that allows us to save our documents in Google as backup data storage. We don't have to worry if our PC or laptop is infected with a virus because it already stored our data in Google Docs. We can keep our written files hidden as long as we keep our Gmail account and password secret. According to Dangwal and Lalima (2017), the students will have plenty of opportunities to communicate with other students studying the same course using Google Docs. This application is proven to provide better opportunities for the students to interact with each in a digital environment. As a result, the student's knowledge increases, and they develop a sense of understanding, love, and harmony with their peers.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants and settings

Participants were (30) students (age range: 19-21 years), enrolled in a creative writing course (Eng 305) in (the spring 2021) semester. All the participants are studying at the English department, College - Arts of Sebha University.

3.2. Method and procedure

This study aimed at exploring the effects and attitudes toward using blended learning (in-class learning with Google Docs application) for teaching writing to EFL students. First, permission was asked from the teacher to do the experience of teaching by Google Docs. After that, four assignments from their present course were selected as part of the blended learning procedure (see appendix 1). The students and the teacher were given an idea about how to open the Google Docs application and start working on it (see appendixes 2 & 3). The students were then asked to start working on the class assignments and complete their work at home by using the Google Docs application. Students were divided into 6 groups (five students in each group) and were required

to finish each assignment in a week. The researchers helped the teacher and the students to discover the options and ways of writing on this application whenever necessary. The teacher and the researchers monitored the student's progress and performance in writing in the classroom and at home through Google docs. Corrections, comments, and feedback were given by the teacher in the class and on the Google Docs application whenever necessary. After finishing the assignments, the data were collected as students completed an in-class open questionnaire to survey their experience with a blended learning environment (see appendix 4).

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

As the data collected in this study is qualitative, the narrative descriptions are used to report the data.

4.1. Students' perspective

4.1.1. The blended learning environment

Surprisingly, all of the students stated that the blended learning environment was great for them because it helped them to communicate and express their thoughts and feelings with other students. They also claimed that the blended learning experience improved their writing performance. Their use of technology helped them to be more creative and professional while doing their assignments and thus increasing their experience and understanding of the ways of writing creatively. The students' perspectives also indicated that the blended learning was highly inspiring because it was a new experience and adds a technology touch to their process of learning writing. It made the teaching-learning process multicultural, and the multiplicity of experiences added an academic and multifunctional component.

Several studies similarly indicated the same findings as El-Deghaidy and Nouby (2008), which proved that the achievement of students in the blended group is much higher than that of students who studied in person. Furthermore, they discovered that students' attitudes about e-learning are significantly better in the blended group. The use of a blended learning approach to develop EFL learners' writing competency was examined also by Adas and Bakir (2013). Specifically, this study aims to identify whether blended learning can be a productive tool that helps to increase students' performance in writing. In a



Palestinian university, sixty EFL learners participated in the study. The students were grouped into two main parts: the first group was taught English writing using the traditional face-to-face approach, while the other group was instructed using a blended learning approach. By the end of the teaching sessions, the study revealed that the group that was taught using blended learning performed better in writing than the other group. All the previous studies indicate that blended learning, as a teaching model, could be utilized to develop various language skills such as speaking reading, writing, and vocabulary knowledge.

To sum up, the results showed great development in the writing competencies of EFL learners who experienced the use of the blended learning model including many aspects of the participants' writing such as spelling, punctuation, grammar, and paragraph coherence. As can be seen in the ESL/EFL context, research revealed that blended learning can develop the language competencies of English language learners.

4.1.2. Benefits of using Google docs for learning writing

For the advantages of using this application, students unanimously stated that Google Docs is preferable since it helped them in doing writing assignments in a timely and fascinating manner. It also helped in the exchange of ideas for the matter course by commenting on and modifying postings, conserving time, and enhancing knowledge. The participants reported that Google Docs provided them with the ability to collaborate on a common topic without the constraints that traditional face-to-face contacts impose. Additional time was given to students to complete their assignments, with no time constraints as in class. The students wrote longer essays and were able to work on collaborative writing more efficiently and swiftly as a result of their experience with Google Docs. Many of them stated that they were able to gain benefit from the knowledge of others. More advantages were also identified and are stated below:

- 1-Access your work from any device
- 2- Access at any time and everywhere
- 3- easy to understand
- 4- ease collaboration

- 5- new experience
- 6- get knowledge from another students
- 7- get access to different online resources
- 8- immediate feedback from pairs and teacher
- 9- Automatically saves the work
- 10- it is free

Various studies indicate several benefits of Google Docs, such as SriRahayu (2016) who observed that Google Docs is preferred among his study participants since it is simple, enjoyable, and free. The impact of Google Docs was also examined by Suwantarathip and Wichadee (2014) on student writing in a Thai university, as well as the nature of student collaboration in Google Docs work groups. A greater understanding and better performance of the writing process were recorded by his participants. The student performed better in the post-test writing via Google docs than those students who had been in face-to-face writing groups. In another study conducted by Al-Haq and Al-Sobh (2010) on Jordanian secondary students' performance, the researchers examined the effectiveness of a web-based writing instructional EFL program (Web WIP). The participants of the study were 122 students in the eleventh scientific grade studying in four secondary comprehensive schools. The participants were two male schools and two female ones that belong to the Irbid Second Directorate of Education. The results revealed that there were statistically significant differences due to gender in favor of the female students compared with males and there were statistically significant differences in the achievement post-test in favor of the experimental group. A study by Sayed (2012) highlighted practicing writing on a website by a moderator. The study was carried out on 60 students selected from Nader El-Riyadh Preparatory School. The participants were divided into two groups: control and experimental: with 30 students per each. The students of the experimental group practiced writing on a website under the teacher's guidance and feedback. To collect data, a post-writing test was administered. The findings revealed that there was a difference between the two groups and showed that electronic portfolios had a large effect on writing skills. This application simply allows students to share their thoughts, experiences, and



knowledge. Students thus gain broad exposure and content knowledge as a result of the variety of these experiences.

4.1.3. Challenges of learning writing through Google docs

The data show that the students faced some writing problems in the first week of working on Google docs due to the printing procedure as they were not used to writing on the keyboard. This problem is then solved automatically and gradually when they get used to writing on the keyboard. Another problem raised early in the experience was the students' confusion about the application's options and features. Both the researchers and the teacher assisted the participants in learning how to use the various options, icons, and features of Google Docs. After only a few minutes of teaching, the students were able to use the majority of the options swiftly and easily. Gralla (2010) stated that Google continues to update and improve its products and options in this respect. Many of the problems that students faced using Google Docs have since been resolved. For example, each online collaborator's name is now shown above a different-colored pointer moving across the screen.

Furthermore, the students may now see each group member's contributions in real-time. Thus, some of them reported being concerned all of the time because all of their classmates see their every single writing comment. Therefore, they must pay more attention to the English writing rules such as using appropriate words that are appropriate to the topic (vocabulary), using appropriate time of using (tenses), verb using (infinitive, past, and past participle), punctuation, spelling, organization, and exploring ideas. However, after finishing their work, they reread their work many times to ensure that it follows proper English patterns. However, some students stated that writing on Google Docs may take more time than writing in class because all students would see what they write and whether or not they make mistakes. Although working on the internet takes more time, the students felt more responsible about their writing products, which is beneficial since they would feel ashamed if they made a mistake in front of others.

However, online teamwork in Google Docs might lead to unpleasant experiences for several reasons. For example, the participants as well as the instructor might be uncomfortable sharing knowledge. Moreover, participants may not all contribute equally to the assignment and it was not appropriate to

change other students' written work. Many studies recorded similar problems to Rick and Guzdial (2006) who reported that some of the participants in his study felt shy and uncomfortable with writing in public in the first days of the experiment. Some of them also refused to share knowledge and preferred to work individually. These problems were solved later with some support and encouragement from the teacher. They were told that their work is traced and the marks will not be equal but rather depend on the collaboration and effort done in writing.

Although there are some problems related to this experience, this study implies that Google Docs can be used effectively to increase students' writing skills. Google Docs allowed the learners to work on the given tasks without restrictions often imposed by traditional face-to-face contacts.

4.2. Suggestions related to blended learning by using Google docs

The data obtained from this study lead to several suggestions related to the application of blended learning in the university domain and they are listed below:

- * Teachers should be knowledgeable in the concept of blended learning, as well as properly trained and proficient in combining both traditional and technological techniques.
- * In blended learning, the teacher must perform two roles: traditional in the classroom and monitor, guide, and organizer outside the classroom using technology.
- * The school should have adequate classrooms and well-equipped laboratories with enough computers to cope with the needs of all students in one class, as well as internet access and, if possible, a Wi-Fi campus.
- * In addition to a properly ICT-friendly institution, students should have basic hardware support at home to learn online and offline. This necessitates the government's constructive approach and good investment programs.

However, as online technology has become an integral part of daily life, it is beneficial to educators, policymakers, and classroom teachers to understand how technology can be integrated with writing programs and to what extent the integration can help boost student motivation and



participation at all levels.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study's participants' positive perception of blended learning highlighted the potential advantages of using Google Docs for out-of-class writing assignments in addition to regular in-class assignments. Today, students rarely meet in person for group work, preferring to interact via e-mail, instant messaging, video conferencing, and various web-based technologies. Thus, Google Docs is a well-suited tool to encourage students to work collaboratively and finish the assignments given in the classroom.

However, teachers must educate both themselves and their students on the most recent application which can help in the process of learning and teaching. Most importantly, teachers should carefully analyze their course learning objectives to see if any new technology would better prepare students to meet their specific learning outcomes. Although this study attempts to illustrate one of the technical methods that can support the process of learning both inside and outside the classroom, more research is required to integrate more recent technological resources to teach different educational courses.

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Blended Online EFL Writing Activities in Google Docs for Higher Education Students

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Exploring Online Collaborative Writing on Google Docs for Novice small-group EFL Graduation-Project Students

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Abstract

The development of Web-2 technology with unrestricted access to collaboration tools yielded sizable research in ESL/EFL Online Collaborative Writing (OCW) predominantly for formative assessment. Little attention however has been dedicated to OCW in summative-assessment project-based tasks, e.g. graduation projects (GP). This qualitative case study explores collaborative writing activities by a small group of Libyan novice EFL student teachers writing their GP on Google Docs. The core research question concerned (1) what patterns of OCW activities novice EFL student-teachers perform on Google Docs? Three sub-questions were generated: (2) Do the students contribute equally and mutually to the collaborative process? (3) How do the students perceive their first-hand collaborative experience on Google Docs? (4) What obstacles are encountered? The findings reveal progressive group collaboration with a restricted range of Writing Change Functions; one member assumed group-leader position with another lagging behind. In retrospect, the students highly appreciated their online collaborative experience through, not only exchanging comments or suggestions, but also in witnessing their collective project materialise in real-time. Serious problems with power cuts, and inappropriately responding to supervisor feedback were some challenges encountered. The study has strong implications in implementing OCW for project/research writing, enhancing project supervision strategies, and enhancing project-writing outcomes.

Keywords: Online collaborative writing; Google Docs; interaction patterns; research/ project writing; research supervision



1.1 Background

The idea for this paper evolved out of a predicament. At the time of data collection (autumn 2021), only two Graduation Project (GP) students at the Faculty of Education Tripoli (FET) were allowed to collaborate on a single project at any one time. Due to problems with accessing relevant resources for their research topic, two students were about to withdraw (GPs must be completed by the end of the semester). Instead, the researcher proposed they be permitted to join another team whom he was supervising thus making up “the group of four”, as the researcher named then from then on. The condition for acceptance was that members of the newly formed team demonstrate equivalent participation to the project work. In previous semesters, more than two students were allowed to work on a graduation project, but it often turned out that one or two would typically ‘hang around’ and rely on the others to carry out most of the work. Although a research supervisor’s assessment ought to reflect individual student participation (40%), such passive students often manage to get through project assessment in view of their oral presentation (30%) and the shared written assessment (30%). Therefore, to overcome the issue of unequal workload and students’ lack of contribution, the researcher sought to apply a form of online facility that keeps a record of peer involvement patterns, that is, who did what on the project and when.

To achieve this goal, the researcher opted for Google Docs as an online collaborative writing platform for he had already experienced using it and found it convenient in authoring documents with staff members. Before the Google Docs collaborative process began, however, a project schedule was agreed and the workload was evenly distributed so that each member knew what task-related activities to perform. As far as the researcher is aware, OCW environments were neither practiced nor researched for project writing within the Libyan EFL teacher education context.

1.2 Why Google Docs

Several Web-2 based OCW platforms have been employed in educational settings, e.g. wikis, blogs, Google Docs, and EtherPad (Brodahl et al., 2011). Google Docs, an application by Google Apps for Education, is a web-based tool that has effectively been utilised to facilitate OCW (Liu et al, 2018). Google Docs supports collaborative writing and editing of shared documents,



information, conferencing and giving feedback (Brodahl et al, 2011).

Moreover, Google Docs provides opportunities for multiple users to “work on the same document simultaneously, have a separate space for written metacommunication, and are promoted by software designers to be fairly intuitive to adopt without prior training (ibid, p. 1). Additionally, Google Docs is highly interactive in that writers can edit text synchronously or asynchronously, a feature which is unattainable in conventional settings (Woodrich & Fan, 2017). Slavkov (2015) in fact refers to Google Docs as a more dynamic tool because of its collaborative feature to share online documents between instructors and peers and hence “have a privileged view of the process of invention and creation in real time” (p. 83).

Automatically saving version history is another distinct feature on Google Docs. This substantially reduces time and effort to save edited copies while collaborators’ names are tagged to those changes. In other words, Google Docs version history feature allows Google Drive cloud-storage of edited revisions, and thus facilitates tracking writing changes made to different drafts (Alharbi, 2019). Participants can also toggle between editing and suggesting modes, which allows them to suggest changes rather than make edits directly (Branden & Sneha, 2020).

1.3 Collaborative writing

An inclusive definition for Collaborative Writing (CW) is that by Giroud (1999). He identified it as a learning task where a small group of students equally and collaboratively participate in constructing a piece of text for which they become jointly responsible; the process entails discussion and the exchange of ideas to solve any problems that arise in the process. CW has also been perceived as a social iterative process by a group of individuals with focus on a shared goal; that of finalizing the writing of a common document through meaning negotiation and coordination of efforts (Lowry, Aaron and Rene, 2004). Erkens, Jaspers, Prangma, & Kanselaar (2005) point out that in CW the participants are dependent on shared resources and cooperative intentions of their partners. Therefore, CW is an interactive cognitive process that brings about pedagogic outcomes through socializing, sharing information, and the meaningful construction of knowledge (Philips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004).

1.4 Online collaborative writing

Because of rapid developments in virtual technologies, increasingly more opportunities for Online Collaborative Writing (OCW) were created (Nykopp, *et al*, 2019). Unique advantages for CW materialised, e.g. equal opportunities for participation regardless of time or space (Parker & Chao, 2007); interactive peer reviewing (Alexander, 2006); constructing text extracted from various sources (Murugesan, 2007); sharing information and giving real-time feedback (Parker & Chao, 2007); the ability to track contributions and provide detailed feedback in contrast with face to face situations (Chu & Kennedy, 2011). Moreover, active participation in OCW has been shown to bring about cognitive development (Hsu, 2020).

Online collaborative writing afforded by virtual environments, however, has augmented the complexity of the writing process in contrast with traditional CW (Lowry & Nunamaker 2003). Participants in OCW are not physically together to interpret nonverbal signs, e.g. gestures or facial expressions which often facilitate social interaction in face-to-face conditions (Kreijns et al. 2003). Moreover, the lack of immediate feedback or response to pressing issues can sometimes be annoying and/or off-putting under asynchronous conditions (Nykopp, Marttunen & Erkens, 2019) since one has to wait until a partner on the other side reads and responds to a comment or request for information.

Despite the remoteness and the lack of social contact in OCW, however, collaborators can utilise alternative means to maintain social relations (Birnholtz et al, 2013), e.g. through supportive comments or expressions, which help maintain a positive group atmosphere (Janssen et al. 2012). Facial images or emojis can also be used for socialising purposes in different ways. Nonetheless, partners' comments on the quality of writing in asynchronous communication may cause annoyance, as they may be perceived as domineering (Nykopp, *et al*, 2019).

That is why grounding rules should be mutually agreed prior to conducting OCW in earnest. Grounding entails common understanding of working rules between collaborators to accomplish the final product; they are expected to communicate and write collaboratively and ensure they understand each other, agree on task division and on the strategies to complete those tasks (Janssen et al, 2012). Further, it was found that student groups who regulated their



collaborative activities through grounding performed better than those who did not (Janssen et al., 2012). Once group members approve of grounding rules, communication and feedback may be delivered synchronously or asynchronously as circumstances dictate.

1.5 Towards a framework for data analysis

This subsection is a review of previous studies relevant to OCW regardless of the online environment employed or the technical facilities within. The aim is to identify data analysis frameworks used in analysing patterns of collaborative activities that the researcher may utilise in the present study. The studies are presented in chronological order.

Mak and Coniam (2008) explored how ESL secondary school learners (n=24) in Hong Kong collaborated in a wiki environment as they co-authored a brochure describing their school facilities. The students were divided into six groups of four each with a different subtask. After a succession of drafts, the final produced was printed for distribution. It was in this task-oriented study that the concept of Writing Change Functions (WCF) in an online context was first reported. The researchers identified four WCFs in the form of adding, correcting, expanding ideas, and reorganizing ideas.

Li (2013) extended Mak and Coniam's (2008) work by conducting a study on a small group of Chinese EFL university students' writing on a wiki-based environment. Data analysis demonstrated students active engagement in reciprocal communication that reflected "content discussion, social talk, task management, technical communication and language negotiation" (p.1). A significant finding was that the participants as individuals collectively scaffolded each other's writing as they co-constructed meaning. As well as (adding, correcting, expanding ideas, and reorganizing ideas), Li identified 'deletion' and 'rephrasing' as additional functions to Mak and Coniam's (2008) WCFs. This is because 'adding' and 'correcting' already existed; 'reorganizing ideas' was simply renamed 'reordering'; 'adding' and 'expanding ideas' were seemingly merged under one WCF label, hence ensuing five functions:

- Addition (adding new text initially written by others or self);
- Deletion (deleting text initially written by others or self);
- Rephrasing (rewriting text by others or self, using different words);

- Reordering (moving text around to reorganizing ideas made by others or self);
- Correcting (correcting errors in grammar or language mechanism made by others or self).

Storch (2013) used language functions as a medium of communication to advocate a dyadic interaction model that identifies five modes of online peer involvement: 1) collaborative, 2) dominant/dominant 3), dominant/passive 4) expert/novice, and 5) cooperative (Figure 1). The dyadic model mirrors peer involvement with one another through two collaboration scales: equality (the degree to which a peer equally contributes to the collaborative process in relation to other peers) and mutuality (the extent of engagement with peers' contributions through commenting or editing).

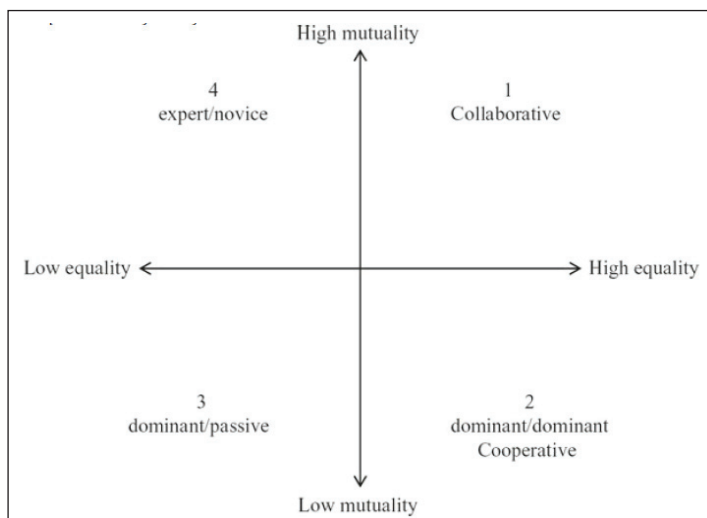


Figure 1. Storch's (2013, p. 67) dyadic interaction model

Accordingly, four quadrants are produced by the model. Quadrant 1 depicts collaborative engagement within moderate to high levels of equality and mutuality. In Quadrant 2, two patterns of interaction occur: dominant/dominant and cooperative. Within dominant/dominant interaction, members may contribute equally but compete for dominance over task, yet with little attention to each other's texts; in a cooperative interaction pattern, peers may show moderate to high contribution yet with relatively low mutuality or



minimal engagement with other's contributions. Quadrant 3 depicts medium to low equality and mutuality implying that a peer assumes control while the others passively observe. Quadrant 4 represents moderate to low equality, with moderate to high mutuality. The emerging pattern is expert/novice, where one peer contributes more than the others do and hence plays a more dominant role as an expert.

Li and Kim (2016) pursued two further lines of inquiry to Li's (2013) study. In addition to analysing Writing Change Functions, they examined scaffolding strategies and language functions by two groups of students of English for Academic Purposes. They also looked into how the students collaboratively and dynamically interacted across multiple wiki writing tasks. Language functions reflected how peers used L2 as a mediating tool to interact with each other in task negotiation. Findings revealed that the two groups working on identical wiki tasks performed different patterns of interaction and that those patterns changed within each group across two tasks.

Nykopp, Marttunen and Erkens (2019) put together a framework to analyse OCW interactive processes for a group of university students (n=28). Referring to Janssen's et al. (2012) work on computer supported collaborative learning, they classified collaborative writing activities into two core categories *task-related* and *social*, each of associated with either coordinating or performing an activity, resulting in four categories. It appears however that Nykopp, Marttunen and Erkens's (2019) work was aimed at relatively large groups since the focus was on coordination of social activities and group profiles. More importantly, there was no reference to usage of a specific OCW platform.

Diem and Think (2022) conducted a study to investigate the effects of regular collaborative activities via Google Docs on the writing skills of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) for Vietnamese high school students (n=24). The researchers used a mixed-method approach with a pre- and post-test experimental design as well as semi-structured interviews with the students. The results revealed that the students' overall writing skills improved significantly over the period of the course. Individual academic writing skills also showed significant improvement in task response and lexical resources; regarding cohesion, coherence and accuracy though, no significant improvement was shown. The interviews echoed that they valued

the practicality of Google Docs collaborative environment in enhancing their EAP writing skills. The students however were met with certain challenges while using Google Docs and they displayed mixed opinions regarding whether they had enjoyed using the platform for collaborative writing.

1. Method

2.1 Purpose and approach

The purpose of this research is to identify patterns of collaborative writing activities undertaken by a small group of four EFL female students who were novice to online collaboration. The study aims also to identify how the peers collectively interact and perform during the collaborative writing process. The research approach for the study is therefore exploratory, in which case-study methodology is adopted. “Case study remains a very powerful methodology for language researchers and for theory development in applied linguistics and language education. What it may lack in generalizability, it makes up for in its detailed portrayal of issues, settings, individuals, and interactions” (Duff & Anderson, 2015, p. 117).

2.2 Participants

The participants of the study were four Libyan female students from the Department of English at the Faculty of Education Tripoli (FET). The students were enrolled for Graduation Project (GP) module at their seventh and pre-final semester of study; hence, it is presumed that they have a sense of bonding. GP involves the writing of a research project on a mutually agreed topic with the RS, who for this particular study was the researcher himself.

2.3 Research questions

In line with the research objectives, five research questions were generated:

1. What patterns of online collaborative activities Libyan novice EFL student teachers perform on Google Docs?
2. Do these novices contribute equally and mutually to the online collaborative process?
3. How do the student teachers perceive their first-hand online collaborative writing experience on Google Docs?
4. What challenges or obstacles are encountered by the students and, if so,



how were they resolved?

2.4 Data sources

Based on the qualitative paradigm and the research questions above, data was gathered from multiple sources as follows:

- a) The author's (as a research supervisor) narrative account of the supervised OCW process;
- b) Google Docs' archived versions and comments history of the project document;
- c) Snap shots of Google Docs document at relevant junctures;
- d) A retrospective open-ended questionnaire with the students at the conclusion of the project.

2.5 Procedure: pre-writing

The procedure prior to OCW involved pre-writing preparation activities. These involved agreeing on ground rules (grounding) for the group and planning the writing process (schedule). With guidance from the Research Supervisor (RS), it was agreed that:

1. Group members must share the work load equally between them, and this was laid out in the mutually agreed work schedule (Table 1);
2. Any information and/or resources concerning the writing project must be shared with the group and properly cited. A separate resources page was set out on Google Docs for this purpose;
3. Only constructive and objective feedback should be offered by group members to each other.
4. Comments are only deleted from the Google Doc by the supervisor when he feels that the related issue or issues have been adequately addressed.
5. Members must do their utmost to fulfil their assigned share of the written task including any task-related activities e.g. searching, identifying, or sharing of relevant resources. All shared resources must be properly referenced (APA style of referencing) and a valid web-link uploaded to the resources page.
6. Any group member who genuinely feels she cannot uphold her part of the

set task(s) should inform both the group and the RS so that alternative solutions could be made to keep up with the schedule.

The project task schedule as Table 1 demonstrates was planned for completion in approximately seven weeks throughout April and May 2021.

Table 1 Project task schedule.

No.	Project task	Students	Time allocated
1	Searching for and reading background material on the research topic; upload relevant material with citation to Resources Page	All	One week
2	Writing a preliminary Introduction chapter	S1	One day
3	Writing the Literature Review. Agree appropriate subheadings and mutually divide workload	S2, S3, S4	Six days
4	Surveying and writing related previous studies; others check work	S1	Three days
5	Writing the Methodology chapter	All	Three days
6	Data collection and documentation	All	One week
7	Data Analysis and writing of chapter	All	One week
8	Writing the Conclusions and Recommendations chapter	All	Two days
9	Revisiting and updating the Literature Review as necessary	All	Four days
10	Refine Introduction, write the Abstract. Add Declaration, Approval, Acknowledgements, TOC, etc.	All	Two days
11	Proof reading the whole written project		One day
12	Preparing a soft-bound draft copy of the project (hard copy submitted when GP is approved by the project discussion panel)	All	Three days

Data Analysis and Discussion

3.1 Writing Change Functions

Overall, 124 history versions of the document were created and archived



by Google Docs. The number of edits per version varied significantly between two and 502 edits as the group members progressively engaged in the collaborative process. The researcher then selected three typical versions of the document that 1) contained contributions from all members and 2) contained a high volume of edits. The selected versions have been renamed Sample Versions 1, 2 and 3 and were analysed for Writing Change Functions (WCF) as well as equality/ mutuality based on Li's (2013) and Storch (2013) frameworks consecutively (see subsection 1.5).

To focus data analysis on WCFs more effectively, the researcher overlooked edits in writing mechanics, e.g. word, line, or paragraph spacing, capitalisation, punctuation marks, etc. Therefore, the researcher tracked and counted the number of WCF performed by each member and categorised them accordingly (Table 2). For the purpose of anonymity, the student participants are referred to numerically (S1-S4).

Table 2 Writing Change Functions produced.

Students	Writing Change Functions										Total	%
	Addition		Deletion		Correcting		Rephrasing		Reordering			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
S1	68	48.9	12	35.3	24	38.1	0	0	0	0	104	44.1
S2	41	29.5	10	29.4	22	34.9	0	0	0	0	73	30.9
S3	16	11.5	9	26.5	10	15.9	0	0	0	0	35	14.8
S4	14	10.1	3	8.8	7	11.1	0	0	0	0	24	10.2
Total	139	58.9	34	14.4	63	26.7	0	0	0	0	236	100

In total, 236 WCFs (excluding corrections in mechanics) were identified by the collaborating members in the three selected sample versions. However, it is noted that only three WCFs, in descending order, were employed: Adding (58.9%), Correcting (26.7), and Deleting (14.4%). Rephrasing and Reordering were not observed. It may appear, at first glance, that Rephrasing and Reordering are high-level skills that are beyond the students' competency, and were thus avoided. The students' compositions, however, were apparently

coherent and organised, i.e. the participants already possessed sufficient language competencies to produce such writing.

Upon receiving the retrospective open-ended questionnaire responses, however, it occurred that due to fears of sudden power cuts frequent at the time, the students “invented” an alternative solution; they reverted to preparing their compositions, in Microsoft Word, prior to posting them online when power returned. Consequently, students’ contributions, in the three sample versions, appeared organised and coherent, i.e. free of global errors (see students’ extracts in Appendix A); what they then did was merely edit each other’s local errors. Though this strategy may have resolved the students’ immediate problem, it impoverished the collaborative data of global-level activities-WCFs of Rephrasing and Reordering. To verify that observed absence of global activities was valid across the document, the researcher reviewed the remaining archived versions on Google Drive. It transpired that no other version had writing changes pertaining to Rephrasing and Reordering, hence, confirming that the students had dealt with these functions in isolation of Google Docs.

3.2 Equality and mutuality

Concerning equality and mutuality, Storch’s (2013) dyadic interaction model was used as the framework for data analysis. From Table 1, WCF data reveals member dominance by S1 who made the most contributions (44.1%), and in doing so, assumed a dominant expert role (Storch, 2002). S2 was not very far behind (30.9%); her correction edits (34.9%) were even closer to those of S1 (38.1%). Therefore, it can be said that collaborative activities fall within quadrant 4 in the dyadic interaction model (expert/ novice) in which group interaction is characterised with medium to low equality and medium to high mutuality.

A rather large gap in collaborative contributions is observed between S1 and S2 on the one hand, and S3 and S4 on the other. S1 and S2 together accumulated 75% of the changes compared with 25% for S3 and S4, which proportionally amounts to only a third of the collaborative effort. This disparity in collaborative contribution does not reflect equality across the group. Rather, it could be said that equality was dichotomised between S1 and S2 as experts and between S3 and S4 as novices.



3.3 Collective peer scaffolding

Not long after starting the project, S4 confronted a personal circumstance (death of a parent) that kept her away for over a week. As she re-joined the group, the bulk of the work had been done, yet her colleagues sympathised with her and tendered collective peer scaffolding. Donato identified ‘collective scaffolding’ through peer interaction in which participants as learners are “individually novices and collectively experts, sources of new orientations for each other and guides through this complex linguistic problem solving’ (Donato, 1994, p. 46).

In an extract by S4, addressing self-reflection on linguistic competence (below), the group collectively scaffolded her sentence by contributing eight edits; On the Google Docs project, there has been no amalgamation of eight edits in any single sentence:

Linguistic competence :I think my language was clear and my voice level is good as well that everyone can hear .

S2: Addition of subtitle “First lesson” (not visible in extract as this was the second paragraph)

S1: Addition of missing verb “found”

S1: Adding of missing subject “everything”

S3: Added a full stop

S1: Added a missing subject with a modal auxiliary “everyone can”

S2: Adding a space after above

S1: Adding a predicate “hear”

S3: Adding full stop

S1’s higher level contributions in this extract, relative to others, further confirms the observation made earlier pertaining to her assumed role as dominant group leader/ expert.

3.4 Students retrospection

Having completed the writing of the project on Google Docs, a retrospective open-ended questionnaire was carried out. The questions concerned three themes: 1) how the students as novice collaborators perceived their OCW experience on Google Docs, 2) how they collectively engaged in the collaborative activities and processes, and 3) the kind of challenges or limitations they encountered and how they were resolved, if so. It is noted that the students' responses are reported verbatim with no corrections.

3.4.1 On Google Docs collaborative experience

Collectively, the students as novice practitioners in OCW in general highly valued online collaboration and the collaborative features facilitated by Google Docs.

S1 was extremely pleased with her new collective experience:

My experience with Google Docs was amazing, I really like this application. It facilitated writing our project together. Also I like the way of keeping everyone informed with anything that happens in the shared document.

S1 makes reference to the background issue which led to writing their project on Google Docs:

Google Docs has a big role in completing our graduation project, because we were group of four so, it would be hard to send and receive documents from each other, but Google Docs broke the barriers of lots of obstacles, such as the limited internet access, I like that it has an offline mode that we could write and edit anytime even when we didn't have the internet, and the editing was shown when the internet was available.

S2 appreciated the constant access to a Google document:

You can access it anywhere and anytime to make changes, Google Docs super easy to collaborate with your team member, unlike the Microsoft Word you have to send the document to one person.



S3 valued Google Docs facility to archive changes and the highlighting of grammar mistakes

I really like the feature that every single word, edits and comments are saved and anyone can relate to check and see them. Also if you write something wrong automatically the shared document will draw a blue line under the word so you can check it and see what is your mistake.

S4 was appreciative of the shared access facilitated by Google Docs

Google Docs is playing an initial role in completing our graduation project to the fullest because we were a group consisted of four students. Therefore, it would be hard to share our work between each other so this application make it easier to us.

3.4.2 On collaborative activities

S1 appreciated the supervisor's comments and his strategy for resolving them:

The thing that I like the most is when our supervisor comments on our work, that lets us all be informed about the mistakes or the changes that we have to make, also we can reply to comments to clarify some points or to answer some questions. When the discussions or the comments are finished and our supervisor satisfied about the corrections, he resolves the comments to close them.

S2 thought the visible name-icons were interesting as they identified who was on the document:

I liked how it shows you who is in the document editing or writing, by clicking on his name it takes you to the place where the person is.

S2 particularly liked receiving feedback and responding to it on the same document:

The feature that caught my attention in the program is that the supervisor can write comments for us and we can

respond to him in the same program without the need to use other programs to communicate.

S3 simply thought the whole collaborative experience on Google docs was amazing:

My experience with Google Docs it was seriously very interesting and amazing. It helped us a lot to share our ideas, also to know our mistakes and learn from it. The most important thing is when we collaborate together and discuss about our graduation project.

S3 also highly valued feedback comments and the resulting learning experience

In our project we were the group of four as our supervisor always called us. His comments and suggestions were very helpful to know how to improve our mistakes. I really like the way of giving comments in front of us. All of us can see my mistakes and discuss about them at the end I indeed learned from my mistakes

S4 appreciated how she recognized collaborating members on the shared document

The thing that I like the most is when you are in the shared document and it allows you to see who is online and it let you up with all the changes that happens.

S4 also liked how the mistakes are highlighted and resolved

I like the way of how our supervisor shows our mistake by highlighting it, and everyone can see the mistakes, so by that others cannot repeat it.

3. Results

RQ1: What patterns of collaborative activities novice EFL student-teachers perform on Google Docs?

To answer this first research question on patterns of collaborative activities, Lis' (2018) developed WCFs model was used as the basis for data analysis.



Whereas, in descending order, local functions of Adding (58.9%), Correcting (26.7%) and Deletion (14.4%) were employed, global high-level changes (Rephrasing and Reordering) were not observed. Problems with power cuts forced the participants to prepare their compositions on Word prior to pasting them on Google Docs.

RQ2: Do these novices contribute equally and mutually to the online collaborative process?

Concerning equality, the answer is not exactly; S1 contributions were the highest and combined with S2's share, they contributed 75% of the collaborative work; 25% by S3 and S4. S1 emerged as a dominant expert and engaged the most with peer contributions, followed by S2. Collectively, the mutuality of group interaction can be described as expert/ novice, (medium to low equality and medium to high mutuality). An emergent result concerns collective peer scaffolding; peers collectively engaged to scaffold the work of a returning peer following an abrupt absence.

RQ3: How do the case-study student teachers perceive their first-hand online collaborative writing experience on Google Docs?

This was the first time for the case-study EFL student teachers to take part in online collaborative writing. As novice users of Google Docs, they were very appreciative of their new experience in collaborative online writing and the fact that they successfully accomplished writing their graduation project online, in contrast with any of their cohorts. They expressed excitement in developing new knowledge through the collaborative process of sharing, suggesting, editing, obtaining, and responding to constructive feedback on their writing mistakes, all of which contributed to the construction of knowledge and the enhancement of academic/ research writing skills.

One student commented, "*Google Docs helped me a lot in improving writing my graduation project*". Another student wrote, "*I would advise all the students use this application especially who are writing their graduation projects, assignments or essays to facilitate writing and avoid grammar and spelling mistakes*". A third added, "*I would recommend students who are writing their graduation projects to use Google Docs, even for writing assignments because of its accuracy in spelling and grammar checking*". As reported by Zioga and Bikos (2020), Google Docs as a web-based

collaborative environment has the potential, not only to stimulate motivation and engagement in collaborative writing but also to develop individual writing skills.

RQ4: What challenges or obstacles were encountered by the students and, if so, how were they resolved?

In actual of fact, the students had little to say with respect to encountered challenges or obstacles on Google Docs. They referred to the annoying problem of common and unexpected power cuts, which disrupted the flow of work as individuals and as a group. In addition, some of the supervisor feedback comments were not appropriately responded to, which hindered how project writing progressed. For example, when a plagiarism report that showed 86% plagiarised work (Appendix B) was posted to the group, it took them more time than required, and yet it was not completely plagiarism-free. This incident inadvertently points to the issue of keeping track of plagiarism by research supervisors who unfortunately have to work with meagre technical or academic support, an important one of which is access to plagiarism checking software.

4. Conclusion

The novice EFL student teachers positively engaged in and contributed to the online collaborative writing process on Google Docs. The patterns of collaborative activities reflected by the Writing Change Functions analysis was inadvertently restricted to local-level edits since the students had carried out the global-level organisation of content externally to Google Docs. For them, the product (graduation project) was more essential and rather critical than the process (online collaborative contribution patterns) which the researcher had in mind.

1. S1 emerged as a dominant leader/ expert as she engaged in most of the writing changes and, along with S2, both contributed to three quarters of the edits giving rise to an expert-novice mode of interaction. Whereas equality of participation was low, the students “group of four” showed high mutuality by collectively contributing to edit each other’s writing. Mutuality was so high that all three members collectively peer-scaffolded a one-sentence contribution with eight edits as she resumed writing following an abrupt absence.



2. The novice EFL student teachers were enthusiastic at the prospect of participating in online collaborative project writing for the first time instead of traditional face-to-face meetings. As females with busy home chores, remote and asynchronous collaboration was particularly timesaving and effective for them. Online collaborative writing on Google docs helped the students construct new knowledge through feedback comments on their mistakes, as well as to improve their academic and research skills.

3. Frequent and unexpected power cuts are a nuisance obstacle to anyone who relies on compute-mediated communication to carry out their work. Asynchronous collaboration is fine for flexibility of communication but can be irritating when response to e.g. a suggestion or task is required. Plagiarism in academic or research writing should be controlled and kept at a maximum level mutually agreed with the supervisor. Students in low-resourced environments know that the supervisors lack access to plagiarism detection programmes and thus feel at ease to plagiarise. Higher education institutions are obliged to make such software commonly available to their staff in order to check not only research writing in projects but also in assignments and open-ended tasks.

5. Limitation

Despite the conclusions of this explorative case study, a serious limitation has impoverished the quality of data. Due to the sudden power cuts, the students - not informing their supervisor (the researcher) - had decided to prepare their individual compositions in Word and then posted them on Google Docs. Consequently, written product had already been organised such that it was free of global (rather than local) type errors. This inadvertent shortcoming on the part of the students unfortunately impoverished the Writing Change Functions from potential global-level changes in Rephrasing and Reordering. The WFCs identified in Google Docs collaborative writing data was limited to local-level changes, i.e. Adding, Deleting, and Correcting.

6. Implications

The present case study has strong practical implications for L2 collaborative research/ project writing in a number of ways:

- Participating in the writing of a graduation project is no longer fixed to a room number at a certain time of the day; the process of online collaborative writing frees the supervisor and students from the boundaries of space and time. The fact that collaborators may collaborate synchronously or asynchronously from different locations saves time, effort, and resources.

- Online Collaborative Writing for research purposes allows the sharing and build-up of resources e.g. a resource page with web links to relevant resources and/or references for a particular topic.

- The supervisor and student collaborators all witness the development of the written project with archived records of member contributions to the shared document. This will substantially help supervisors to objectively assess individual student contributions particularly for summative assessment purposes, e.g. a graduation project.

- The research supervisors must get involved much earlier in the project writing process to make sure that the students initiate their text online rather than offline so that any global high-level edits are archived and assessed. It is easy for students to copy and paste text on Google Docs, or any other online collaborative environment, if they are not serious about their work

- Equality mutuality in online participation is also essential in OCW. Again, it is the supervisor, who must track individual contributions and keep everyone motivated and engaged with the project at hand.

7. Recommendations

Recommendations for further research within project writing are outlined in these proposed topics:

- Effectiveness of supervisor feedback on local and global issues
- Supervision strategies and quality of feedback comments
- Patterns and conditions for online project-based peer scaffolding
- Collaborative behaviour patterns with reference to synchronous and asynchronous conditions



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Appendix A

Extracts of pre-edited text

S1 (purple) and S2 (green)

Self-reflection is a technique of highlighting weak and strong points, and to know teaching mistakes and try to overcome them in the future. Also it is defined as a tool of criticism, and a way that teachers can use in order to observe and evaluate the way they behave in their classroom. There are lots of ways of conducting self-reflection, some of them depend on video recording or voice recording just as a self reference to improve their performance and others are asked to fill a self-reflection form. However, some pre-service teachers did not practice self-reflection during their teaching practice. The impact of self-reflection is feeling more confidence in each lesson and discovering hidden abilities, and it helps in writing clear lesson plans and creating different activities for each lesson. In addition to that, self-reflection encourages the way of dealing with students regarding the individual differences. There are some obstacles that may face pre-service teachers during teaching practice while reflecting on their performance, the first issue was the limited time for each class due to the coronavirus pandemic. Another obstacle is missing to write some important points about teaching performance.

S4 (blue) and S3 (orange)

This research was carried out to show and point out The impact of Self-reflection on Pre-service Teachers Development during Teaching Practice at the Faculty of Education Tripoli. Two instruments investigated the supposed results answering the research questions, which were "Questionnaire" and "Interview" that were conducted for the students who were in teaching practice. This research is guided by four questions, the first question is: How do pre-service teachers at the Faculty of Education perceive self-reflection?. The second question is: Do pre-service teachers practice self-reflection during teaching practice? To what extent?.The third question is: How do pre-service teachers see the impact of self-reflection on their teaching performance and on future professional development?.The fourth question is What obstacles pre-service teachers face in performing self-reflection in order to achieve best practice?. In this chapter the researcher presented the findings, recommendations, and recommendation for further studies. In addition, a summary of this chapter is reported.

Appendix B

Plagiarism report



Uses of Internet of Things in E- Learning

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Abstract

Internet of Things (IoT) technology is described as the Internet Protocol (IP) based smart networks of sensors and actuators. These sensor networks are embedded with data storage, computation and communication capabilities to collect and disseminate the information for the required action. Potential applications of IoT include smart homes, smart buildings, smart cities, and smart schools.

Presently, industrialized countries are using information and communication technology (ICT) based innovations aligned with the new idea of internet of things to upgrade educations by e-learning resource management. In such countries, schools are now transformed into the high-tech educations units that are characterized by high scale production and intensive use of technologies.

Technological interventions are also attracting new teachers in Libya and other African countries to transform their schools management practices for increasing their learning levels and hence financial gains.

This paper describes some of the major issues related to the Libya E-learning sector and how those issues can be addressed by using IoT supported technological interventions. These solutions have potential to increase efficiency and improve competitive dynamics in education to ensure socio-economic wellbeing of communities.

Keywords: Web-based services, Cloud computing, IoT Models, E-learning.





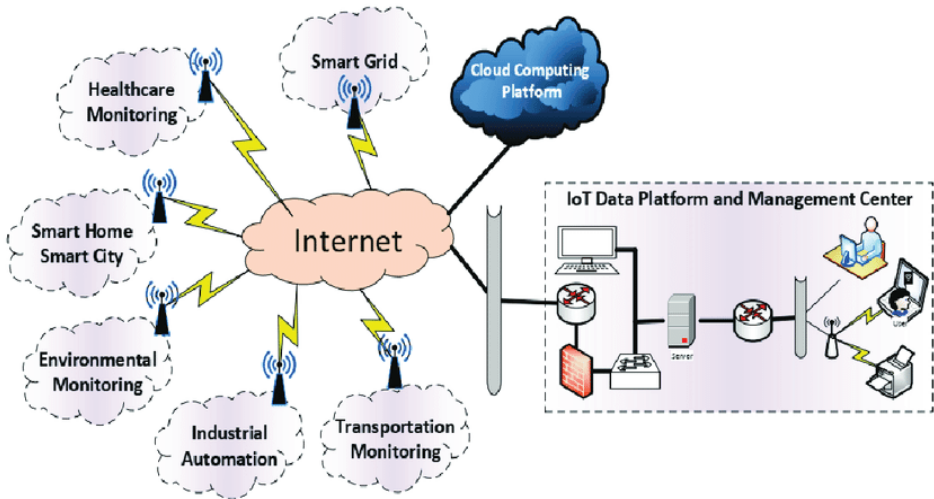
Introduction

Internet of Things (IoT) is a proposed development of the Internet in which everyday objects have network connectivity, allowing them to send and receive data. It visions to provide ease of accessibility and interoperability among things of daily use. Its collection of connected physical items accessible to the Internet .IoT enables the interconnection of things that can be monitored and handled remotely through wireless infrastructure [1].

The **Internet of Things** project declare our new possibility to (inter)connect «6A»- Anyone, Anything, Anytime, Anyplace, Any service, Any network [2]. For this purpose, the implementation of web-based services and applications over IoT architecture is progressive nowadays. The technology in focus is cloud computing. It has brought the exponentially increasing information at the user's fingertip. But again, storing data and important files on external service providers opens up to security and privacy challenges such as data leaks, malicious users, and limited control for users, etc. [3]

The technological advancement has molded the connectivity between people and objects (things) into newer aspects. Today, modern devices are embedded with sensors with the capability to sense real-time data, which is at the end coupled with the web. This approach ultimately results in a very promising concept of the Internet of Things, which provides the ability to connect, interact, and exhibit remote control on even minute networked, automated devices via the public Internet. For instance, additional development can be estimated by integrating several upcoming technologies with IOT, cloud computing being the most prominent one. The information generated by connected devices can be collected and stored on the cloud, using several web-based services. However, as we switch from private networks to Enterprise networks to the public Internet, this transition raises alarms about the security of data being stored and privacy for an individual to access that data. The primary concern of IOT is to maintain consumer's convenience, and hence security, possession of data and trust become the core concerns. Figure 1 shows the IoT scenario [4].

This paper elaborates on various approaches provided to date for achieving.



A.IOT could be recognized on different “systems”: [6]

- **Transportation:** sensors are used to manage the mobility needs with an appropriate Intelligent Transport System (ITS), which takes care of overcrowding, anticipates the newcomer trains, buses, or other public transportation options; handling parking space availability, expired meters, reserved lanes, etc.
- **ICT can also be used for environmental issues and energy tracking:** sensors can perceive at what time trash pick-ups are required or inform authorities about landfill deadlines, energy consumption, and emissions monitoring to fortify accountability in the use of energy and carbon, etc.
- **Building management:** sensors help smart meters and monitoring devices to monitor and manage water consumption, heating, air-conditioning, lighting, and physical security. Also, this allows the evolution of intelligent utility grids with the bidirectional flow in a distributed generation system requiring a real-time exchange of information.
- **Healthcare:** IoT utilized to manage electronic records, telemedicine, medical surveillance for disabled or older people, and health information interactions in remote assistance and.



- E-commerce services and remote controlling for enterprises, communications for individuals, and entertainment. Social networking and cooperative crowd sourcing collecting citizens' generated data.
- Security and Public Safety: Smart sensors help in this area, such as sensor-activated video surveillance systems, location-aware enhanced security systems, estimation, and risk prevention systems (e.g., sensitivity to pollution, extreme summer heating) [7].

B. The Needs of Urban Scale Experimental Facilities:

Experimentally-driven research is becoming more and more critical in ICT research. When design in heterogeneous large scale systems, difficulties arise in modeling the diversity, complexity, and environmental conditions to create a realistic simulation environment [8].

The outcome is explicit: simulation results can only give very limited information about the feasibility of an algorithm or a protocol in the field. In many cases, due to practical and outside constraints, a number of issues arise at the implementation phase, risking the viability of new services and applications. Most of these problems are related to scalability aspects and performance degradation [9]. The level of maturity achieved at the networking level, even though they can be further improved, foresees an increasing necessity of additional research activity at the sensor and context information management level. Nevertheless, Future Internet FI research is no longer ending at the simulation stage. Advances in sensor networking technologies need field validation at large scales, also posing new requirements on the experimentation facilities.

Besides, new cross-layer mechanisms should be introduced to abstract the networking level from the higher ones, so new services and information management activities can be performed over heterogeneous networking technologies [10].

This increasing interest to move from network experimentation towards service providing requirements does not just apply to the Smart Cities field, but also in a more general process, it is common to most future internet experimentation areas.

C. Cross-domain Access for Social IoT:

Integrating the social networks with IoT to establish autonomous social relationships, thereby enhancing network scalability, is known as the Social Internet of Things (SIoT). In this system, the nodes are deployed in different domains related to several social networks. They share the sensor data amongst each other using standard protocols and are controlled by various authorities. In this project, the sensors integrated with twitter were deployed everywhere in the city, enabling the users in social networks to interoperate the data from the underlying sensors, thereby optimizing the security, transportation [11], etc. for a smart city. Hence, we can say that SIoT bridges the distance between social users and the physical world, leading to openness, complexity, and dynamicity in social networks. But, this, in turn, increases the risk factor and raises the question as to how the cross-domain access security for multi-domain networks can be achieved. In [12], a feasible approach for the same has been proposed, namely the “Cross-domain Secure Access Scheme.” In this methodology, Public Key Cryptography (PKC) is used at its base to facilitate authorized access[13]. PKC consists of procedures that help to create, manage, distribute, use, store, and revoke digital certificates. Every user is bound with a public key that is issued to them by a Certificate Authority (CA). Each public key is unique within a domain. A registration authority (RA) ensures that only a valid and required key is assigned to a user. The data servers in social networks are issued data certificates corresponding to every user by the CA. The data certificates and public keys issued to the servers and users, respectively, decide the eligibility and access scope for a particular user. Hence, whenever access from different domains is issued, it can be individually identified and traced, which ultimately reduces the chances of unauthorized access. Also, any user can access a particular dataset up to a certain limit only, which reduces data manipulation chances [14]. In spite of these security measures being incorporated in the proposed system, no conscious provisions have been inculcated to ensure that the data certificates and/or public keys themselves don't get manipulated.

THE ROLE OF IoT

In order to move into an Intelligent Enterprises Increasingly, organizations are relying on the Internet of Things (IoT) to make the journey of becoming



intelligent enterprises, using data from across the organization to make decisions. As a consequence, they are better able to delight their customers and operate more efficiently [15].

In order to make the right decision for intelligent enterprises, useful data is needed. Such data need to come from the supply chain, operations, the manufacturing center, distribution and logistics, and products in operation. Much of it will arise from IoT devices in these locations. Useful data that comes from these devices is made possible by a high level of connectivity, which is crucial to any smart enterprise.

How enterprises achieve high connectivity? The difficulty they encounter is considerably more than linking several offices and sites. Millions of different end devices must be connected through the end products in service, from delivery vehicles to individual processing machines [16]. These should be all connected in a secure and scalable manner. It's easy to see how connecting such a large number of different devices can become a challenge in itself and, if not properly done, stop the smart business

First, consider what connectivity technologies are required. Mobile providers provide extensive global coverage, but this comes costly. Regarding the range of mobile devices, an intelligent enterprise needs to be able to connect to multiple technologies [17]. Using a consistent approach with connectivity and device management across all the connectivity types is needed. Enterprises must ensure both the security and scalability of these solutions. This process can be achieved using neutral solutions that enable connectivity over different technologies through a single platform and API with reliable policies and management of devices. These solutions utilize cloud computing technology to present a flexible infrastructure able to satisfy market changes in real-time.

Enterprises are working too with neutral providers to manage the connectivity between multiple mobile networks. These providers use an open SIM card not associated with any singular network. This allows enterprises to exploit the similar SIM card in all devices, nevertheless wherever they used. Network subscription can then be remotely managed as required without needing to change the SIM card in the device [18].

The current technologies may work with both virtual "soft" SIMs and with

the more familiar physical SIM cards. This technique ensures that over the life of the IoT devices, access to the best connectivity options is maintained. It also enables devices to operate in countries that require the roaming of IoT devices. In this case, if a device is found to be roaming in a country with a permanent roaming restriction, a local subscription can be downloaded to the device, ensuring compliance with local regulations [19].

CHALLENGES FACING THE USE OF IoT IN NORTH AFRICA

We take Libya as an example. While acknowledging the advantages of IoT technology convergence, several challenges should be addressed in order to facilitate the capturing of new competencies, capacities and market opportunities Libyan players so that a higher growth rate in IoT can be achieved.

Generally, four thematic challenges such as Infrastructure, Data and information, Security and privacy, Talents and Ecosystems are acknowledged by various stakeholders of the ecosystem, as follows:

1. Infrastructures

Infrastructure is considered as the incentive to move to an interoperable, trustable, mobile, distributed, valuable and powerful enabler for rising applications such as smart cities, smart grid, smart buildings, intelligent transport systems, and ubiquitous healthcare, to name a few. The big size of sensors and smart things to be connected to the Internet will pressure the spectrum and availability of IPv6.

Libya is currently suffering from the lack of such infrastructures and needs insight into the comprehensive development of infrastructure fundamentals to be able to access the use of this technology.

2. Data and information

With the hugeness of things connected to the Internet, individuals and businesses will be able to collect more detailed information. The Web of Things will expand the types and quantity of data collected, gathering everything from location information to demographic, psychographic, and social details. The increase of sensors will facilitate self-tracking data, which is outside the mainstream and traditional data collection manner. Self-tracking data can

deliver better measures of everyday behaviors and lifestyles and can fill in the gaps for the existing high-quality conventional data collection. Therefore, it is critical to aggregate and manages self-tracking data for knowledge advancement.

TABLE I - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF IOT.

Factor	Strengths	Weaknesses
Technology	Well- established mobile operators and three operators licensed to provide 4G services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•lack of Technology experience•Legacy systems•Security and privacy concerns
Resource	using smartphones and Internet access rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Lack of funding support.•Market competition is not mature enough.•Data accessibility and knowledge sharing Availability
Societal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•The high percentage of young consumers can use mobile apps and value-added services (VAS)	Adaptation fear – technology Phobia Aged consumers can't use mobile apps and value-added services (VAS)
Economy	Various incentives like pioneer status, tax exemptions, and allowances to promote ICT investment Intellectual property protection and cyber laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•there's no Dedicated performance management entity to monitor and drive performance of innovation initiatives

In Libya, there are no businesses or people who have an enormous amount of such data and information, which is the backbone to benefit from the use of this technology.

3. Security and privacy

Connected devices can interact with consumers, transmit data back to companies, and compile data for third parties such as researchers. Findings from TRUST Internet of Things privacy index show that consumers worried widely depending on responsibility, ownership, and usage of collected

personal data.

4. Human capitals

The biggest challenge that turns up the more significant benefits of IoT is the human factor, where the capabilities of industry players in rapidly creating new and differentiated products will be a primary determinant of their success. Human capital challenges can be segmented into two broad categories, namely strategic issues (e.g., programmers to cultivate success stories of IoT deployment) and tactical issues (e.g., identifying pools of IoT talent, attracting talent participation in IoT, and identifying niche areas to attract talent across different disciplines).

5 Ecosystems

“Things” can be defined as everyday objects used in education systems, communicate, network, and produce new information and are becoming a vital part of the Internet. With new business models, applications, and services developing across different sectors of the economy. These will also stimulate innovation and growth in areas such as smart components, smart devices, wireless connectivity, system integration, and decision-support tools. The systemic issues held back the full economic potential of IoT. The challenge is in the formation of an ecosystem for IoT to unlock new markets and help Libya to gain a competitive advantage in the technology.

A Case Study IoT in Education Review, Future of Internet of Things in Libya Proposal

Schools and universities are one of the important parts in our life. In the rapid growth of technology, education has implemented technology as part of the learning process to make it fun and interactive. The use of ICT has changed the education to the next level from the conventional hard copy books to the integrated system of education technology. With the IoT, education industry can enhance the learning outcomes, administrative process and getting a real-time data on student performance (20).

Implementation of IoT in education is one of the future planning around the globe. Same as Smart houses, Smart University and Smart School must be introduced with the use of IoT to enhance the education system to become more efficient in the learning and management process.

Education system in Libya must enhance the quality of learning environment and management process with the use of IoT. Digital campus or Smart School can attract more students to learn with the integration of the technology in education. Management process much easier with the use of IoT which makes administrative cost cheaper and more efficiently. Government needs to provide more funds to the universities and schools to become a Smart Digital Campus/School. This will give a huge impact on education industry to Libya.

Idea of Smart Digital Campus

Smart Digital Campus nowadays increase in demand for higher education institution to digitalize the learning and administrative process in the digital environment (21). The design of the physical infrastructure with integration of technology will impact the teaching, learning and research experience to encourage student on lifelong learning (22). Smart Digital Campus can reduce the operational costs, improve security and offers a technology tools for the student and staff. According to Smart Digital Campus comprises in two main component which is connectivity, which use the IT service delivery platform to make the connection all over the digital campus, and the IoT devices to support the service platform to enhance student learning and management.

According to Cisco, there are five main categories in the digital campus which is Building Control and Management, Security and Access Control, Video and Information Systems, Location and Attendance Systems, and Energy Monitoring and Control. Figure below is the illustration of the system of Smart Digital Campus.

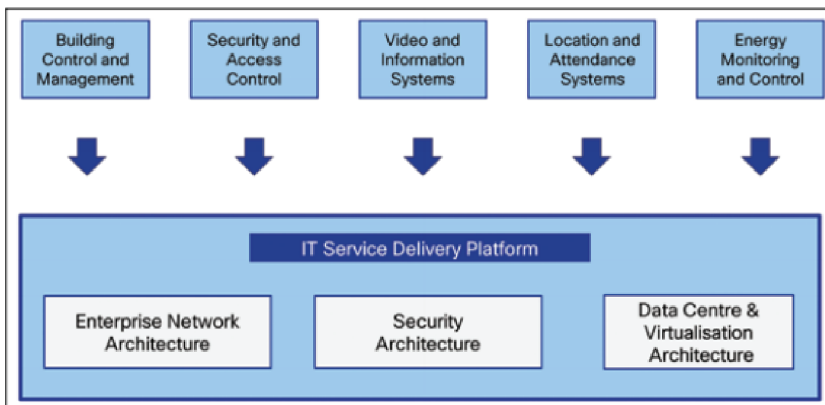


Figure 2: System Architecture of Smart Digital Campus.

Implementation of IoT will connects all the sensors to these five main categories of system in a digital campus. Sensors will alert the system and transfer data to the IT Service Delivery Platform about the data and information collected. For example, sensor for light energy monitoring in the building will shut down the light power automatically if there is no activity in the building and the data can be transfer to the service platform. The most important part in the digital campus is the wireless connection and must be design to meet high demands of modern university.

IoT also enhance the teaching and learning in the campus, for example, the IoT in the training of the same sight, making the teaching space, training venues, sports venues, learning dormitories, restaurants and students across the campus of IoT, making the campus to train students anytime and anywhere, can become a physical, mental, and skills place to acquire a full range of learning and training. This will lead colleges to become ubiquitous learning and training (23).

Benefit of IoT in Education Sector

Students are much more engaged in the learning process. Various personal devices can be enhanced using the IoT technology into the smart device in education which can be access easily by the student to attract them in affective learning process and experience. Connected devices will make student become active rather than passive when they can communicate with each other using the educational smart devices. They can share knowledge and information in a real-time which can stimulate the activity of learning as well as research process.

IoT can be used to automating many administrative activities. Connected devices can reduce the time and increase efficiency in a many of administrative tasks. With the connected devices, some daily routine activities such as attendance of the student can be track by using the connected devices. This can save a lot of time and teachers don't have to waste their time by doing this. The collected data must be kept to analyze the student report and making a future plan for the school or university.

Challenge in IoT in Education

IoT brings tremendous challenges and opportunities to higher education. This unprecedented growth of computing, evolving IoT capabilities,



technologies is not only improving the value of teaching and conducting research. It's also introducing a new digital culture. Nevertheless, it's also face challenge to implement in education sector.

i. Capability to integrate IoT in classroom IoT offers lots of advantages to teachers and students, however it also leaves some concerns about its implementation. To successfully integrate the devices in the classroom, an education provider need to have capabilities to provide necessary equipment such as Wi-Fi, robust network band width , teachers training, devices for students and more.[IoT in the Classroom, Education organization need to make sure both of IT equipment and teaching strategies suitable and support the use of IoT in classroom.

ii. Security and privacy Since these devices measuring and collecting students' data, they're putting the security and privacy of students at risk by maximizing the storage of sensitive data in Internet-based network of connected devices prone to cyber-attacks. Education providers are concerned about repercussion of security breach that could risk a student ID linked to an individual's health record and family financial information (24).

iii. Difficult to manage IoT program could be expensive and hard to manage. Some devices and applications are not compatible and impede the organization's ability to make an IT environment that is accessible to all users.

COST MODELING AND ESTIMATION

Determining the cost of an Internet of Things (IoT) solution focused on predictive maintenance is generally a complex problem.

We will list an initial approach that we have used with our case study to estimate the cost.

With any calculation, it is very specific to a scenario and this model will not be applicable to all situations or be totally complete.

Before we go into the specifics of determining the cost for a solution, we want to stress that cost modeling, like capacity planning, is an iterative exercise.

The process repeats itself, and performance testing and other data gathered will change capacity distribution (for example, different workloads could be combined in a single unit to save cost because these workloads are compatible in load profile) and tune the model over time. In other words, the first cost estimate

will not be perfect, and it provides only an indicator of the cost of the solution.

FUTURE SCOPE

Although the Internet of Things and Cloud Computing existed in the technical world for a long duration, in the 21st century, they are eventually becoming the face of technology. With the ever-increasing public requirements to attain a more & more comfortable lifestyle and thereby maintaining their privacy as well as security, interfacing IoT with Cloud has become inevitable. As we know, it's just trending, but a future human world wouldn't be imagined without IoT-Cloud, considering the explosive technological advancement and the alarming need for individual privacy as well as security. If appropriate concepts are employed, and very accurate security constraints are embedded, this technology would create a milestone in the technical era.

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**Fee or Free:
Online Learning Policies
and Regulations**

Evaluating e-Learning and e-Teaching of Composition 1 & 2 at the Department of English of the Faculty of Arts of Tripoli during Covid-19 (2020 – 2022)

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Abstract

Despite the widespread use of online teaching materials on the internet and websites for a long time, still there are many obstacles to obtaining the E-learning approach as a conformed educational system in many educational organizations around the world. Most electronic educational materials are used as supplementary materials chosen to serve certain situations because they were designed by different people and for different purposes and circumstances. Even though many efforts have made great progress in creating electronic content either to improve online learning or to reinforce the outcome of the real regular traditional face-to-face classrooms. But during the covid-19 pandemic, many countries adopted the E-learning approach to saving their educational system. The Libyan educational system adopted the E-learning mode too. Furthermore, this study examines the effectiveness of E-learning specifically in teaching English Composition 1&2 courses for first and second semester English Language undergraduates at the Faculty of Arts of Tripoli by shedding light on some major techniques used to enhance Writing e-teaching and e-learning skills.

The purpose of this study was to identify some of the most important observable e-teaching and e-learning behaviors. They are identified in the following three main areas. First, strategies in designing a digital writing syl-

labus and an appropriate curriculum. Second, the influence of E-learning on instructors' personal and career development, and motivation as well. This is in addition to its impact on students' motives, intentions, and desire for returning to study atmosphere away from the sorrow of war and covid-19. Finally, the role of the infrastructure of the English Department specifically and the University of Tripoli in general, compared to the fundamental requirements of the international E-learning and online quality standards in the near future.

Working on the above three elements throughout this study helped to establish fundamental criteria in evaluating e-learning and e-teaching of Compositions 1&2. Actually, results indicate the possibility of implementing this system in many other departments of English Language. The implementation is likely high and not risky!

Smart mobile phones, computers, iPads, and laptops were tools and instruments used to apply this experience by downloading the Telegram application. This application provided students with virtual educational channels and discussion groups called after the names of the subjects.

Data for this study were extracted from students' feedback and their opinions on the discussion groups of both two educational channels of Composition 1& 2 on Telegram. It is conducted regularly by the instructor of both subjects. It also included the results of online course reviews completed during Autumn 2020, Spring 2021, Autumn 2021, and Spring of 2022. The data includes also the results of post-questionnaires.

Findings indicated that many efforts have been made to assess e-learning and e-teaching of these two subjects including evaluating their course description, course curriculum, student engagement, and the instructor's performance. Results also have shown positive outcomes seen in the improvement of students' performance and instructors' self-development during the four semesters of this case study.

Keywords: (Composition, course description, course curriculum, student engagement, infrastructure, e-learning, evaluation, assessment)





Background

The Start of Online Learning or e-Learning in the English Language Department of Tripoli goes back to the period between 2010 to 2017), known as (Distances Learning Program). It was made for students who are off-site. i.e. cannot come to college regularly either because they were working full time or have difficult social circumstances (marriage, divorce, poor financial support, lack of transportation, and so forth).

Students were asked to register for every new semester and to buy the printable syllabus of almost all subjects. No lectures were recorded or filmed in advance. Some of the course materials were prepared electronically; just a few few handouts were pictured by students' phone-cameras and shared on the website of the Distance Program of the Department of English. The website shows that it was like a notification board to announce to students the latest news about the system of study. Students were allowed to attend face-to-face classes whenever they were able to attend. Saturday was the day for real feedback and meeting with fellow-students and the instructors.

But recently, during the pandemic, the Department of the English Language improved the old Distance Learning Program and updated it since all the teaching staff members and the students have an active online social networking presence. Essentially, they were conscious of a wide range of e- teaching and eLearning applications that have encouraged and motivated them to implement the e-learning mode without any Digital preparation courses.

As mentioned above, the present study was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of E-learning specifically in teaching English Composition 1&2 courses for pre-graduate students of the first and second semesters in the English Language Department of the Faculty of Arts of Tripoli by concentrating on some major techniques used to enhance Writing e-teaching and e-learning skills. Also to reconsider students' and faculty members' attitudes toward e-learning in general and e-learning and e- teaching of Writing at the college level. As well to investigate students' confidence in e-learning of writing.

It is hoped that the results of this study will give other Writing Instructors at the college level some insights when e- teaching writing.

1. The Effectiveness of Writing E-learning

In fact, it is difficult to ensure that the E-learning mood is one hundred% effective. So this study is to investigate if the E-learning mode was really useful and valid during the Covid-19 and even if the most difficult subjects such as Composition can be taught online or not. The data of this study was gathered by different tools: observation, questionnaires, and interviews. It has been seen that e- teaching helped Composition Instructors to develop the quality of writing skills necessary for success in college and in future careers. Also, students improved their writing skills through e-learning of composition as they were obligated to study online and offline, in addition to testing them according to their English level and Knowledge of different types of English Compositions: argumentative, compare and contrast, descriptive, narrative, etc.

Students were asked to download some educational phone apps, for instance, Grammarly Checker and Plagiarism Checker. These applications helped students to strengthen their punctuation, spelling, editing, and revision. Students became aware that copying from each other in doing assignments or taking quizzes either face to face or copying others' works, is a kind of cheating. It is (plagiarism). Students themselves and instructors became more aware of the benefits and side effects of e-learning. Searching through the internet enabled them to practice more writing and find out different effective research techniques according to their differences and abilities.

In real Face to Face teaching mode, students of composition 1 &2 were required to fulfill attend 16 lectures each semester including the midterm and final exam. The lecture duration was 2 hours per week. The first hour was theoretical, the second was practical as students practice what they newly have learned in each lecture. During Covid-19, it was difficult to prepare such several lectures digitally, only two months before the start of the new semester. So the teaching staff members' committee agreed to record and video 10 lectures for each subject. All the recorded and filmed lectures were saved on flash disks and CDs and uploaded by the instructors themselves on educational channels on the Telegram application, either on their smartphones or personal computers.



Creating digital channels on Telegram for each subject, required planning and a great desire for success. Students also were engaged in the discussion groups. In these groups, students have got one-on-one academic support (tutoring) as in the feedback session, each instructor responds to each student individually and in groups. Both of the channels were monitored by a Supervisor Monitor. This Monitor was the Head of the Study and Examination in the Department. She had the responsibility to monitor all the electronic educational channels on telegram and had the right to judge the educational process progress of each channel. Both instructors and students were observed and monitored. Reports about monitoring and observation, were sent to the administration of the department weekly. Lazy Instructors and students were warned and given opportunities to fix what they missed.

2- Strategies in designing electronic writing syllabus and appropriate curriculum.

Students were not stunned by joining the E-learning mode as most of the staff members implemented the supportive level of e-learning in their ordinary teaching. Students were already encouraged to E-learning by using their smart mobile phones because of the lack of Laps and the poor electronic and digital infrastructure of the English Department. It is obvious that smartphones became a necessity for almost all ages. Both instructors and students believed that smartphones engaged them in a virtual digital environment that they have never been involved in, neither at home nor at college. Students through their mobile phones were exposed, formally or informally, to the English Language whether it was written, heard, or seen.

Students were assessed not only on written midterms and final exams. They were assessed by giving weekly typed assignments and monthly presentations by PowerPoint. Therefore, almost all the students were familiar with the usage of the internet. The level of exposure to digital content varied from one student to another, and from one instructor to another depending on their capacity, age, the reach of the Internet connectivity, and the nature of the subject itself. Though the following subjects were taught face to face in real classrooms, students attend to attend related lectures on YouTube for more practice and comprehension. The subjects are: speaking and listening 1, 2, 3,4,

Phonetics^{1,2,3,4}, Consecutive and Spontaneous Translation, and some other subjects such as Grammar and Syntax, Writing and Reading Comprehension, linguistics, and Semantics, and finally Morphology and Contrastive Analysis in addition to Literary subjects as Short-story, Play, Drama, Novel, and Literary Criticism.

Students may have attended to use different electronic and digital resources because they have different learning abilities and depend on different ways and methods of learning. Therefore as in a 2009 article, “Online teaching and learning resource guide” by Watwood, Nugent, and Diehl stated: “while the content and the learning outcomes are the same, the manner in how is delivered and the interactions with students are quite different.”¹ This difference cannot be measured easily. Students’ performance indicates if they really achieved the targets of learning outcomes or not regardless of the type of learning mode.

3. The influence of e-learning on students’ motivation and their personal e-learning development

In the Autumn 2020 semester, students were asked to choose either to join the e-learning mode or to drop registration. Most of the students were extremely enthusiastic to get themselves in the mood of study, after a long absence because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Joining the digital channels on Telegram, allowed both students and instructors to enrich their experience in E-learning. There were flexibility and accessibility to access the channels at any time and in any place whenever they were connected to the internet. E-learning suited their social and working obligations. They saved their money and time and female students managed family issues as well. A such chance was never given for free in the high public education system before. It was an attempt created by the staff members that made students and parents indeed thankful and grateful. Both strong and weak students were allowed to practice, comprehend and participate according to their individual needs and abilities. Students’ positive attitudes toward e-learning facilitated the progress of e-teaching and e-learning.

1- article, “Online teaching and learning resource guide” by Watwood, Nugent, and Diehl 2009



Students of composition 1 and 2 were very motivated. They were competing with each other in each lecture. They were not procrastinating, they were delivering assignments on time, as they know everything is recorded on the channels, following the instructor's instructions, and attending the lectures online according to the electronic schedule.

The instructor through the course plan could set limits for students. Students learned to not overwhelm themselves by trying to take on big, long lessons first. Instead, they started small, tackling the easier work first, then graduating to more complicated tasks. Also learned to set time limits as they go rather than trying to accomplish everything at once.

Students worked hard to improve their grades and score higher than on previous tests. They recognized that attending composition 1&2 online is more organized than real classes. Typing assignments on their computers and mobile phones granted them a tidy place to study as messy areas can be distracting. They were really productive.

4. Fundamental criteria in evaluating and assessing the digital teaching and learning of Compositions 1&2

In the e-learning mode, students will be judged and graded online, in comparison to how their performance on the same assignments, quizzes, and exams in order to evaluate their progress by using technology. Students are allowed to take their exams wherever they are with their own devices according to their digital schedule. As mentioned, smart mobile phones, computers, iPads, and laptops were tools and instruments used to apply this experience through downloading the Telegram application.

5. Types of Digital assessments:

There are many different types of processes for evaluating student performance according to ²<https://www.edtick.com/en/guides/how-to-implement-eassessment-and-online-exams>.

“Formative Digital Assessment: *measure how learning objectives have been achieved so far. This helps teachers and students adapt their approach during the educational process.*

2- <https://www.edtick.com/en/guides/how-to-implement-eassessment-and-online-exams>.

Summative Digital Assessment: *is administered at the conclusion of a unit or course, and often factors heavily into a student's grade. These assessments help indicate if students are prepared for the next stage of learning.*

Diagnostic Digital Assessment: *Similar to formative assessments, these intend to evaluate and improve learner's knowledge. Diagnostic assessments review what the learner knows and the difficulties that they may be facing. Instead of looking backward like formative assessments do, the diagnostic assessment looks forward and is often used when a problem arises or in anticipation of a potential problem.*

Work Integrated Digital Assessment: *These assessments are closely integrated with tasks and activities a student is already performing. This helps develop student's skills while they accomplish their regular work. They also help educational staff design more dynamic assessments that fit teachers' needs.*

Dynamic Digital Assessment: *This measure students' readiness to learn about unfamiliar topics. A good example is teaching students a foreign language for a short trial period to assess how well they take up the new knowledge. This assessment type can be helpful to understand the potential of students who come from underprivileged backgrounds.*

Synoptic Digital Assessment: *Synoptic assessments help measure students' capacity to apply knowledge and deeply understand a subject. They aim to encourage students to build a comprehensive view of the subject in question.*

Criterion-referenced Digital Assessment: *These assessments evaluate the performance of every student based on a specific learning goal. They are built on the concept that other students' performance shouldn't affect a score by setting a standard, but instead that the evaluation should be strictly based on whether knowledge was achieved or not.*

Ipsative Digital Assessment: *Ipsative assessments aim to increase student motivation to learn and help them keep track of how well they are doing. Therefore, the performance of the student is measured in comparison to their previous performance, rather than being compared to an abstract standard."*



6. Research Questions

According to the purpose of the present study, the following research questions were answered:

1. Will e-Teaching and eLearning of composition 1&2 and other writing subjects at the college level be taught through e- Learning system?
2. Will the Writing Instructors and students become more confident about the eLearning and e-Teaching of writing?
3. Can students of Writing be assessed and evaluated through online learning?³

7. The rationale behind e- teaching and eLearning of English composition at the college level

According to <https://www.straighterline.com/7-reasons-why-english-composition-is-the-most-important-course-you-will-ever-take-part-2/> No one can deny that teaching composition is a difficult job that requires certain skills in order to achieve the objectives of each lecture that is why each instructor has got his approach. But when it comes to teaching composition online, it is more complicated than in- class teaching method as many elements affect the type of approach supposed to be used. According to *Basker* “teaching styles vary, with no proof that any one style works better than another, a gifted lecturer may motivate students as effectively as a teacher who has a talent for conducting writing conferences” and in this study different methods were used in order to come up with students’ levels and backgrounds. Students know well that composition courses are crucial for their English improvement. Because ⁴“*English Composition serves as the educational foundation on which your advanced college courses rest. After successfully completing your English Composition course(s), you are considered to be at a level playing field with other undergraduates in your cohort, no matter where you began when you first started taking college classes.*”

3- <https://www.straighterline.com/7-reasons-why-english-composition-is-the-most-important-course-you-will-ever-take-part-2/>

4- <https://www.straighterline.com/7-reasons-why-english-composition-is-the-most-important-course-you-will-ever-take-part-2/>

8. Course Description

Both courses of Composition 1&2 were designed to introduce college-level students to the fundamental principles of effective Academic writing in order to enhance their overall writing abilities through studying different topics to improve sentence structure and clarity including grammar, punctuation, and word choice. Students were exposed to many writing processes such as drafting and revising sentences, paragraphing, and finally writing essays. Although in these two courses, students couldn't explore all the writing genres such as narration, cause and effect, compare and contrast, definition, and argumentation, because of their English level, but they learned some research techniques. The Courses were based on the following two books: the first is for Composition1 which is

The Longman Academic Writing Series- Fundamental Academic Writing – level 1 by Linda Butler). And the second book is for Composition 2 which is *The Longman Academic Writing Series- Fundamental Academic Writing – level 2- Contents Page by Ann Hugo*.

These two books were uploaded on the educational channels on Telegram. Each lesson was provided with a recorded lecture. Students were able to read and listen by their mobile phone screens or through their personal computers.

9. The objectives of the courses:

Though the course content was already organized and easy to use, the books were really useful and guided. But recording lectures on a Screen Reader Application required a lot of effort and time. It was difficult to get a quiet environment to get professional work at home. Some records are repeated more than once. It was really frustrating hearing some noise. Work during quarantine was a big challenge for students and the instructors! However, after completing the online courses students were able to: Be aware of the importance of instructors' instructions related to the writing process. Students learned how to write in steps not randomly. Students understood how to do brainstorming, as well as how to search on the internet for more model samples and extra information to explore a specific topic. They knew the



distinction between writing a first draft and a final one and how to reconstruct their sentence structures to improve better clear and more accurate ones.

Students become able to edit their sentences and paragraphs as well revising them to be clear and concise in addition to how to use word choices to express ideas, and thoughts. Students develop a paragraph structure, topic sentences, and supporting sentences. Also, students can improve their critical thinking abilities and respond to essay exams and writing quizzes confidently. Students submit only their own work on the channels as the channels are observed by the instructor of the course.

Students are taught how to use quotations and citations to indicate words taken from another source.

10. Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites to take composition 1 but for composition 2 students are obligated to pass Composition 1

11. Course Evaluation Criteria

When it comes to assessing writing at the college level, faculty policy issues control the types of assessment methods and approaches must be used. Students used to be evaluated only face to face through doing written exams: a mid-term exam over 40 or two mid-terms over 20 and a final exam over 60. Some instructors concentrate on the student's participation in the classroom and engagement by doing homework assignments and weekly quizzes instead of having only two written midterm exams. So Students have reworded 20 marks for participation. For further details on percentage scores and grading scale. A passing percentage is 50% or higher. The final grade will be based upon that college's grading scale of a total of 100 points in the course. On the other hand, assessing writing e-teaching and e-learning required an assessment system to be valid. Composition 1&2 courses were assessed across the continuous assessment. Students were asked to deliver different writings based on the purpose and sequence of the table contents of the lessons of the two books. (See in the appendix of the paper the attached two tables of contents of the books for the two courses.

Students were assessed across a Writing Mark Scheme: 5 for Task Achievement: a student should address the requirements of the task, 5 for Conventions, Coherence, and Cohesion as a student should arrange information and ideas coherently to get the unity of the paragraph, 5 for Fluency and Vocabulary, as a student uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task 5 for syntax, as a student uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms 5 for style and punctuation and the organization of a paragraph, 10 for being free of Plagiarism as a student should not copy from his classmates, provide references and resources if he used others' writings.

Task No.	Task achievement	Coherence&cohesion	vocabulary	syntax	Punctuation& organiza- tion	Free of Plagiarism	Time of deliver-ing	Total /40
	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/10	/5	

The Writing Mark Scheme helped students to assess their works and to evaluate their progress through self-correction and pair-correction. Assessment is an essential component of effective instruction, according to Stephen Isaacson in his “Simple Ways to Assess the Writing Skills of Students with Learning Disabilities. He clarifies that effective instructions are related to students’ achievements. He refers to Christenson, Ysseldyke, and Thurlow’s (1989) reviews that the following factors affected positively student achievements:

“The degree to which there is an appropriate instructional match between student characteristics and task characteristics (in other words, teachers must assess the student’s prior knowledge and current level of skills in order to match them to a task that is relevant and appropriate to their aptitudes)”

5- <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/simple-ways-assess-writing-skills-students-learning-disabilities>



Instructors as monitors and examiners must observe students' understanding and progress in order to evaluate their performance, otherwise, students will not be motivated and interested.

Stephen Isaacson also referred to Airasian's (1996) 'three types of classroom assessments: *the "sizing-up" assessments, which usually represent a kind of placement test to evaluate students' current level. "Instructional assessments" are used for the daily tasks of planning instruction, giving feedback, and monitoring student progress as he clarifies. And finally, "official assessments; which are the periodic formal functions of assessment for grouping, grading, and reporting. In other words, teachers use assessment for identifying strengths and weaknesses, planning instruction to fit diagnosed needs, evaluating instructional activities, giving feedback, monitoring performance, and reporting progress. Simple curriculum-based methods for assessing written expression can meet all these purposes.*'

12. Limitations of the Methods

There are many limitations in this study, but the major were three.

The first limitation relates to the number of participants. Such a study is difficult to be applied to large classes with over 15 students unless to have more than one instructor for each class. For this reason, that observation and monitoring would be impossible.

Another limitation is the level of knowledge of technology; Students and instructors must have a positive response and attitudes to word e-learning and technology, otherwise they will complain and fail. Finally, poor access to the internet and the frequent cuts in electricity were the most annoying problems encountered by students and instructors.

13. Method

The study took place in the Department of English at the Faculty of Arts. It spanned over a two-year period starting from the academic year 2020-21 and expanding to 2021-2022. Exactly Autumn 2020, and Spring 2021 are fully online learning while Autumn 2021 and Spring 2020 are blended learning.

6- Stephen Isaacson also referred to Airasian's (1996)

14. Participants

The E-learning mode was implemented over nearly a two-year period starting from the academic year 2020-21 and expanding to 2021-2022 covering almost all the courses in the department and all English levels. But this study is limited to the courses of Composition 1&2 only. During this period, both male and female students were engaged. They are aged between 19-and to 21. The number of them ranges from 21 to 30. Their English level was beginner and elementary since these subjects are taught in the first and second semesters.

15. Data collection

Observations and Questionnaires were used as tools to collect data for the paper. Electronic interviews made with a few e- teaching composition instructors working in private schools and have the same experience in advance, as it is recognized in Tripoli that private language Centers and schools have got great financial support enriched their facilities such as continuous strong access to the internet, full equipped, laps and well full furniture classrooms.

16. The Observations

Though observation takes a longer time in collecting the data, according to their unstructured nature, still easier to be noted after each class as everything was authentic on the telegram channels and dissection groups. Few notes were taken separately for analysis. The observations have covered the first year-period time of the e-learning mode implantation from its establishment in Autumn 2020 to Spring2022.

The data which was collected covered: The channels setup' content and course plans, the number of students engaged each semester during the study period and their nature. Students' engagement and participation in online activities like reacting to instructor's instructions about doing assignments and quizzes

17. The Questionnaires

Two versions of the questionnaire with some differences were administered to students of both genders. pre- and post-questionnaires consisted of a list of 30 questions distributed to the discussion groups. The aims behind the questionnaires are to find out Students' attitudes to Composition 1&2 e-teaching and learning. Its effectiveness, easiness of use, and disadvantages.



What aspects of writing criteria might be writing e-learning cover?

18. The Interviews

Only some private school teachers of writing and some students were randomly interviewed online. Two questions were asked. First: “As technology invaded all the aspects of human lives either at home, school, work or street, and made this world a small village, **do** you think e-learning and teaching, became the most wanted compared with the breakdown of traditional teaching and learning because of wars and diseases? Second, is it possible to learn writing online? Why and how?

The purpose of using interviews is to confirm what has been obtained from the questionnaires and observations.

19. Objectives of the Study

This study aims at:

1. Finding out what students think of E-learning and what possible advantages might appear compared with the traditional teaching mode.
2. Evaluating the emerged state of e-teaching / learning of composition 1&2 in the English department in the Faculty of Arts of Tripoli and measuring the success of this experience in order to confirm this mode of e-teaching
3. Sharing the benefits of Telegram application in e-teaching\learning of composition in the lack of governmental support in providing appropriate facilities and required furniture suites the e-learning mode of education.
- 4 Identifying the limitations of e-learning in the English department of Tripoli and coming up with possible solutions depending on the results, suggestions, and recommendations will be given at the end of this study.

20. Results

Results of the Observations:

The results are given below in Table 1 frequencies of students’ performance in attending online sessions and their attitude about doing assignments (tasks) and taking quizzes. The numbers registered in the table, refer to the statics of the students who really responded positively to the eLearning mode.

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Students performance and attitude towards e-teaching and e-learning of composition 1&2:	Autumn2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
	Full e-learning mode		Full e-learning mode		Blending learning		Blending learning	
	Comp1	Comp2	Comp1	Comp2	Comp1	Comp2	Comp1	Comp2
	29 Ss	19Ss	15Ss	25Ss	7 Ss	25Ss	15Ss	10Ss
Ss participating in the discussion groups	24	15	13	23	5	20	10	6
Ss feel competitive	23	10	10	22	5	19	11	5
Ss seem motivated	24	15	8	22	4	19	11	5
Ss deliver their assignments on time	22	15	10	21	6	20	12	6
Ss are complaining about anything.	10	5	4	1	0	2	0	1
Ss responded positively to online quizzes and test	22	15	11	21	5	18	10	6
Ss did not join the online quizzes and deliver assignments	1	2	2	1	0	1	0	0
Ss joined the educational channels, watching only silently with no response at all.	5	3	2	0	1	0	1	0
The clarity of the channels 'content for Ss	22	16	14	22	6	20	10	5
Ss understanding the instructor's instructions about doing assignments and quizzes	22	15	13	20	6	19	11	6



21. Online Assignments

Table 2 below presents the data obtained through observations. As shown in the table the following categories are given: number of courses and s, names of courses, level in which each course is taught, number of, students, what attempts of writing, similar attempts (students' copying from each other), acceptable responses and finally the unsuccessful attempts. It clarifies the aspects of writing aspect that students studied online and practiced well

Aspects of assessment	Autumn2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
	Comp1 29 Ss	Comp2 19 Ss	Comp1 15 Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 7 Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss
-Introducing you to types of sentences and tenses	27	15	14	23	7	23	13	10
-Writing and revising and editing sentences to improve grammar and eliminate errors.	28	18	13	22	6	24	10	9
- Improving your Spelling	29	19	15	25	7	25	15	10
- identifying Commonly Confused Words	25	18	13	21	5	20	10	5
- Identifying the major strategies for building your vocabulary.	29	18	13	22	6	20	10	8
- distinguishing Word Use/word choice	25	15	12	23	5	22	10	8
-Defining: The audience Tone, and Purpose	20	10	10	20	5	18	10	5
-Practicing First and Final Draft	29	18	14	25	6	25	15	10
-Introducing Essay Structure /Essay development	15	17	10	24	3	23	6	8

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Aspects of assessment	Autumn2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
	Comp1 29 Ss	Comp2 19 Ss	Comp1 15 Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 7 Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss
- Practicing: -Pronouns Transitions -Mechanics -Punctuation. capital letters, numbers, and abbrevia- tions	27	18	11	23	5	23	14	10
Defining: -Paragraph Form-Para- graph Structure, Orga- nization, Support, and Unity -Thesis, Details, and Introduction/Conclusion -Paragraph Content	25	18	13	22	6	22	10	7
- Explaining how to structure a clear and concise paragraph.	14	15	14	23	6	22	10	8
-Describing the pre- writing process and how to write an effective topic sentence.	25	19	13	22	7	24	13	9
-Explaining how listing, and clustering	5	18	10	24	5	23	12	8
- Developing brain- storming techniques for generating topics us- ing free association of words and ideas.	29	19	14	24	7	22	15	10
-Defining parts of the paragraph	28	19	13	22	7	24	14	8
-Explaining how to use supporting sentences - How to write a con- cluding sentence.	28	19	13	23	6	24	15	9



22. Results of post-questionnaires

The following table clarifies students' satisfaction and response to Composition 1&2 e-learning after announcing the final results. In point of fact of data inserted in the table below it is the answers to the questions of this study. The results below show many students reacted to these questions every semester:

1. What do students of compositions 1&2 think about the e-learning mode they are exposed to? Was it effective or not?
2. What difficulties encountered students through exposing to e-learning of composition 1&2?
3. what made students join or not join the electronic channels on telegram?
4. How students were participating in the e-learning of compositions 1&2?
5. How students were assessed in the e-learning of compositions 1&2?

Students' response toward E-learning mode was identified by The Agreement 5-point Likert scale as follows:

Students' response towards E-learning Mode	Agreement 5-point Likert scale	Autumn 2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
		Full e-learning mode		Full e-learning mode		Blending learning		Blending learning	
		Comp1 29 Ss	Comp2 19Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss	Comp1 7Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss
E-learning and teaching is a waste of time and money	1. Strongly Agree.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2. Agree	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
	3Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	3	2	3	5	5	5	3
	4. Disagree	27	16	13	6	2	20	15	7
	5. Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The Need for Utilizing (CAT) Tools as an Educational Technology Instrument for Training Translation Students Universities in Libyan

Students' response towards E-learning Mode	Agreement 5-point Likert scale	Autumn 2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
		Full e-learning mode		Full e-learning mode		Blending learning		Blending learning	
		Comp1 29 Ss	Comp2 19Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss	Comp1 7Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss
E-learning and teaching is for lazy teachers and students	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	3 2 3 20 1	1 3 5 10 0	2 3 3 7 0	2 2 2 4 0	2 2 2 1 0	5 5 5 5 5	0 5 5 5 0	0 2 2 8 0
The government doesn't support e-learning and teaching in public higher education originations because it costs not of being unworthy	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	2 20 0 7 0	2 5 5 2 5	4 4 10 1 0	6 2 2 0 0	4 2 1 0 0	10 5 5 5 0	5 5 5 0 0	5 5 0 0 0
e-learning and teaching is dominant abroad and having licenses using it offers more job chances in the private schools and institutions.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	20 8 1 0 0	5 6 4 4 0	5 5 2 3 0	5 2 2 1 0	2 3 1 1 0	3 11 5 5 1	5 5 3 2 0	4 1 3 1 1
E-learning and teaching is suitable for busy students or have full-job time.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	10 14 6 5 4	4 6 4 5 0	2 3 5 4 1	4 2 2 1 1	1 4 1 1 0	5 6 4 5 5	3 4 3 2 3	3 3 3 1 0
Students and instructors need to be trained to join the eLearning mode	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	9 20 0 0 0	5 5 5 3 1	4 4 5 2 0	3 2 2 2 1	2 2 2 1 0	4 6 5 5 0	3 2 2 4 3	2 3 3 1 1



Students' response towards E-learning Mode	Agreement 5-point Likert scale	Autumn 2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
		Full e-learning mode		Full e-learning mode		Blending learning		Blending learning	
		Comp1 29 Ss	Comp2 19 Ss	Comp1 15 Ss	Comp2 10 Ss	Comp1 7 Ss	Comp2 25 Ss	Comp1 15 Ss	Comp2 10 Ss
e- learning & teaching mode instructors should be patient and cooperative.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	9 10 5 5 0	6 4 5 2 2	5 4 3 1 2	5 3 1 1 0	5 1 1 0 0	5 5 6 4 5	2 3 5 4 1	2 2 2 1 1
Students will be motivated if their e-learning & teaching instructors are motivated.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	5 20 4 0 0	6 4 4 3 2	5 2 3 4 1	3 4 3 0 0	4 2 1 0 0	11 2 10 1 1	3 5 4 2 1	3 2 2 1 2
Extra marks for talented Ss is a better prize and reward for all Ss to participate online.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	20 7 3 0 0	2 5 5 2 5	4 4 10 1 0	6 2 2 0 0	4 2 1 0 0	10 5 5 5 0	5 5 5 0 0	5 5 0 0 0
Ss feel disappointed when their instructor neglect them online and not responding to their inquiries in the discussion group	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	25 1 3 0 0	5 6 4 4 0	5 2 3 0 0	5 2 2 1 0	2 3 1 1 0	3 11 5 5 1	5 5 3 2 0	4 1 3 1 1
Ss prefer e-learning because it is interesting, useful and practical.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	20 5 3 1 0	4 6 4 5 0	2 3 5 4 1	4 2 2 1 1	1 4 1 1 0	5 6 4 5 5	3 4 3 2 3	3 3 3 1 0

The Need for Utilizing (CAT) Tools as an Educational Technology Instrument for Training Translation Students Universities in Libyan

Students' response towards E-learning Mode	Agreement 5-point Likert scale	Autumn 2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
		Full e-learning mode		Full e-learning mode		Blending learning		Blending learning	
		Comp1 29 Ss	Comp2 19Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss	Comp1 7Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss
Ss prefer e-learning mode as they can watch and listen to the recorded lectures more than one time and contact with the instructor anytime.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	10 10 5 4 0 0	2 5 5 2 5	4 4 10 1 0	6 2 2 0 0	4 2 1 0 0	10 5 5 5 0	5 5 5 0 0	5 5 0 0 0
Ss believe that learning through their mobile phones and computers is more intimate and safer than traditional learning	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	5 10 10 4 0	5 6 4 4 0	5 2 3 1 0	5 2 2 1 0	2 3 1 1 0	3 11 5 5 1	5 5 3 2 0	4 1 3 1 1
Ss prefer traditional teaching and learning because they want to see each other and go around.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	5 5 5 5 9	4 6 4 5 0	2 3 5 4 1	4 2 2 1 1	1 4 1 1 0	5 6 4 5 5	3 4 3 2 3	3 3 3 1 0
Ss feel that e-learning mood enriched their knowledge about lots of topics compared to traditional teaching mood.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	9 10 5 5 0	5 5 3 1	4 4 5 2 0	3 2 2 2 1	2 2 2 1 0	4 6 5 5 0	3 2 4 3	2 3 3 1 1
E-learning mode respects Ss' privacy and religious principles.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	10 8 9 2 0	6 4 5 2 2	5 4 3 1 2	5 3 1 1 0	5 1 1 0 0	5 5 6 4 5	2 3 5 4 1	2 2 2 1 1



Students' response towards E-learning Mode	Agreement 5-point Likert scale	Autumn 2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
		Full e-learning mode		Full e-learning mode		Blending learning		Blending learning	
		Comp1 29 Ss	Comp2 19Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss	Comp1 7Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss
e-learning is not impossible nowadays because it is everywhere.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	10 5 5 9 0	6 4 4 3 2	5 2 3 4 1	3 4 3 0 0	4 2 1 0 0	11 2 10 1 1	3 5 4 2 1	3 2 2 1 2
E-learning is disturbing when Ss study through their phones because they are full of extra social media icons.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	10 8 3 7 1	2 5 5 2 5	4 4 10 1 0	6 2 2 0 0	4 2 1 0 0	10 5 5 5 0	5 5 5 0 0	5 5 0 0 0
Ss prefer blending learning rather than full online mood	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	10 5 5 5 4	5 6 4 4 0	5 2 3 1 0	5 2 2 1 0	2 3 1 1 0	3 11 5 5 1	5 5 3 2 0	4 1 3 1 1
Ss do not care about the mode of study whether it the e-learning or the traditional one. They just want to study anyway	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	5 15 5 5 4	4 6 4 5 0	2 3 5 4 1	4 2 2 1 1	1 4 1 1 0	5 6 4 5 5	3 4 3 2 3	3 3 3 1 0
Ss feel tired and exhausted after traditional classes compered to digital lectures.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	10 10 5 4 0	2 5 5 2 5	4 4 10 1 0	6 2 2 0 0	4 2 1 0 0	10 5 5 5 0	5 5 5 0 0	5 5 0 0 0

The Need for Utilizing (CAT) Tools as an Educational Technology Instrument for Training Translation Students Universities in Libyan

Students' response towards E-learning Mode	Agreement 5-point Likert scale	Autumn 2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
		Full e-learning mode		Full e-learning mode		Blending learning		Blending learning	
		Comp1 29 Ss	Comp2 19Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss	Comp1 7Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss
e-learning mode allows Ss to feel free, comfortable and confident.	1.Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	10 8 8 2 1	5 6 4 4 0	5 5 2 3 0	5 2 2 1 0	2 3 1 1 0	3 11 5 5 1	5 5 3 2 0	4 1 3 1 1
Learning English Speaking and Writing by eLearning is easier and better than traditional teaching	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	9 10 5 5 0	4 6 4 5 0	2 3 5 4 1	4 2 2 1 1	1 4 1 1 0	5 6 4 5 5	3 4 3 2 3	3 3 3 1 0
Ss can learn from their mistakes and not cheat from each other	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	5 20 4 0 0	5 5 3 1 1	4 4 5 2 0	3 2 2 2 1	2 2 2 1 0	4 6 5 5 0	3 2 4 3	2 3 3 1 1
Smart phone applications helped Ss to improve their English proficiency and accuracy.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	20 7 3 0 0	6 4 5 2 2	5 4 3 1 2	5 3 1 1 0	5 1 1 0 0	5 5 6 4 5	2 3 5 4 1	2 2 2 1 1
Writing can be assessed electronically better than face to face	1.Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	10 5 5 5 4	6 4 4 3 2	5 2 3 4 1	3 4 3 0 0	4 2 1 0 0	11 2 10 1 1	3 5 4 2 1	3 2 2 1 2



Students' response towards E-learning Mode	Agreement 5-point Likert scale	Autumn 2020		Spring 2021		Autumn 2021		Spring 2022	
		Full e-learning mode		Full e-learning mode		Blending learning		Blending learning	
		Comp1 29 Ss	Comp2 19Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss	Comp1 7Ss	Comp2 25Ss	Comp1 15Ss	Comp2 10Ss
Ss prefer to type their assignments rather than deliver them handwritten. Typed assignments are less grammatical spelling, capitalization and punctuation mistakes.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	9 10 5 5 0	2 5 5 2 5	4 4 10 1 0	6 2 2 0 0	4 2 1 0 0	10 5 5 5 0	5 5 5 0 0	5 5 0 0 0
The plagiarism checker application helped both Ss and instructors to type assignments and research papers.	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	5 20 4 0 0	5 6 4 4 0	5 2 3 0 0	5 2 1 1 0	2 3 1 1 0	3 11 5 5 1	5 5 3 2 0	4 1 3 1 1
E-learning textbooks are free and available	1. Strongly Agree. 2. Agree 3Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree	20 7 3 0 0	4 6 4 5 0	2 3 5 4 1	4 2 2 1 1	1 4 1 1 0	5 6 4 5 5	3 4 3 2 3	3 3 3 1 0

23. Conclusion

It can be concluded that e-learning and teaching mode is effective in case instructors and students themselves were positive and really motivated. Students if they were really guided well and correctly instructed either in the traditional teaching mode or in digital learning can be effective and good learners. If they were ignored or not observed well they would get lazy and lose communication and contact.

E-learning is welcome not only because it was a necessity and all students were obligated to it, but because it became a requirement to keep up. It is seen from the students' results, that their response to online assignments is associated with the instructor following up and guidance. Though not all students are unable to fulfill the online requirements, they try and ask for help from their classmates, relatives, and neighbors. Students showed better English at the end of the courses.

24. Recommendations

It is recommended that e-learning and teaching must be sponsored by the government all over the country; i.e. authorities should pay attention that Higher education organizations must be connected to the Internet and must provide students and staff members with access to the internet at home to encourage scientific research.

Furthermore, this study should be continued in order to investigate the validity of the exams run online for other courses. E-learning implementation requires collective and cooperative efforts in order to success.

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Appendix I

Appendix I: Table of contents of the course book syllabus of Composition 1 From The Longman Academic Writing Series- Fundamental Academic Writing –level 1 by Linda Butler	
Topics	Nb.
Getting started (Your Classmates) Prewriting- Writing- Sharing	Note:(2 hours is the duration of an ordinary lecture with a break of 10 minutes. But the digital one is about 45 minutes and students can pause recording whenever they want and are free to contact the instructor online whenever it is possible for both of them.)
<p>Chapter 1 Introducing Yourself.....</p> <p>Part 1: Organization From Words to Sentences to Paragraphs What does Paragraph look like?</p> <p>Part 2: Sentences Structure and Mechanics What is a sentence? What does a sentence look like?</p> <p>Part 3: Grammar and Vocabulary Verbs Nouns</p> <p>Part 4: The Writing Process What is a Process? Expansion Activities: Keeping a Journal</p>	<p>Chapter 6: Your Hometown.....</p> <p>Part 1: Organization Topic Sentences and Supporting Sentences II</p> <p>Part 2: Grammar: There is and There are A, An and The</p> <p>Part 3: Vocabulary and Sentence Structure Prepositions for describing Location Prepositional Phrases in Sentences</p> <p>Part 4: The Writing Process Your Paragraph: Describing My Hometown Results of the Writing Process Expansion Activities: Your Journal Challenge: A Favorite Place</p>

<p>Chapter 2 Describing Your Daily Routine.... Part 1: Organization What Should Your Paper Look Like? Papers Typed On a Computer Part 2: Grammar and sentence Structure Subject Pronouns The Simple Present of Be Basic Sentence Patterns with Be Part 3: Mechanics Rules of Capitalization Part 4: The Writing Process The Steps in the Writing Process Your Paragraph: <i>Getting Ready for The Day</i> Results of the Writing Process Expansion Activities: Your Journal Challenge: <i>Sleep Habits</i></p>	<p>Chapter 7: Remembering an Important Day Part 1: Organization Organizing Your Ideas Part 2: Sentences Structure and Mechanics Compound Sentences Using Commas Part 3: Grammar and Vocabulary The Simple Past Part 4: The Writing Process Your Paragraph: <i>An Important day</i> Results of the Writing Process Expansion Activities: Your Journal Challenge: <i>A Funny or Scary Experience</i></p>
<p>Chapter 3: Every Picture Tells a Story..... Chapter: Part 1: Organization Topic sentences Part 2: Sentences Structure and Mechanics Subjects of Sentences Part 3: Grammar and Vocabulary Adjectives The Simple Present Part 4: The Writing Process Your Paragraph: <i>The Face in The Photo</i> Results of the Writing Process Expansion Activities:Your Journal Challenge: <i>An Important Person</i></p>	<p>Chapter 8: Memories of a Trip Part 1: Organization Concluding Sentences Part 2: Grammar and Vocabulary Past Time Expressions Before and After as Prepositions Part 3: Sentences Structure and Mechanics Sentences with Past Time Clauses Sentence Fragment Part 4: The Writing Process Your Paragraph: <i>Memories of a Trip</i> Results of the Writing Process Expansion Activities:Your Journal Challenge: <i>From My Childhood</i></p>



<p>Chapter 4: Saturdays.....</p> <p>Part 1: Organization Time Order</p> <p>Part 2: Sentences Structure and Vocabulary Simple Sentence Pattern I Adverbs of Frequency</p> <p>Part 3: Grammar and Mechanics Common Verbs Using Prepositions to Show Time Titles</p> <p>Part 4: The Writing Process Your Paragraph: My Partner’s Saturdays Results of the Writing Process</p> <p>Expansion Activities: Your Journal Challenge: My Favorite Holiday</p>	<p>Chapter 9: Looking Up Ahead</p> <p>Part 1: Organization Listening Order and Listening – Order Words</p> <p>Part 2: Grammar and Vocabulary Expressing Future Time with <i>Be Going To</i> Expressing Future Time with <i>Will</i></p> <p>Part 3: Sentences Structure Sentences with Future Clauses Run- On Sentences</p> <p>Part 4: The Writing Process Your Paragraph: My Future Plans Results of the Writing Process Expansion Activities: Your Journal Challenge: Imagining The Future</p>
<p>Chapter 5: What’s going On?.....</p> <p>Part 1: Organization Topic Sentences and Supporting Sentences I</p> <p>Part 2: Sentences Structure Simple Sentence Pattern II</p> <p>Part 3: Grammar The Present Progressive Non-Action Verbs</p> <p>Part 4: The Writing Process <i>Your Paragraph: What is Happening in This Photo?</i> Results of the Writing Process</p> <p>Expansion Activities: Your Journal Challenge: My Own Photo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rules for Capitalization - Punctuation (form + use) - Correction Symbols - Exam Correction/ Marking Criteria

Appendix II

Contents of the course book syllabus of Composition II From: The Longman Academic Writing Series- Fundamental Academic Writing –level 2

Topics	Note: 2 hours is the duration of an ordinary lecture with a break of 10 minutes. But the digital one is about 45 minutes and students can pause recording whenever they want and are free to contact the instructor online whenever it is possible for both of them.
<p>Chapter 1 Introducing People</p> <p>What Is Academic Writing?</p> <p>Chapter Preview</p> <p>Prewriting Activity: Asking Questions and taking notes</p> <p>Part 1: Organization</p> <p>What is a Paragraph?</p> <p>Model: What is A Paragraph? <i>Mrs. Robinson</i></p> <p>Paragraph form</p> <p>Model: Handwritten Assignment <i>My Class mate</i></p> <p>Model: Computer- written Assignment <i>My Class mate</i></p> <p>Part 2: Grammar and Capitalization</p> <p>What Is a Sentence?</p> <p>Command Sentences</p> <p>Subjects, verbs, objects</p> <p>Capitalization: Six Rules</p> <p>Journal Writing</p> <p>Model: Journal Entry</p> <p>Part 3: Sentence Structure</p> <p>Simple Sentences</p> <p>Connecting Words: and, or</p> <p>Sentence Combining</p> <p>Part 4: The Writing Review QuestionsThe Writing Process</p> <p>Step 1: Prewriting to get ideas- freewriting</p> <p>Step 2: Write the first draft</p> <p>Step 3: Edit the first draft</p> <p>Step 4: Write the final draft Writing Assignment</p>	<p>Chapter 4: Describing a Place</p> <p>Chapter Review</p> <p>Prewriting Activity: Listing Descriptive Details</p> <p>Part 1: Organization</p> <p>Description</p> <p>Space Order</p> <p>Model: Space Order <i>The Shared Refrigerator</i></p> <p>Topic and Concluding Sentences for descriptive Paragraphs</p> <p>Specified Details</p> <p>Planning a Space – Order Paragraph</p> <p>Part 2: Grammar</p> <p>Adjectives</p> <p>Order of Adjectives</p> <p>Part 3: Sentence Structure</p> <p>Prepositions</p> <p>Prepositional Phrases</p> <p>Model: Prepositional Phrases od Place in a Description <i>My Desk</i></p> <p>Using Prepositional Phrases to Vary Sentence Openings</p> <p>Part 4: The Writing</p> <p>Preview Questions</p> <p>Writing Assignment</p>



<p>Chapter 2 Listing –Order Paragraphs Chapter Preview Pre writing Activity: Clustering Clustering Model: Clustering 1 Model: Clustering 2 Part 1: Organization Listing –Order Paragraphs Model: Listing –Order Paragraphs <i>Flight Attendants</i> The Three Parts of a Paragraph The Topic Sentence Listing –Order Transition Signals Paragraph Unity The Concluding Sentences Outlining Model: Simple Outline <i>Flight Attendants</i> Part 2: Sentence Structure Compound Sentences Coordinating Conjunctions: <i>and, or, so</i> Two Sentences Errors: Run- on and comma Splices Part 3: The Writing Preview Questions Writing Assignment</p>	<p>Chapter 5: Stating Reasons and Using Examples Chapter Review Prewriting Activity: Reason and Examples Part 1: Organization Model: Reasons and Examples Costa Rica Outlines with Details Model: Detailed Outline: Costa Rica Reasons and Examples Transition Signals with Reasons Conclusion Signals with Reasons Transition Signals with Reasons Part 2: Sentence Structure More About Complex Sentences Reason and Condition Subordinators Part 3: Capitalization and Punctuation Capitalization: Two More Rules Commas: Four More Rules Part 4: The Writing Preview Questions Writing Assignment</p>
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<p>Chapter 3: Giving Instructions Chapter Preview: Prewriting Activity: Listing Part 1: Organization “How To” Paragraphs? Model: “How To” Paragraph <i>How to Have a Successful Garage Sale</i> Topic and Concluding sentences for “How To” Paragraphs Time Order Signals Listing and Out Lining Model: Listing Model: Edited List Model: Simple Outline Part 2: Sentences Structure Independent and Dependent Clauses Adverb Subordinators Complex Sentences Sentence Errors: Fragments Summary: Three Types of Sentences Part 3: Capitalization and Punctuations Capitalization: Four More Rules</p>	<p>Chapter 6: Expressing Your Opinion Chapter Review Prewriting Activity: Getting Ideas from Reading Part 1: Organization Opinion Paragraphs Facts and Opinions Model: Opinion Paragraph <i>Video Games and Violence</i> Transition Signals for Opinion Paragraphs Part 2: Sentence Structure Model: Adjective Clauses <i>School Uniforms</i> Adjective Clauses with <i>who, which, and that</i> Punctuating Adjective clauses Complex Sentences with Adjective Clauses More about Fragments Part 3: Punctuation Quotation Marks Part 4: Writing Preview Questions Writing Assignment</p>
	<p>Journal Writing Business Letters Readers Response and Writer’ Self Check</p>



Adverb Subordinators	Part 3: Punctuation
Complex Sentences	Quotation Marks
Sentence Errors: Fragments	Part 4: Writing
Summary: Three Types of Sentences	Preview Questions
Part 3: Capitalization and Punctuations	Writing Assignment
Capitalization: Four More Rules	Journal Writing
Commas: Four Rules	Business Letters
Part 4: The Writing	Readers Response and Writer' Self Check
Preview Questions	
Writing Assignment	

Appendix III

Final Exam Results of Composition 1&2

Table1:Results of Composition 1 Autumn 2020 By Manar Elost									
Total /100/	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name		Total /100/	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name	
50	48	2	عبد الحكيم	16	80	50	30	ابرار	1
98	59	39	علاء الدين	17	99	60	39	اريج	2
55	33	22	لقمان	18	56	31	25	اسماء	3
60	36	24	مالك	19	55	25	30	الاء	4
0	0	0	محمد	20	50	42	8	تسنيم	5
50	50	0	محمد نور	21	98	59	39	تقوي	6
50	50	0	مرام	22	74	74	0	تيما	7
71	43	28	مروان	23	84	51	33	حنين	8
56	31	25	معتصم	24	0	0	0	خديجة	9
50	24	26	نبيلة	25	0	0	0	ريان	10
50	26	24	نور	26	42	22	20	سجى	11
97	58	39	هبة	27	35	13	22	سرور	12
71	41	30	هدى	28	30	0	30	سعيد	13
36	6	30	هدى م	29	82	49	33	صفاء	14
					58	30	28	عائشة	15

Table2 :Results of Composition 2 Autumn 2020 By Manar Elost									
Total /100/	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name		Total /100/	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name	
43	16	27	على	11	28	28	0	آية	1
30	0	30	فاتن	12	54	24	30	إيهاب	2
30	0	30	فاطمة	13	82	52	30	احمد	3



97	59	38	محمد	14	50	50	0	تفريد	4
0	0	0	محمد	15	53	22	31	دانية	5
25	25	0	منذر	16	43	15	28	رغد	6
69	69	0	نجاة	17	50	27	23	زينب	7
50	25	25	هديل	18	50	27	23	شهد	8
59	29	30	هنادي	19	93	56	37	عائشة	9
					0	0	0	عبد الماجد	10

Total /100	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name		Total /100	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name	
76	36	40	فاطمة اشرف	16	97	57	40	آيات	1
0	0	0	فاطمة عبدالسلام	17	92	53	39	ابتهاج	2
96	57	39	فاطمه الحسين	18	94	55	39	ابرار	3
25	5	20	ليلى	19	69	30	39	امباركة	4
64	64	0	محمد حسين	20	84	45	39	امتان	5
79	40	39	محمد عبدالحميد	21	81	42	39	بشرى	6
71	32	39	مرام	22	59	19	40	بنان	7
94	55	39	مروة	23	51	11	40	تسنيم	8
0	0	0	ملاك	24	79	40	39	دعاء	9
69	30	39	منال	25	85	46	39	زهرة	10
86	47	39	هبة	26	70	31	39	سجى	11
69	30	39	هدى محمد	27	75	36	39	سرور	12
76	37	39	هنادي	28	50	50	0	سرور مفتاح	13
77	38	39	هند	29	0	0	0	سلمى	14
64	34	30	ياسين	30	85	46	39	غفران	15

Table4 :Results of Composition 1 Autumn 2021 By Manar Elost				
<i>Total /100</i>	<i>Final exam</i>	<i>Mid-terms</i>	<i>Ss 'name</i>	
84	54	30	أنس	1
78	50	28	سليمة	2
80	37	43	شدى	3
82	47	35	على	4
20	0	20	ليلي	5
76	51	25	محمد فرج	6
87	48	39	محمد مصطفى	7

Table5 : Results of Composition 2 Spring 2021 By Manar Elost									
<i>Total /100</i>	<i>Final exam</i>	<i>Mid-terms</i>	<i>Ss 'name</i>		<i>Total /100</i>	<i>Final exam</i>	<i>Mid-terms</i>	<i>Ss 'name</i>	
75	36	39	على	14	51	31	20	ابرار	1
20	0	20	فاتن	15	89	49	40	اريج	2
61	22	39	فاطمة	16	55	16	39	اسماء	3
20	0	20	محمد فوزي	17	65	25	40	الاء	4
64	25	39	محمد نور	18	50	11	39	تسنيم	5
42	2	40	مرام	19	99	59	40	تقوي	6
76	36	40	مروان	20	0	0	0	تيما	7
82	43	39	معتصم	21	72	33	39	حنين	8
50	11	39	نبيلة	22	54	25	29	رغد	9
50	30	20	نور	23	50	10	40	ريانة	10
90	50	40	هبة سعد	24	55	15	40	عائشة	11
58	18	40	هبة فوزي	25	75	36	39	عبد الحكيم	12
					96	56	40	علاء الدين	13



Table6: Results of Composition 2 Autumn 2021 By Manar Elosta

Total /100	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name		Total /100	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name	
76	48	28	فاطمة	15	96	58	38	آيات	1
53	30	23	فاطمة الحسين	16	85	46	39	ابتهاج	2
55	35	20	مالك	17	81	49	32	ابتهال	3
50	27	23	محمد عبدالحميد	18	88	50	38	ابرار	4
0	0	0	محمد فوزي	19	14	4	10	امباركة	5
38	25	13	مرام المختار	20	52	27	25	امنتان	6
56	36	20	مرام عبدالرزاق	21	72	42	30	بشرى	7
91	53	38	مروة	22	50	30	20	بنان	8
50	15	35	منال	23	26	10	16	تسنيم	9
57	44	13	هبة	24	73	39	34	دعاء	10
55	26	29	هدى محمد	25	73	45	28	زهرة	11
31	4	27	هنادى	26	50	14	36	سجى	12
50	15	35	هند	27	50	18	32	سرور	13
					56	28	28	غفران	14

Table7:Results of Composition 1 Spring 2022 By Manar Elosta

Total /100	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name		Total /100	Final exam	Mid-terms	Ss 'name	
78	44	34	شيماء	9	73	36	37	تقوى	1
18	0	18	عائشه	10	79	42	37	حنان	2
44	24	20	فاطمة	11	55	33	22	دعاء	3
0	0	0	ليلى	12	0	0	0	ريان	4
54	30	24	نبأ	13	76	44	32	ريحانة	5
36	10	26	ندى	14	98	58	40	سارة	6
80	47	33	هند	15	66	36	30	سعاد	7

Table7:Results of Composition 1 Spring 2022 By Manar Elosta									
					89	49	40	شهد	8

Table 8:Results of Composition 2 Spring 2022 By Manar Elosta				
<i>Total /100</i>	<i>Final exam</i>	<i>Mid-terms</i>	<i>Ss 'name</i>	
5	0	5	أنس	1
68	39	29	امباركة	2
88	50	38	سالمة	3
67	36	31	سليمة	4
69	37	32	علي	5
0	0		فاتن	6
57	33	24	محمد	7
32	0	32	محمد فوزي	8
61	41	20	هنادي	9
65	36	29	ياسين	10